# Rite-Solutions Selected in $74 Million Undersea Weapon Systems Navy Contract

Middletown, R.I. – Rite-Solutions recently was selected as one of 17 companies that will participate in a five-year, $73.7 million contract to help the U.S. Navy develop future generations of its Undersea Weapons Family of Systems (FoS), the company said in an April 20 release.

The contract, announced by the Naval Undersea Warfare Center (NUWC) in Newport, Rhode Island, will develop core technologies in 12 functional areas such as payloads, propulsion, power storage and conversion, vehicle control and command and control.

“We were awarded two functional areas where we have outstanding core capabilities: software development, and modeling and simulation,” said Dennis McLaughlin, president and CEO at Rite-Solutions. “We are very pleased that NUWC recognizes our strengths in building high-performing teams and innovative software-based solutions, as reflected in this award.”

NUWC will release task-order requests for proposals in specific or combined functional areas that companies that received awards may bid on. Unlike contracts that source a finished product from a single company, NUWC will receive components from multiple companies.

“This contract is very similar to the approach NUWC used with the Unmanned Undersea Vehicles (UUVs) Multiple Award Contract,” adds Mike Coffey, Rite-Solutions executive vice president.

“NUWC is taking a best-of-breed approach to acquiring

technologies that will enable them to develop, build and support these complex systems. They will integrate and test the different technologies in the prototype phases of weapons development, which will establish the blueprints for future production.”

As with the UUV FoS contract, Rite-Solutions is a prime contractor alongside other companies with demonstrated expertise in undersea warfare. “We are pleased to be included on this contract, with some of the biggest and most reputable companies in the aerospace and defense industry,” Coffey said.

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# Attack Submarine USS Vermont Commissioned


A photo illustration of the Virginia-class attack submarine USS Vermont. U.S. Navy

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy commissioned USS Vermont (SSN 792), the 19th Virginia-class attack submarine, on April 18, the Navy said in a release.

Although the traditional public commissioning ceremony was canceled due to public health restrictions on large public gatherings, the Navy commissioned USS Vermont administratively and transitioned the boat to normal operations. Meanwhile, the Navy is looking at a future opportunity to commemorate the special event with the ship's sponsor, crew and commissioning committee.

"This Virginia-class fast-attack submarine will continue the proud naval legacy of the state of Vermont and the ships that have borne her name," said acting Navy Secretary James E. McPherson.

Vice Adm. Daryl Caudle, the Navy's commander of

submarine forces, said Vermont's entry to service marks a new phase of American undersea warfare dominance for a global submarine force that is ready to deter, defend and defeat threats to our nation, allies and rules-based international order.

"This warship carries on a proud Vermont legacy in naval warfare and unyielding determination stretching back to the birth of our nation," Caudle said.

"To her crew, congratulations on completing the arduous readiness training to enter sea trials and prepare this ship for battle. I am proud to serve with each of you! Stand ready to defend our nation wherever we are threatened – honoring your motto – FREEDOM AND UNITY. May God bless our Submarine Force, the people of Vermont, and our families! From the depths, we strike!"

> *"This warship carries on a proud Vermont legacy in naval warfare and unyielding determination stretching back to the birth of our nation."*
>
> *Vice Adm. Daryl Caudle, commander of submarine forces*

USS Vermont's sponsor, Gloria Valdez, former deputy assistant secretary of the Navy (Ships), offered her gratitude to everyone who played a role in delivering USS Vermont to service. She said she is proud to represent the crew and the first Block IV Virginia-class submarine to enter service.

"I am very proud of the Sailors and families of USS Vermont, who worked so hard to bring her to life, and also feel extremely grateful to everyone who played a role preparing her to defend our nation for generations to come," Valdez said. "I look forward to commemorating this special occasion together with the crew in the future."

Vermont's commanding officer, Cmdr. Charles W. Phillips III,

highlighted Vermont's accomplishments over the past several weeks getting through initial sea trials. The hard work and dedication of the entire team the past few years was evident in the successful execution of at-sea testing, he said.

Phillips added he is especially thankful to the crew and their families, ship sponsor Valdez and the USS Vermont Commissioning Committee, led by Debra Martin, for all their hard work and support of the crew.

"We recognize just how important the submarine force is during this era of Great Power Competition," Phillips said. "As part of the nation's maritime asymmetric advantage over our competitors, we are ready to perform whatever duty is most needed."

"The crew is hungry to hone our skills at-sea and become an effective fighting unit, and we will work tirelessly to justify the nation's confidence in us," he added. "Today marks the culmination of six years of dedicated work by the men and women who constructed the nation's newest and most capable warship. We are all honored to be part of this historic moment."

USS Vermont is the third U.S. Navy vessel to bear the name of the Green Mountain State. The first Vermont was one of nine 74-gun warships authorized by Congress in 1816. The second Vermont, Battleship No. 20, was commissioned in 1907 and first deployed in December that year as part of the "Great White Fleet." She was decommissioned in June 1920.

The USS Vermont is 377 feet long, has a 34-foot beam and will be able to dive to depths greater than 800 feet and operate at speeds in excess of 25 knots submerged. The boat's construction began in May 2014, and it will provide the Navy the capabilities required to maintain the nation's undersea superiority well into the 21st century.

Vermont is the first the first of 10 Virginia-class Block IV

submarines. Block IV submarines incorporate design changes to reduce total ownership cost, as well as allow the Navy to increase the time between maintenance stops and the number of deployments.

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# DOT Announces Nearly $20 Million in Funding to Small Shipyards

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD) has awarded $19.6 million in discretionary grants to 24 small U.S. shipyards through the Small Shipyard Grant Program, according to an April 20 release from MARAD. The funding will help modernize America's small shipyards, making them more efficient in constructing commercial vessels.

"This $19.6 million federal government investment in the nation's small shipyards will help maintain the U.S. shipyard infrastructure of our country," U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao said.

MARAD's Small Shipyard Grant Program provides funding to assist eligible shipyards in modernizing operations, improving efficiency and reaping the benefits of increased productivity by investing in emerging technologies and a highly skilled workforce. Projects under the program include capital and related improvement projects that foster efficiency, competitive operations and quality ship construction, repair and reconfiguration. In addition, the program can fund training projects that foster employee skills and enhance productivity.

“Small shipyard grants play a significant role in supporting local communities by creating jobs for working families,” Maritime Administrator Mark H. Buzby said. “These shipyards are a tangible investment in our nation’s maritime infrastructure and the future of our maritime workforce.”

The economic footprint of American shipyards is nearly 400,000 jobs, $25.1 billion of labor income and $37.3 billion in gross domestic product.

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# Navy Awards Ship-to-Shore Connector Contract to Textron

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy has awarded a contract for the fiscal year 2017-2020 procurement of ship to shore connector craft, the Navy’s Program Executive Office (PEO)–Ships said in an April 16 release.

Ship to shore connectors are the evolutionary replacement for the existing fleet of landing craft air cushion (LCAC) vehicles and will primarily transport weapon systems, equipment, cargo and personnel of the assault elements through varied environmental conditions from amphibious ships over to the beach.

“As the program continues to move forward with delivering these important capabilities to the fleet, the procurement of these additional craft is critical,” said Tom Rivers, program manager of the Amphibious Warfare Program Office for PEO-Ships.

Textron Systems was awarded the $386 million fixed price incentive-firm target and firm fixed price contract

modification for the construction of 15 craft. Work will be performed primarily in New Orleans.

The contract award is one of several recent milestones for the program. The Navy accepted delivery of the first of the next-generation landing craft, Ship to Shore Connector Craft 100, on Feb. 6. Craft 100 is the developmental unit for the next-generation landing craft and will be located in Panama City, Florida, where additional testing and crew training will be conducted.

The second craft, LCAC 101, is making headway and will head to sea within the next few weeks for builder's trials for assessment of its operational readiness. During the trials, LCAC 101 will undergo integrated testing in both unloaded and loaded states to ensure the craft will successfully meet all requirements. The detail design and construction contract procured nine craft. Beyond Craft 100 and LCAC 101, an additional seven craft are in the later stages of production.

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# Marine Corps Makes First Operational MQ-9A Flight in Middle East

SAN DIEGO – U.S. Marine Corps pilots and sensor operators from Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 1 (VMU-1) conducted their first operational flight of an MQ-9A Reaper unmanned aircraft system in the Middle East on March 20, according to an Aeronautical Systems Inc. (GA-ASI) release.

The multisensor reconnaissance-equipped MQ-9A UAS produced by General Atomics has provided crucial support to Marine forward

operations on the battlefield.

With oversight from the GA-ASI team, VMU-1 “Watchdog” crews took control of a company owned/company operated (COCO) MQ-9A supporting forward-deployed Marines. This achievement comes shortly after surpassing 7,000 hours of COCO flight operations since September 2018.

“This achievement represents a unique milestone and example of the Marine Corps’ legacy of innovation,” said David R. Alexander, president of GA-ASI. “As a partner with the Marine Corps, we look forward to expanding the role of medium-altitude, long-endurance UAS in support of maritime littoral missions.”

VMU-1 leases MQ-9A Reaper aircraft to fulfill its urgent needs request for persistent intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) in Afghanistan. GA-ASI has been working with VMU-1 as the Marine Corps transitions its COCO MQ-9A contract to a government owned/government operated (GOGO) contract in the coming year.

The GOGO capability fulfills the commandant’s directive for USMC Group 5 persistent ISR capability with strike. VMU-1 will be the test bed and incubator to provide crucial information, lessons learned, requirements, tactics, techniques, and procedures that will aid in the Marine Corps efforts for the successful acquisition and fielding of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force Unmanned Aircraft System Expeditionary Group 5 capability.

# HII Begins Fabrication of Amphibious Transport Dock Harrisburg


A graphic illustration of the future amphibious transport dock ship Harrisburg (LPD 30). U.S. Navy

PASCAGOULA, Miss. – Huntington Ingalls Industries' Ingalls Shipbuilding division recently started fabrication of the U.S. Navy's newest San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock Harrisburg, the company said in an April 16 release. The start of fabrication signifies that the first 100 tons of steel have been cut.

"LPD 30 is the start of an exciting new era for the San Antonio class," said Steve Sloan, Ingalls LPD program manager. "The start of fabrication for Harrisburg marks the beginning of the LPD Flight II program. Through learning structured

around consistent production, we've been able to identify design and construction modifications to make future ships in the class more affordable while fulfilling Navy and Marine Corps requirements."

Ingalls has delivered 11 San Antonio-class ships to the Navy and has three more under construction, including the Harrisburg. The ship will be the 14th in the San Antonio class and the first Flight II LPD. Fort Lauderdale (LPD 28) launched in March and is scheduled to be delivered next year.

LPD 30 will be the second Navy vessel named after the city of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The first was a troopship acquired by the Navy during World War I that served in commission from May 29, 1918, to Sept. 25, 1919. That ship also served with the Navy in the Spanish-American War under another name. In addition to being the capital of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg is home to several Defense Department facilities, including the Naval Support Activity, Mechanicsburg.

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# SUPSHIP Turns to Fusion for Facemasks

NNSY’s Sail Loft has begun making facemasks to further ensure the health and safety of workforce personnel, with a capacity to produce up to 900 daily. COVID-19-specific Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) has been distributed to the USS George H.W. Bush, USS Wyoming and USS San Francisco projects. NNSY/Danny De Angelis

WASHINGTON – When Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion and Repair Newport News’ supply of protective facemasks to combat COVID-19 dwindled to 30 by the morning of April 9, SUPSHIPNN’s commanding officer, Capt. Jason Lloyd, turned to his staff for a solution, according to Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA).

An order for more masks had already been placed but they would not arrive until the following week. He needed a solution that would enable the command to continue its fleet support mission.

His staff turned to Fusion, an internal Navy collaboration tool that is like Facebook and was developed by Naval Information Warfare Systems Command connecting NAVSEA

employees virtually throughout the world.

“As the SUPSHIPNN Command Process Improvement Champion, I have been a fan of the NAVSEA Fusion site since its inception,” said Greg Mitchell, SUPSHIP Newport News’ command process improvement champion. “I immediately posted a plea for help on Fusion early” on the morning of April 9.

“Fusioneers” – as Mitchell termed his fellow collaborators – responded with numerous recommendations and offers to assist. One of those responses led to Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY), co-located in Norfolk, a command already using its internal capability to sew cloth facemasks for its workforce.

“I reached out to them,” Mitchell said. “By 1400 that same day, I had 100 brand-new masks made by Norfolk Naval Shipyard’s production resources group in their sail loft I could deliver to my command.”

In an e-mail to the shipyard’s commanding Officer, Capt. Kai Torkelson, Lloyd thanked his NAVSEA colleague, calling the success of Fusion as a “perfect example of teamwork and knowledge sharing. … Fusion collaboration at its finest.”

Mitchell said that in order to answer NAVSEA Commander, Vice Adm. [Thomas] Moore’s call to “Expand the Advantage” the command needs to become a High Velocity Learning (HVL) organization. “There is no better way to use HVL than Fusion,” he said. “Thanks to everyone involved who made this a complete Fusion success.  We are and will always be a “One Navy” Team!”

Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Conversion and Repair, Newport News, is the liaison between the Department of the Navy and Huntington Ingalls Industries Newport News Shipbuilding, the company engaged in the design and construction of new nuclear-powered submarines and aircraft carriers as well as the repair and modernization of active subs and carriers in the fleet.

# 2nd Fleet Keeps Truman Strike Group at Sea as Ready Carrier Amid Pandemic

Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) 2nd Class Albert Gibson chains an E-2D Hawkeye to the flight deck of the USS Harry S. Truman in the Atlantic Ocean on April 11. The Truman Carrier Strike Group is conducting operations there. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Bela Chambers

NORFOLK, Va. – The Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group remains at sea in the western Atlantic as a certified carrier strike group force ready for tasking to protect the crew from the risks posed by COVID-19, following their deployment to the U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet areas of operation, the U.S. 2nd Fleet said in a release.

The Navy is taking this measure to maintain the strike group's warfighting capability while ensuring the safety of the crew.

**See: U.S. Military in All-New Territory in Fight Against Virus, Foggo Says**

The demand for naval assets remains high. Therefore, keeping the Truman strike group at sea as it remains in the sustainment phase of optimized fleet response plan (OFRP) allows the ship to maintain a high level of readiness for a potential rapid surge or forward deployment, providing options to the national command authority during the global pandemic.

The Truman and its strike group remains at sea in the western Atlantic to protect the crew from the risks posed by COVID-19. U.S. Navy/Aircrew Survival Equipmentman 1st Class Brandon C. Cole

"The ship is entering a period in which it needs to be ready to respond and deploy at any time," said Vice Adm. Andrew Lewis, commander of the 2nd Fleet. "Normally, we can do

that pierside, but in the face of COVID-19, we need to protect our most valuable asset, our people, by keeping the ship out to sea."

The Navy will continue to evaluate the situation and will provide an update to the crew and their families in about three weeks.

"After completing a successful deployment, we would love nothing more than to be reunited with our friends and families," said Rear Adm. Andrew Loiselle, commander of Carrier Strike Group 8.

"We recognize that these are unique circumstances and the responsible thing to do is to ensure we are able to answer our nation's call while ensuring the health and safety of our Sailors. We thank you for your continued love and support as we remain focused on this important mission."

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# CACI Awarded $83 Million Task Order to Support Portsmouth Naval Shipyard

ARLINGTON, Va. – CACI International Inc. has been awarded a U.S. Navy contract to provide engineering, technical and planning expertise to the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, the company said in an April 14 release. The single-award task order is for one base year and four option years, with a ceiling value of more than $83 million.

Under the task order, which the Navy awarded under its SeaPort-NxG contract vehicle, CACI engineers and

technicians will provide expanded mission expertise, including planning maintenance and repair for submarines by assisting the Ships Availability Planning and Engineering Center (SHAPEC) and Deep Submergence Systems Program. The task order is CACI's first award under the SeaPort-NxG vehicle.

CACI technical expertise across submarine engineering disciplines, such as structural, mechanical, electrical and combat systems, will help the Navy to safely return submarines to the fleet as quickly as possible. For example, CACI has developed the Shipyard Planning Engineering Automated Reports, the software tool SHAPEC uses to more effectively conduct its planning.

"CACI engineers and technicians help Navy shipyards overcome hurdles in their maintenance and repair efforts with expertise earned through long-standing support of the mission," said John Mengucci, CACI president and CEO. "CACI stands ready to support the Navy shipyards in any way they may need, including by providing acquisition and engineering support."

CACI Executive Chairman and Chairman of the Board Dr. J.P. (Jack) London, said, "CACI is proud to play a critical role in helping the Navy maintain its submarine fleet and continue to project power around the world."

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# NAVSEA, PEO USC Host Virtual Industry Day on Hammerhead Program

WASHINGTON – Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) and Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC)

hosted a virtual industry day in April, pressing forward with PEO's mission priorities despite restrictions on gatherings brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The virtual program discussed the requirements for the design, development and production of the Mine Warfare Program Office's Hammerhead program, according to an April 13 release from NAVSEA.

Sixteen companies participated in the industry day in support of the maritime mine deployment system. Hammerhead is designed to deploy from an unmanned underwater vehicle and detect, classify and destroy anti-submarine warfare assets. The day's objective was to improve industry's understanding of the Hammerhead program and accelerate the design, development and production of the system.

The industry day, said PEO USC Rear Adm. Casey Moton, should "stress the importance of the program to the fleet – they want it today, they need it today. … We're still going to deliver the mission-essential capability, so it's important that we proceed."

Moton said the Hammerhead program is designated both a Middle Tier Acquisition Rapid Prototyping Program and a Navy Maritime Accelerated Acquisition, reflecting the urgent need for the capability the system promises to bring.

"We're looking for industry feedback," said Capt. Danielle George, program manager of Mine Warfare Programs. "That's how we're going to be successful" in meeting the program's aggressive schedule to deliver this new capability to the fleet.

Chief of Naval Operations Mine Warfare branch Capt. Samuel Davis, resource sponsor for the program, said: "The Hammerhead program will bring important capabilities to the fleet, and we look forward to its development and fielding."

The government intends to post the final Hammerhead prototype solicitation later this year. Industry will have about four weeks to submit a full proposal for Hammerhead prototypes.

Award of a design and test contract for an expected quantity of up to 30 prototypes is anticipated in fiscal year 2021, with delivery of operationally relevant prototypes by the end of fiscal year 2023.