

# Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast Returns to Port after 60-Day Patrol



A view of the Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast at sunrise off the coast of San Diego Dec. 2, 2019. The crew of the Steadfast was transiting north to their homeport of Astoria, Oregon, following a 60-day patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. U.S. Coast Guard / Petty Officer 1st Class Jonathan O'Connor

ASTORIA, Ore. – The Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast returned to homeport Thursday following a 60-day counter drug patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, the Coast Guard 13th District said in a Dec. 5 release.

The Steadfast crewmembers steamed over 10,500 miles, conducted over 100 readiness drills, enforced maritime safety and security and deterred illicit narcotics movements in the region.

The 210-foot cutter provided maritime domain awareness and served as an on-scene law-enforcement asset while patrolling the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

During patrol breaks, crewmembers volunteered for a number of community service projects.

Crewmembers partnered with the community and the local Navy League to paint and refurbish the exterior of the local elementary school for children with special needs in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico.

Crewmembers also teamed with the Bacaanda Foundation to assist in the construction of a retaining wall that supports access to a primary school, creating a safe-walking path for children in Huatulco, Mexico.

Steadfast crewmembers also represented the Coast Guard, among several other U.S. and Australian navy vessels, during the 2019 San Francisco Fleet Week Parade of Ships, and hosted more than 1,500 public tours.

For the parade's grand finale, in front of more than three million viewers, members of the Coast Guard's Maritime Security Response Team repelled from a Coast Guard helicopter to the Steadfast's flight deck just after the cutter passed under the Golden Gate Bridge.

Steadfast is a Reliance Class cutter that has been home ported in Astoria since 1994. Previously, based in St. Petersburg, Florida, where the cutter earned the nickname "El Tiburon Blanco," or "White Shark," from drug smugglers for its notoriously effective law enforcement operations in the Caribbean.

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## **Navy to Christen Littoral Combat Ship Mobile**



The LCS Mobile will be commissioned Dec. 7 in Mobile, Alabama. U.S. Navy

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy will christen its newest Independence-variant littoral combat ship (LCS), the future USS Mobile (LCS 26), during a 10 a.m. Central Time ceremony Saturday, Dec. 7, in Mobile, Alabama, the Defense Department said in a Dec. 4 release.

U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne, representing Alabama's first district, will deliver the christening ceremony's principal address. His wife, Rebecca Byrne, president and CEO of the

Community Foundation of South Alabama, will serve as the ship's sponsor. In a time-honored Navy tradition, Rebecca Byrne will christen the ship by breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow.

"USS Mobile is a marvel of engineering," said Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly. "She will extend our capabilities for any mission, from the middle of the ocean to the shallowest of waters, enhancing our ability to project power ashore and at sea. This Independence-class LCS will extend the maneuverability and lethality of our fleet to confront the many challenges of a complex world."

LCS is a highly maneuverable, lethal and adaptable ship designed to support focused mine countermeasures, antisubmarine warfare and surface warfare missions, according to the Navy. The ship integrates new technology and capability to affordably support current and future mission capability from deepwater to the littorals. Using an open architecture design, modular weapons, sensor systems, and a variety of manned and unmanned vehicles to gain, sustain and exploit littoral maritime supremacy, LCS provides U.S. joint force access to critical areas in multiple theaters.

The LCS class consists of two variants, the Freedom variant and the Independence variant, designed and built by two industry teams. The Freedom variant team is led by Lockheed Martin in Marinette, Wisconsin (for the odd-numbered hulls). The Independence variant team is led by Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama (for LCS 6 and the subsequent even-numbered hulls).

LCS 26 is the 13th Independence-variant LCS and the 26th in the class. It is the fifth ship named in honor of the port city on Alabama's Gulf Coast. The first Mobile was a side wheel steamer that operated as a Confederate government operated blockade runner. It was captured by U.S. forces at New Orleans in April 1862, commissioned as Tennessee and later renamed Mobile. The second Mobile was a passenger liner

operated by Hamburg Amerika Lines between Germany and the United States until the outbreak of World War I. It was taken over by the Allied Maritime Council and assigned to the United States after the Armistice and commissioned March 1919. The third Mobile (CL 63) was commissioned March 24, 1943. It participated in numerous campaigns in the Pacific during World War II and received 11 battle stars for her service by the time she was decommissioned May 1947. The fourth Mobile (LKA 115) was an amphibious cargo ship that served from September 1969 until decommissioning in February 1994.

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## **New Gerald R. Ford-Class Aircraft Carrier John F. Kennedy to be Christened Dec. 7**



The aircraft carrier Pre-Commissioning Unit (PCU) John F. Kennedy (CVN 79) show in October reaching a construction milestone, Oct. 29, 2019, as its dry dock area is flooded three months ahead of its slated production schedule leading up to the christening of the second Ford-class aircraft carrier, scheduled for Dec. 7, 2019. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Adam Ferrero ARLINGTON, Va. –The Navy’s newest aircraft carrier, the future USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79), will be christened on Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019, during an 11 a.m. ceremony at Newport News, Virginia, the Defense Department said in a Dec. 4 release.

John F. Kennedy is the second aircraft carrier of the Gerald

R. Ford class, slated to replace USS Nimitz (CVN 68), when that ship is decommissioned.

Former NASA Administrator Charles F. Bolden, also a retired major general of the U.S. Marine Corps, will deliver the ceremony's keynote address. Ambassador Caroline Kennedy, President Kennedy's daughter, will serve as the ship's sponsor and break a bottle of American sparkling wine against a plate welded to the hull.

"USS John F. Kennedy will carry the legacy of its namesake and the power of our nation," said Acting Navy Secretary Thomas Modly. "The advanced technology and warfighting capabilities this aircraft carrier brings to our global challenges will strengthen our allies and partners, extend our reach against potential adversaries and further the global mission of our integrated naval force."

CVN 79 is the second aircraft carrier to honor President John F. Kennedy for a lifetime of service to the nation. The president wore the uniform of our nation as a Navy lieutenant during World War II and served as the 35th president of the United States from January 1961 to November 1963.

John F. Kennedy, along with its embarked air wing and other strike group assets, will provide the core capabilities of forward presence, deterrence, sea control, power projection, maritime security and humanitarian assistance.

Built by Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding division, the Gerald R. Ford class incorporates advances in technology, such as a new propulsion system, electric plant, Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS), Advanced Arresting Gear (AAG), machinery control, radars and integrated warfare systems.

At 1,092 feet in length and 100,000 tons, CVN 79 incorporates more than 23 new technologies, comprising dramatic advances in propulsion, power generation, ordnance handling and aircraft

launch systems. These innovations will support a 33% higher sortie generation rate at a significant cost savings, when compared to Nimitz-class carriers. The Gerald R. Ford class also offers a significant reduction – approximately \$4 billion per ship – in life-cycle operations and support costs compared to the earlier Nimitz class.

The ceremony can be viewed on the Navy Live blog at <http://navylive.dodlive.mil>.

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## **Coast Guard, Port Partners Increase Joint Inspection Operations During Busy Shipping Season**



A member of Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team New York and K9 Ruthie inspect goods in the Port of Philadelphia for contraband, Nov. 13. Interagency teams brought an increased presence to the ports during November to inspect goods brought in for the holiday seasons. U.S. Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay/Petty Officer 1st Class Seth Johnson

PHILADELPHIA – Members of Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay, Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team New York, Customs and Border Protection, and multiple state and local police agencies increased maritime operations to deter illegal activity within the ports of Philadelphia and Wilmington, Delaware, over the past three weeks, the Coast Guard 5<sup>th</sup> District said in a Dec. 3 release.

These combined joint agency efforts were focused on a period

of heavy import and export before the holidays, accounting for more than \$1.2 billion of commerce throughout the Delaware Bay watershed.

During this time period, the Coast Guard and partner agencies conducted more than 470 hours of extensive joint operations that included the inspection of 235 vehicles before export, screening 150 ferry passengers and the pier side examination of 62 shipping containers.

“The Delaware River contributes more than \$77 billion dollars in economic value each year,” said Capt. Scott Anderson, Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay Commander and Captain of the Port. “These types of joint operations help unify law enforcement efforts in the port to disrupt, detect and deter illegal activities by sharing unique capabilities and resources between agencies.”

In March 2019, an interagency task force seized 537 kilograms of contraband from a commercial vessel at the port of Philadelphia and in June 2019, nearly 20 tons of cocaine was seized, with an estimated street value of \$1.3 billion.

The Delaware River port facilities can receive more than 3,000 deep draft vessels each year. There are more than 70 private and public facilities capable of servicing bulk, break bulk and containerized cargos.

Philadelphia is the largest North American port for the importing of paper, meat, cocoa beans and fruit. The Delaware River is also the largest energy port on the East Coast.

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# BAE Systems Selected by DARPA to Create Autonomy Software for Multi-Domain Mission Planning



BAE Systems will develop software for military operators that will enable semi-autonomous multi-domain mission planning. BAE Systems.

BURLINGTON, Mass. – BAE Systems has been awarded a contract by the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to develop software that will enable semi-autonomous multi-domain mission planning, the company said in a Dec. 3 release. The technology will be designed for military operators to leverage battlespace resources from across various domains, such as space, air, land and sea, for more effective, efficient missions, according to the company.

Military operators currently use manual processes to assess availability and coordinate use of sensors, communications, weapons and other assets across domains. DARPA's Adapting Cross-Domain Kill-Webs (ACK) program will seek to help operators adapt to dynamic situations with software technology that automatically identifies the best options. In response, BAE Systems' FAST Labs research and development organization, along with teammate Carnegie Mellon University, will create software called Multi-domain Adaptive Request Service (MARS).

MARS aims to help operators make informed decisions by automatically identifying available capabilities across domains, and then rapidly assessing the costs and benefits to use those capabilities when adjusting mission tasks. The software also includes a visual interface that will allow the

exploration of available asset options, helping operators arrive at the best course of action to deliver the desired effect on targets.

“Multi-domain mission planning is complex because it involves a tremendous amount of distributed variables such as domains, systems, resources, and manned and unmanned platforms,” said Chris Eisenbies, product line director of the Autonomy, Controls and Estimation group at BAE Systems. “Our hope is that MARS will provide warfighters with the ability to automatically leverage the resources they need and quickly determine the most effective way to accomplish their mission no matter what type of battlespace they are operating in.”

MARS builds on BAE Systems’ robust autonomy portfolio and 20-year history pioneering autonomy technology. Work on the ACK program, valued at \$3.1 million, is being performed at the company’s facilities in Burlington, Massachusetts, and Arlington, Virginia.

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## **Coast Guard Cutter Diligence Returns to Wilmington After a 60-day Patrol**



Diligence performed counter-drug, search-and-rescue and alien migrant interdiction operations in support of Coast Guard District Seven and Joint Interagency Task Force South on its 60-day patrol. U.S. Coast Guard.

WILMINGTON, N.C. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Diligence returned to Wilmington, North Carolina, Nov. 28 following a 60-day patrol in the Caribbean, the Coast Guard

5th District said in a release of the same date.

The Diligence performed counter-drug, search-and-rescue and alien migrant interdiction operations in support of Coast Guard District Seven and Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) South.

While working with Coast Guard Sector San Juan, Puerto Rico, Diligence seized more than 300 kilograms of cocaine, worth more than \$9 million, and was responsible for the disruption of more than 800 kilograms of cocaine worth more than \$25 million. The operation also led to the apprehension of two drug smugglers, who were turned over to U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration authorities in St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands for prosecution. Cutter Diligence also helped facilitate the transfer of 5,000 kilograms of cocaine and 11 drug smugglers interdicted by other Coast Guard cutters to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration for prosecution.

Diligence also interdicted three illegal and unsafe migrant smuggling vessels in the Mona Pass between the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, and repatriated 76 of the migrants to the Dominican Republic Navy and turned over four migrants suspected to be in violation of U.S. immigration laws to U.S. Customs authorities in Puerto Rico.

In early November, Diligence found a Haitian vessel disabled and adrift off the north coast of Haiti. Diligence's Rescue and Assistance team was deployed and determined the vessel to be inoperable. Diligence took the vessel in tow and delivered the vessel and 13 passengers to a safe harbor on the north coast of Haiti.

Later that month, Diligence assisted the Royal Bahamian Police and Defense Forces in rescuing 86 Haitian migrants stranded on a desolate beach on Great Inagua island with no food or water after their vessel had run aground. Diligence brought all 86 persons aboard the cutter, and safely delivered them to

Bahamian Customs authorities in Matthew Town, Great Inagua.

“Diligence had a remarkably busy and productive patrol,” said Cmdr. Luke M. Slivinski, Diligence’s commanding officer. “Our success in carrying out numerous challenging operations in an unforgiving maritime environment across a range of Coast Guard missions was a testament to the professionalism, hard work, and determination of the crew.”

During the patrol, Diligence embarked an aviation detachment from Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen, Puerto Rico, which assisted in the detection and deterrence of illegal maritime activity and increasing the visibility of the U.S. Coast Guard in the Caribbean. Diligence constantly trained and worked with the aviation detachment to ensure seamless integration and operational proficiency.

Fifty-four-year-old Coast Guard Cutter Diligence is a 210-foot medium-endurance cutter homeported in Wilmington, with a crew of approximately 80. Diligence’s primary missions consist of counter drug, migrant interdiction, enforcing federal fishery laws, and search and rescue in support of Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

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## **Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk Returns From Drug Interdiction Patrol**



Crew members of the Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk conduct night helicopter tie-down operations with an MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew in the Caribbean Sea on Nov. 5 during a 75-day

patrol. U.S. Coast Guard/Lt. j.g. Kira Dabrowski

KEY WEST, Fla. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk returned to their homeport of Key West following a 75-day patrol throughout the Caribbean Sea in support of U.S. Southern Command Joint Interagency Task Force South and the Coast Guard 7th District, according to a release.

During the patrol, the Mohawk crew interdicted three suspected drug vessels, detained 15 suspected drug smugglers and seized more than 5,500 pounds of cocaine. The cutter crew conducted a joint operation with the Royal Netherlands Navy for one of the interdictions to help strengthen international partnerships and interoperability in the Caribbean area of responsibility.

The Mohawk crew safely interdicted and repatriated more than 150 migrants back to their countries of origin, extending the Department of Homeland Security's Border Security mission into the maritime domain.

Between operational tasking, the cutter crew completed damage control, seamanship and navigation drills, as well as aviation training with an embarked Coast Guard Air Station Miami MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew. The Mohawk's crew worked with multiple interagency and international maritime patrol aircraft and surface assets to counter transnational criminal organizations hindering the illicit flow of drugs, people and other dangerous cargo into the United States.

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**Mitcham Industries' MA-X  
Technology Set for Navy**

# Evaluation

THE WOODLANDS, Texas – Mitcham Industries Inc.’s Klein Marine Systems unit recently received a contract from a leading autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV) manufacturer to install its MA-X technology on a next-generation system for evaluation by the U.S. Navy, the company said in a release.

MA-X represents a cost-effective gap-filler solution that has long been sought by the industry. Traditional side scan sonar imaging creates a nadir gap in the center of the image.

By removing this gap, MA-X eliminates the need for overlapping survey lines time to achieve 100% coverage. For the operators of AUVs, this translates into extended mission duration, or shorter time to cover the same area.

One of the key discriminators of MA-X, particularly for the defense sector, is the ability to produce high-quality imagery of the nadir area that is comparable to the traditional side scan. This allows for the data acquired from MA-X to be fed directly into existing automatic target recognition software allowing for automated detection and recognition of targets of interest.

“We are very excited to be a part of this important U.S. Navy program,” said Guy Malden, co-CEO of Mitcham. “We expect the continued acceptance of this technology to rapidly expand our product offerings for the underwater vehicle market. MA-X is another example of the innovation that Mitcham is committed to bring to the industry.”

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# Middle East Mission Complete for Australian P-8A Poseidon

CANBERRA – The deployment of a Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) P-8A Poseidon aircraft to the Middle East has concluded with the aircraft returning to Australia, the Australian Department of Defence said in a release.

“Over the last month, the P-8A Poseidon aircraft has provided valuable maritime surveillance and reconnaissance to support the coalition partners in the [International Maritime Security Construct],” Defence Minister Linda Reynolds said.

“It is now time for the Poseidon to return home, having played a key role in supporting freedom of navigation and the free flow of shipping, which is crucial to regional security and stability,” she said.

The deployment was the first time the RAAF P-8A had operated in the Middle East.

On return to Australia, the P-8A Poseidon and its crew will contribute to maritime intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance duties there.

A small number of Australian Defence Force personnel will continue to provide liaison, planning and coordination support to the IMSC headquarters.

A Royal Australian Navy Anzac-class frigate will deploy to the Middle East in January 2020 for about six months, in support of Australia’s contribution to the IMSC and the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF).

The CMF is the U.S.-led maritime coalition against terrorism, piracy and drug smuggling in the Middle East.

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# Only U.S. Heavy Icebreaker Departs for Annual Antarctic Operation



Family of a crew member aboard Polar Star wave from the pier in Seattle on Nov. 26. The Polar Star crew departed its homeport for a deployment to Antarctica that will last several months. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael Clark  
SEATTLE – The crew aboard the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star departed Nov. 26 for their annual deployment to Antarctica, where the cutter and crew will support Operation Deep Freeze 2020, a joint military service mission to resupply U.S. interests in Antarctica, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a release.

“We set out today on an important mission, saying goodbye to the friends and families who have supported us and our ship for the past seven-months since we returned from Operation Deep Freeze 2019,” said Capt. Gregory Stanclik, commanding officer of the Polar Star.

“We are looking forward to this year’s mission to McMurdo Station with a ship that is running the best it has since reactivation. This mission is critical to the United States and our continued strategic presence on the Antarctic Continent and I have the best crew possible to ensure we safely accomplish our goal.”

Homeported in Seattle, the 43-year-old Coast Guard cutter is the United States’ last remaining operational heavy icebreaker. This is the cutter’s seventh deployment in as many years to directly support the resupply of McMurdo Station –

the only U.S. main logistics hub in Antarctica.

Each year, the crew aboard the 399-foot, 13,000-ton Polar Star create a navigable path through seasonal and multiyear ice, sometimes as much as 21 feet thick, to allow a resupply vessel to reach McMurdo Station. The supply delivery allows Antarctic stations to stay operational year-round, including during the dark and tumultuous winter.

Commissioned in 1976, the Polar Star is showing its age. Reserved for Operation Deep Freeze each year, the Polar Star spends the winter breaking ice near Antarctica, and when the mission is complete, the cutter returns to dry dock in order to complete critical maintenance and repairs in preparation for the next Operation Deep Freeze mission.

The Coast Guard has been the sole provider of the nation's polar icebreaking capability since 1965 and is seeking to increase its icebreaking fleet with six new polar security cutters in order to ensure continued national presence and access to the polar regions.

In the fiscal year 2019 budget, Congress appropriated \$655 million to begin construction of a new polar security cutter this year, with another \$20 million appropriated for long-lead-time materials to build a second.

The Coast Guard and U.S. Navy, working through an integrated program office, awarded VT Halter Marine Inc. a fixed price incentive contract in April for the detail design and construction of the lead polar security cutter, including options for the construction of two additional PSCs.