Navy Accepts Delivery of USS Tripoli

The USS Tripoli transits the Gulf of Mexico during builder's trials last July. Derek Fountain/Huntington Ingalls Industries
PASCAGOULA, Miss. – The U.S. Navy accepted delivery on Feb. 28 of the future USS Tripoli, the newest America-class amphibious assault ship, from Huntington Ingalls Industries' Ingalls Shipbuilding Division, the Navy announced.

Amphibious assault ships project power and maintain presence by serving as the cornerstone of the amphibious ready group or expeditionary strike group. These ships transport elements of a U.S. Marine expeditionary unit or Marine expeditionary brigade with a combination of aircraft and landing craft. Optimized for aviation capability, Tripoli will enhance Marine aviation with an enlarged hangar deck, greater maintenance capability, and JP-5 fuel capacity.

"On behalf of the entire team, I am grateful to take delivery of this versatile warfighting asset," said Tom Rivers, amphibious warfare program manager for Program Executive Office (PEO)-Ships. "The Navy and industry team has worked persistently to deliver this platform, ready to integrate the Marine Corps air combat element, including the Joint Strike Fighter, to our combatant commanders."

USS Tripoli incorporates the fuel-efficient gas turbine propulsion plant, zonal electrical distribution, and electric auxiliary systems first installed on USS Makin Island (LHD 8). LHA 7 will be 844 feet in length, will have a displacement of about 44,971 long tons and can operate at speeds of more than 20 knots.

"Shipbuilding is a team sport, and LHA 7 is no exception,"

said Capt. Nathan Schneider, supervisor of shipbuilding, conversion and repair (SUPSHIP) Gulf Coast at Naval Sea Systems Command.

“LHA 7 represents the culmination of significant work effort by shipbuilders here at Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, suppliers around the nation, and government stakeholders both here in Pascagoula as well as Naval Sea Systems Command and the Program Executive Office-Ships in Washington, D.C., along with the warfare centers around the country.”

With Tripoli delivered, the ship will focus on moving crew aboard and preparing for commissioning and sail-away later this year.

HII’s Pascagoula shipyard also is producing Bougainville (LHA 8), the guided missile destroyers Delbert D. Black (DDG 119), Frank E. Peterson (DDG 121), Lenah H. Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123) and Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125) and amphibious transport dock ships, Fort Lauderdale (LPD 28) and Richard M. McCool Jr. (LPD 29).

Navy Crew Begins Training in Completed Spaces Aboard JFK

Aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy program director Mike Butler (left) and Capt. Todd Marzano (right), the ship’s commanding officer, cut a ribbon inside a classroom on the ship to mark the completion and turnover of the first of 2,700 compartments to the ship’s crew. Matt Hildreth/Huntington Ingalls Industries

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries has reached

an
important milestone in the construction of the aircraft carrier John F.
Kennedy as the first of 2,700 compartments were turned over to the ship’s crew,
the company announced.

The completed spaces allow Sailors to begin training on the carrier
while final outfitting and testing progresses at the company’s Newport News
Shipbuilding division.

Earlier this month, Sailors assigned to the pre-commissioning unit began coming onboard the ship and working in some of the compartments,
which include a training facility, offices and habitability spaces.

Turning over crew training areas earlier in Kennedy’s construction was a lesson learned from the construction of the USS Gerald
R. Ford. As a result, the Kennedy’s construction team was able to
complete and turn over 63 compartments to the ship’s crew over four months
earlier than on Ford.

“The first Sailors coming onboard is a significant step in the life of the ship,” said Mike Butler, program director for Kennedy. “Our
completing and turning over these spaces to the crew will allow them to start
on-hands, shipboard training, and learn the systems and components they will
operate when the ship joins the fleet.”

Over the next two and a half years, other spaces, such as

berthing and mess areas, will be completed, and distributive, mechanical and
combat systems, such as catapults and radar arrays, will be tested.

Navy UISS Program Achieves Milestone C

HUNT VALLEY, Md. – Textron Systems Corp. announced that
the U.S. Navy's Unmanned Influence Sweep System (UISS) program, which is based
on Textron's Common Unmanned Surface Vehicle (CUSV), has achieved a Milestone C
decision. The decision allows the program to enter low-rate initial production
(LRIP), with the Navy planning to award three UISS systems to Textron under
their existing contract.

"The Textron and U.S. Navy teams have worked diligently
to reach this Milestone C decision," said Wayne Prender, senior vice president
of applied technologies and advanced programs at Textron. "We recognize the
time on the water and dedication of the testing teams which enabled us to enter
this phase of the program."

UISS is the Navy's first unmanned surface vehicle (USV)
program of record, designed for the demanding maritime environment. It provides
unmanned mine counter-measure and capabilities using

interchangeable payloads
and advanced sensors.

UISS completed Navy developmental test and operational assessment in November. The UISS is the first in the Navy's USV portfolio to
reach this milestone. UISS is part of a comprehensive Mine Counter Measure
Unmanned Surface Vehicle (MCM USV) mission and is designed to be deployed from
the littoral combat ship and vessels of opportunity.

Textron is the prime contractor and system integrator for the UISS and MCM USV programs. The company designed CUSV as a multi-mission
unmanned surface vehicle, capability of carrying multiple payloads including
side-scan sonar, mine neutralization, non-lethal weapons, and intelligence, surveillance
and reconnaissance (ISR) sensors.

Production will be completed at Textron's Hunt Valley, Maryland, and New Orleans locations.

Coast Guard Cutter Valiant Returns Home After 9-Week Caribbean Patrol

A family member holds up a welcome home sign as she awaits the arrival of the Coast Guard Cutter Valiant crew on Feb. 27 to their homeport at Naval Station Mayport, Florida. U.S. Coast

Guard/Petty Officer 2nd Class Ryan Dickinson
JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Valiant returned home on Feb. 27 to Naval Station Mayport after completing a nine-week patrol in the Caribbean Sea, according to the Coast Guard 7th District.

The Valiant crew patrolled more than 11,000 nautical miles in the Caribbean supporting Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S) conducting humanitarian and law-enforcement operations, ultimately saving 23 lives.

While underway, the Valiant crew interdicted a 30-foot disabled and adrift migrant vessel attempting an illegal voyage to Puerto Rico, about 37 nautical miles south of Isla Saona, Dominican Republic.

A Coast Guard HC-144 Ocean Sentry Maritime Patrol Aircraft crew spotted the vessel and directed Valiant to its location. This interdiction rescued 19 migrants whose vessel would not have had enough fuel to reach its U.S. destination. The crew later transferred the Dominican migrants to a Dominican navy vessel for a safe return home.

Previously, the Cutter Richard Dixon crew transferred 50 migrants to Valiant from two separate interdictions. The Valiant crew transported six of the migrants to Ramey Sector Border Patrol Agents in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, for federal prosecution on charges of attempting to illegally re-enter the United States. The crew then repatriated the remaining 44 migrants to the Dominican Republic.

In addition to interdicting migrant vessels, the Valiant crew

conducted joint law-enforcement operations with the Belize coast guard and hosted a Belize coast guard officer aboard.

This opportunity gave both nations the chance to communicate and learn from each other while sharing different law-enforcement techniques. As a result of the exercise, Belize was able to establish a presence further offshore in a suspected drug smuggling area. Throughout their patrol, the crew conducted law-enforcement operations with an embarked MH-65 Dolphin helicopter crew from the U.S. Coast Guard's Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON) from Jacksonville, Florida.

Near the end of the patrol, the Valiant crew located two disabled vessels in a known drug smuggling area within a 24-hour period. The first was experiencing engine troubles and the other was out of fuel, and both crews claimed they had been adrift and without food or water for days. The Valiant crew rescued all four from their stricken vessels, embarked them onboard the cutter as search-and-rescue survivors, and transferred them to the Colombian navy for transport back to land.

"I couldn't be prouder of our crew this patrol as we plied the waters of the Caribbean for illicit maritime drug smugglers over the past two months in support of JIATF-S counterdrug operations, interdicting two logistics supply vessels," said Cmdr. Matthew Waldron, Valiant's commanding officer.

"Additionally, the crew demonstrated exceptional flexibility by quickly shifting gears from counter-drug to migrant operations and interdicting a disabled yola with 19 Dominican migrants bound for Puerto Rico in the middle of the night. Had it not been for the combined efforts of a forward-deployed Coast Guard Air Station Miami HC-144 crew, the Dominican Republic navy and Valiant, the individuals on that yola would have likely been lost at sea. … That's 19 lives saved."

Marine Corps Orders More Amphibious Combat Vehicles From BAE Systems

Marines and Sailors watch on Jan. 28 as Marines maneuver an ACV onto the well deck of the amphibious transport dock ship USS Somerset as part of the vehicle's developmental testing off the shore of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, California. U.S. Marine Corps/Lance Cpl. Drake Nickels

STAFFORD, Va. – BAE Systems has received a $113.5 million contract from the U.S. Marine Corps for an additional 26 Amphibious Combat Vehicles (ACV) under the low-rate initial production (LRIP) phase of the program, the company said in a release. This award brings the total vehicle orders for the ACV to 116 and moves the program closer to full-rate production.

The ACV is a mobile, survivable and adaptable platform for conducting rapid ship-to-shore operations and brings enhanced combat power to the battlefield. BAE has been in low-rate production since 2018 on the personnel carrier variant in the ACV family, which is envisioned to consist of additional variants such as command and control, 30 mm medium caliber turret and recovery.

"The ACV provides the most survivable and mobile amphibious vehicle to the U.S. Marines Corps for supporting the warfighters' ability to successfully execute their unique expeditionary missions," said John Swift, director of amphibious programs at BAE Systems.

The BAE team and the Marines have made significant strides to

reach full-rate production, including the completion of logistics demonstration as a critical enabler for the program to move into initial operational test and evaluation (IOT&E) with trained Marine maintainers. This and other major milestones such as operator training and additional testing will take place before full-rate production.

The Marine Corps selected BAE along with teammate Iveco Defence Vehicles for the ACV program to replace its legacy fleet of Assault Amphibious Vehicles, which have been in service for decades and also were built by BAE Systems.

ACV production and support is taking place at BAE locations in Stafford, Virginia; San Jose, California; Sterling Heights, Michigan; Aiken, South Carolina; and York, Pennsylvania.

Aerojet Rocketdyne to Develop Advanced Propulsion for Navy's Advanced Lightweight Torpedo

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. – Aerojet Rocketdyne has been awarded a $63.2 million "other transaction authority" by the U.S. Navy to develop an advanced propulsion system for the Mk54 Mod 2 Advanced Lightweight Torpedo (ALWT), the company said in a release.

"We have developed mission-critical propulsion and power systems for the U.S. Navy for more than 60 years," said Eileen Drake, Aerojet Rocketdyne's president and CEO. "Aerojet Rocketdyne is a world-class developer of high-performance

propulsion systems, and we look forward to applying our expertise to support the development of the Advanced Lightweight Torpedo."

For the authority, Aerojet Rocketdyne will develop a prototype Stored Chemical Energy Propulsion System (SCEPS) power plant and afterbody/tailcone that ultimately would be integrated into the ALWT. The SCEPS improves the capabilities of the Mk54 torpedo.

The Mk54 Lightweight Torpedo, an anti-submarine warfare weapon, is used by U.S. surface ships, fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters.

Coast Guard Interdicts Illegal Foreign Fishers in Pacific

A Coast Guard HC-130 Hercules aircrew from Air Station Barbers Point returns to Hawaii following a maritime domain awareness patrol in the Pacific Ocean on Feb. 20. The Coast Guard conducts MDA patrols routinely throughout the region. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 2nd Class Shane Christian

HONOLULU – The U.S. Coast Guard interdicted several foreign vessels whose crews were fishing inside the U.S. exclusive economic zone (EEZ) on two separate occasions in the first two months of 2020, according to the Coast Guard's 14th District.

"While we've seen incursions into the EEZs of partners and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing on the high

seas, these are the first interdictions we've had in the U.S EEZ since 2012," said Lt. Jason Holstead of 14th District Response Enforcement. "The combination of partnerships, electronic methods and putting assets on the scene to catch violators in the act is essential to deterring IUU fishing in Oceania."

In both cases, the Coast Guard was conducting maritime domain awareness flights in the zones off Guam and Hawaii with Coast Guard HC-130 Hercules aircraft crews based at Air Station Barbers Point.

Case packages were forwarded to the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement for further actions. The investigations are pending.

The living marine resources (LMR) mission is one of two Coast Guard missions devoted to protecting fisheries inside and outside U.S. waters. While LMR focuses on domestic fisheries, other law enforcement focuses on illegal incursions by foreign fishing vessels into the U.S. EEZ. An EEZ is defined as the region extending 200 miles beyond a nation's shores. The Coast Guard leverages partnerships and 13 bilateral agreements between the U.S. and other nations in the Pacific to enforce fisheries regulations and combat IUU fishing.

Fishing within the United States generates more than $200 billion and employs 1.7 million people annually. IUU fishing represents an estimated monetary loss of $10 billion to $23 billion for legitimate fishers. Globally, commercially landed tuna and tuna products have a value of $10 billion to $12 billion per year to the fishermen who target these species and more than $42 billion per year at the final point of sale. These conservative totals do not account for noncommercial tuna activity including sport fishing and tourism.

According to the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Pacific Ocean – also known as the "tuna belt" – represents 65% to

70% percent of globally harvested tuna.

According to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), the international body that manages tuna fishing in the same waters, state fishers caught nearly 2.85 million metric tons of the primary commercial tuna species in 2014. This catch's worth was valued at more than $5 billion to fishers in the region and more than $22.68 billion at the final point of sale. Tuna caught in the WCPFC convention area accounts for more than half of the landings, dock value and end value of all commercial tuna fisheries.

While the Coast Guard is not the only agency responsible for protecting fisheries, it plays a significant role. The Coast Guard has enforcement authority over 202 separate commercial fisheries.

"While regulation compliance among U.S. fishers is near 97%, some of the lowest policed areas, such as the waters in the western and central Pacific, are responsible for the highest percentage of significant violations. This is where the efforts of the Coast Guard 14th District and partners are so important," Holstead said. "In 2019, we conducted numerous routine and analysis-based patrols throughout the region in support of IUU fishing detection and deterrence."

USS Delbert D. Black Completes Builder's Trials

Ingalls Shipbuilding launches the USS Delbert D. Black in September 2017. Andrew Young/Huntington Ingalls Industries

PASCAGOULA, Miss. – The future guided-missile destroyer USS

Delbert D. Black successfully completed builder's trials on Feb. 22 after spending three days underway in the Gulf of Mexico, according to the Navy's Program Executive Office (PEO)-Ships. The trials were conducted by the shipbuilder, Huntington Ingalls Industries, Ingalls Shipbuilding Division.

The ship was previously underway for Alpha trials in December and will be underway again in March for acceptance trials, which will be conducted by the U.S. Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey.

"The Navy and our dedicated shipbuilders have continued to make strides towards delivering this exceptional capability to the fleet and performed well during builder's trials," said Capt. Seth Miller, DDG 51 class program manager, PEO-Ships. "This ship continues the proud Aegis shipbuilding legacy and will provide the Navy with a 21st-century fighting edge."

Delbert D. Black is configured as a Flight IIA destroyer, which enables power projection, forward presence and escort operations at sea in support of low intensity conflict/coastal and littoral offshore sarfare as well as open ocean conflict. DDG 119 will be equipped with the Navy's Aegis Combat System.

HII's Pascagoula shipyard also is producing the future destroyers Frank E. Petersen Jr (DDG 121), Lenah H. Sutcliffe Higbee (DDG 123) and Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125), the first ship to be built in the Flight III configuration.

Ima Black, wife of the first MCPON Delbert "Del" Black and sponsor of the USS Delbert D. Black, signs her name on a memorial plaque during a 2016 keel-laying ceremony. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class (EXW) Timothy Wilson

12th Expeditionary Fast Transport Launched

A graphic illustration of the future expeditionary fast transport USNS Newport. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist Raymond Diaz

MOBILE, Ala. – The U.S. Navy's 12th expeditionary fast transport (EPF), the future USNS Newport (EPF 12), was launched at Austal USA's shipyard on Feb. 20, according to the Navy's Program Executive Office-Ships said.

The launching of an EPF is a multistep process. The ship modules are constructed in Austal's manufacturing facility, then transported to the assembly bay. When ready for launch, the ship is translated by heavy-lift machinery to a docking barge in the Mobile River and further translated onto a floating dry dock. From there, the dry dock is submerged and the ship is launched. The translation and launch takes place over the course of two days.

"We are excited to get Newport in the water, so we can shift focus to final outfitting and trials," said Tim Roberts, strategic and theater sealift program manager, PEO-Ships. "EPFs increase our reach, improving our ability to sustain our Navy and Marine Corps forces around the globe."

EPFs are versatile, noncombatant transport ships that are being used for high-speed transportation of troops, military vehicles and equipment. They support a variety of missions including overseas contingency operations, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, support of special operations forces, theater security cooperation activities and emerging

joint sea-basing concepts.

EPFs can transport 600 short tons 1,200 nautical miles at an average speed of 35 knots. Each vessel includes a flight deck to support day and night aircraft launch and recovery operations. The ships are capable of interfacing with roll-on/roll-off discharge facilities, as well as on/off-loading vehicles such as a fully combat-loaded Abrams tank.

The Newport is on track to be delivered later this year. Austal USA has also started construction of the future USNS Apalachicola (EPF 13) and is under contract to build the future USNS Cody (EPF 14).

KBR Secures $276 Million NAVAIR Task Order to Deploy IT Solutions

HOUSTON – KBR has been awarded a $276 million task order to provide state-of-the-art information technology services and equipment to Naval Air Systems Command's (NAVAIR) Logistics and Maintenance Information Systems and Technology Division, the company said in a release.

Under this contract, KBR will assist NAVAIR in supporting global information grid and net-centric operations and delivering logistics IT capability to the Navy and other Department of Defense organizations.

KBR's tasks will include authentication, data transport, fleet user interfaces, large-scale storage, analytics tools and hardware and software infrastructure. As part of this work,

KBR will acquire and deliver essential in-service systems engineering, modernization, testing and sustainment capabilities.

“KBR’s talented workforce is proud to partner with NAVAIR in implementing and deploying cutting-edge IT solutions across the globe,” said Byron Bright, KBR’s president of government solutions U.S.

This work, which has an increased scope, is a continuation of services that KBR is currently performing for NAVAIR. The company will perform this work at Naval Air Station Patuxent River in Maryland and other DoD locations. The work is expected to be performed over a period of five years.