General Dynamics Electric Boat Awarded $642M for Virginia-Class Submarine Work

Release From General Dynamics Electric Boat

GROTON, Conn. (September 26, 2025) – General Dynamics Electric Boat, a business unit of General Dynamics (NYSE: GD), announced today it has been awarded a $642 million contract modification to a previously awarded contract supporting submarine production. This modification is for a cost-plus-fixed-fee modification to a previously awarded contract (N00024-20-C-2120) for Lead Yard Support and Development Studies and Design efforts related to Virginia-class submarines, as detailed in the U.S. Department of War contract award.

“This contract modification supports our efforts to deliver the submarines our Navy needs as quickly as possible,” said Mark Rayha, president of General Dynamics Electric Boat. “This

funding allows us to continue our design and development efforts in order to sustain and extend our nation's operational overmatch against any potential adversaries. With the support of the administration, the Navy and Congress, we are prepared to deliver the advantage to protect our sailors, our families and our freedom."

CTF-66 Showcases RAS Capabilities With Partners in Unmanned Systems Demonstration

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Cameron C. Edy

TROIA, Portugal – Commander, Task Force (CTF) 66 conducted a live robotic and autonomous systems (RAS) demonstration with Allies and partners during the experimentation exercise Robotic Experimentation and Prototyping with Maritime Unmanned Systems (REPMUS) / Dynamic Messenger 2025, in Troia, Portugal, Sept. 25, 2025.

Nations that participated in the live RAS demonstration include Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, and United States.

"We continue to advance our robotic and autonomous systems through ongoing testing and combined training with partners and their unmanned systems," said Adm. Stuart B. Munsch, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa (NAVEUR/NAVAF). "We deeply appreciate our Ally, Portugal, for their leadership

in maritime experimentation and unmanned systems. Our collective capability is only getting stronger.”

Taking place near the Portuguese Navy’s Operational Experimentation Centre (CEOM), the live RAS demonstration deployed two groups of unmanned surface vessels (USVs) simulating a swarming attack, with CTF-66 deploying three Global Autonomous Reconnaissance Crafts (GARC) in response to disrupt the attacking USVs and protect critical infrastructure from harm.

This routine demonstration tests and validates U.S. and partner robotic and autonomous systems’ ability to protect critical infrastructure, and enhances interoperability within the NATO’s allied and partner nations in employing unmanned systems to execute national tasking.

“CTF-66 is focused on adaptation, which enables a warfighting edge and warfighting advantage,” said Rear Adm. Michael S. Mattis, commander, CTF-66. “Sharpening that warfighting edge is pushing the capabilities and limits of our RAS with Allies and partners, and that’s exactly what we’re doing during REPMUS/Dynamic Messenger 2025.”

REPMUS 2025 is a Portuguese-led experimentation exercise that focuses on maritime unmanned systems experimentation, capability development and interoperability, highlighting NATO’s ability to trial and integrate uncrewed systems into the operational environment.

REPMUS 2025 is combined with exercise Dynamic Messenger (DYMS), an operational experimentation exercise led by NATO’s Allied Maritime Command to promote adaptation of capabilities, support agile modernization of Allied Maritime forces, and gain operational advantage across the Alliance.

REPMUS / Dynamic Messenger 2025 integrates unmanned systems into NATO’s standing Naval Forces, resulting in both national maritime capability development and an exponential growth in

RAS capability across the Alliance. The exercise also supports NATO’s broader Digital Transformation goals by improving information sharing, data management, and the integration of advanced technologies into command structures.

Established in 2024 to deploy and employ RAS with Navy, joint, and NATO partners, CTF-66 utilizes RAS in conjunction with conventional manned platforms and spaced-based capabilities to expand Maritime Domain Awareness, develop defense measures against adversarial use of RAS, innovate asymmetric fighting, and in the future, deliver lethal effects, if necessary.

Commander, U.S. 6th Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allied and interagency partners to advance U.S. national interests, security and stability in Europe and Africa, and freedom of navigation in and around the Mediterranean.

For over 80 years, NAVEUR/NAVAF has forged strategic relationships with Allies and partners, leveraging a foundation of shared values to preserve security and stability. Headquartered in Naples, Italy, NAVEUR/NAVAF operates U.S. naval forces in the U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command areas of responsibility.

Lockheed Martin Begins Critical Testing on Aegis System Equipped Vessel

Antennas

Release From Lockheed Martin

In partnership with the Japan Ministry of Defense (JMOD) and Missile Defense Agency, Lockheed Martin completed initial light off of the Aegis System Equipped Vessel (ASEV)’s shipset 1 radar system on schedule, including all four AN/SPY-7(V)1 antennas in Moorestown, New Jersey’s Production and Test Center (PTC).

This initial light off marks the beginning of a comprehensive testing phase, crucial to supporting the ship construction and commissioning schedule. The testing will validate the full SPY-7(V)1 radar system’s performance, integrated with the Aegis, to ensure that it meets the highest standards of quality and capability.

Dive Deeper Into Testing

“By testing the complete SPY-7 radar system in a land-based facility, we’re able to verify the SPY-7 radar’s Ballistic Missile Defense and Integrated Air and Missile Defense capabilities meet warfighter needs ahead of shipboard installation, significantly reducing program deployment risk,” said Chandra Marshall, vice president and general manager at Lockheed Martin.

Marshall added, “The complete SPY-7 radar system will be installed on Japan’s ASEV ships, serving as a critical component of Japan’s homeland defense.”

What’s Next

Following the completion of shipset 1 testing, Lockheed Martin, JMOD and the MDA will continue to drive progress on the program with milestones.

- Shipset 1 will perform further tracking exercises before being physically delivered to Japan next year.

- Shipset 2 will be sold off to the JMOD and begin testing and verification.

In a significant milestone, Lockheed Martin officially handed over all four AN/SPY-7(V) radar antennas for the first ASEV shipset to the JMOD in June. Although the antennas remained at our facility for testing, that on-time delivery demonstrated the maturity and production capacity of the SPY-7 radar, highlighting our commitment to delivering on schedule.

Across the globe, coming off the success of the first live track in December 2024, Navantia successfully integrated SCOMBA consoles end-to-end with Lockheed Martin's SPY-7(V)2 radar at the Aegis SCOMBA Integration Center in Moorestown, New Jersey. The SCOMBA combat system is now fully integrated with Aegis and SPY-7 and performing simulated engagements of live tracks.

On the domestic side, Lockheed Martin and the MDA successfully executed Flight Test Other-26a (FTX-26a). During FTX-26a, the Lockheed Martin-built Long Range Discrimination Radar successfully detected, tracked, and reported ballistic missile target data in a complex environment, demonstrating its ability to provide critical data to homeland defense systems.

In December 2024, Lockheed Martin's land-based version of the SPY-7 radar, known as TPY-6, successfully intercepted a mid-range ballistic missile as part of the Aegis Guam System during a flight experiment Flight Experiment Mission-02.

The Big Picture

SPY-7 is growing and capable. As a highly adaptable, and scalable radar, it's being produced for multiple international

partners, including Canada's River-Class Destroyers, Spain's F-110 Multi-Mission Frigates, and the US Missile Defense Agency's transportable, land-based Aegis Guam System (TPY-6) and land-based Long-Range Discrimination Radar.

The customer collaboration and successful milestones underscore the radar's versatility and ready-now capability, solidifying its position as a cornerstone of modern missile defense. As the SPY-7 radar continues to demonstrate its capabilities, it's clear that it will be providing 21st Century Security around the world to ensure our customers stay ahead of emerging threats.

Coast Guard Awards Contract for New Heavy Weather Surf Boats

Release From Headquarters, U.S. Coast Guard

SEATTLE – The Coast Guard awarded an indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contract on Sept. 29 to Rozema Boat Works, Inc. of Mount Vernon, Washington to acquire up to six second-generation special-purpose craft – heavy weather (SPC-HWX II) boats.

The total potential value of the contract is $70.9 million and the first SPC-HWX II is anticipated to be completed in fiscal year 2027. The SPC-HWX II will replace the 52-foot first generation of special-purpose craft – heavy weather boats, which entered service in the 1950s and 1960s.

These vessels were retired in 2021 due to increasing

maintenance challenges. Like their predecessors, the SPC-HWX IIs will serve in the Pacific Northwest.

These next-generation vessels are designed to perform a wide range of Coast Guard missions in extreme weather and challenging surf conditions that exceed the capabilities of other boats, such as search and rescue; disabled vessel towing; and law enforcement and ports, waterways and coastal security missions.

Measuring 64 feet in length, the SPC-HWX II will feature self-righting capability and be capable of operating in 35-foot seas, 25-foot surf, and winds up to 60 knots. Powered by twin 1,200-horsepower diesel engines, it will reach speeds of 20 knots, tow up to 300 tons, and operate up to 150 miles offshore. With accommodation for a relief crew, the SPC-HWX II will have an endurance up to 48 hours, a critical feature for long-range heavy-weather operations.

Lockheed Martin Sikorsky to Build Up to 99 CH-53K Heavy Lift Helicopters for U.S. Marine Corps

Sikorsky delivered a 20th CH-53K helicopter to the U.S. Marine Corps in September 2025. The heavy lift helicopter will be based at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Yuma, Arizona. Photo courtesy Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company.
From Lockheed Martin Sikorsky

Multi-year award will help stabilize U.S. industrial base, ensure consistent aircraft deliveries

STRATFORD, Conn., Sept. 26, 2025 /PRNewswire/ — Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company (NYSE: LMT), received a $10.855 billion contract from the U.S. Navy to build up to a maximum of 99 CH-53K® King Stallion® helicopters for the U.S. Marine Corps over five years, the largest-quantity order to date for the aircraft. The award will ensure consistent deliveries of the United States' most powerful heavy-lift helicopter between 2029 and 2034 and reinforce the U.S. industrial base by sustaining thousands of production roles at Sikorsky and across its nationwide supply chain.

"This award reflects trust and confidence in Sikorsky to

deliver these technologically advanced, heavy-lift helicopters that will revolutionize the Marine Corps' operational capabilities by adding unrivaled power, performance, survivability and dependability to the fleet," said Rich Benton, Sikorsky vice president and general manager. "The multi-year contract enables Sikorsky to partner with the Department of the Navy to drive long-term affordability, optimize production efficiencies and stabilize our supply chain and workforce, ensuring the Marines maintain the strategic advantage with the CH-53K in a rapidly evolving battlespace."

The contract combines five separate aircraft orders – defined as Lots 9-13 – into a five-year multi-year procurement, ensuring price predictability and consistent flow of materials from 267 CH-53K suppliers across 37 states, and 17 suppliers from eight countries. The contract allows the U.S. Government to buy up to 99 CH-53K aircraft for the Marine Corps or to fulfill orders from international military customers.

Sikorsky has delivered 20 CH-53K aircraft to the Marine Corps. An additional 63 aircraft (Lots 4-8) are in various stages of production and assembly.

"This contract represents a huge 'win' for the entire CH-53K team," said Col. Kate Fleeger, Program Manager, H-53 Heavy Lift Helicopter Program Office (PMA-261). "The contract allows Sikorsky to bundle purchase orders from suppliers to achieve better pricing and pass the savings on to the government, giving us the ability to provide dependable delivery to the fleet and a consistent and predictable timeline for the transition from the CH-53E to the CH-53K."

To date, the U.S. Marine Corps has transitioned one CH-53K fleet squadron, and has CH-53K aircraft flying at one developmental test squadron, one operational test squadron and one training squadron to support operational requirements.

Sikorsky designed the CH-53K helicopter to meet the Marine Corps' lift requirements for today's battlefield – to transport troops, supplies and heavy equipment forces across a contested environment – and survive.

The Department of the Navy declared Full Rate Production for the CH-53K program in December 2022. The U.S. Marine Corps' Program of Record remains at 200 CH-53K aircraft.

U.S. Navy to Christen Future USS Louis H. Wilson Jr.

From the U.S. Department of War, Sept. 26, 2025

The U.S. Navy will christen the future USS Louis H. Wilson Jr. (DDG 126), during a ceremony at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works (BIW) on Saturday, September 27, at 10:30 a.m. (EST).

The principal address will be delivered by Commandant of the Marine Corps, Gen. Eric Smith; Additional speakers include Governor of Maine, Janet Mills; U.S. Senator of Maine Angus King; Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition, Jason Potter; Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Integration of Capabilities and

Resources, Vice Adm. Brad Skillman; Medal of Honor Recipient, Col. Harvey C. Barnum, Jr.; and President of General Dynamics Bath Iron Works, Chuck Krugh.

In a time-honored tradition, ship sponsors Janet Wilson Taylor, daughter of the namesake and Susan J. Rabern, former Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Management and Comptroller, will christen the ship by breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow.

The ship is named after Gen. Louis Hugh Wilson Jr., a World War II and Vietnam War veteran who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his heroism during the Battle of Guam. Following his service in Vietnam, he served as the 26th Commandant of the Marine Corps from 1975 to 1979.

The christening of DDG 126 symbolizes the Navy's 250-year commitment to innovation and maritime dominance. From seabed to space, the Navy delivers power for peace – always ready to fight and win. This milestone marks the Navy's enduring legacy and commitment to shaping the future of maritime power.

Arleigh Burke-class Flight III destroyers feature the AN/SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar and incorporate upgrades to the electrical power and cooling capacity plus additional associated changes to provide enhanced warfighting capability to the fleet. Future destroyers Harvey C. Barnum Jr. (DDG 124), Patrick Gallagher (DDG 127), William Charette (DDG 130), Quentin Walsh (DDG 132), John E. Kilmer (DDG 134), Richard G. Lugar (DDG 136), and J. William Middendorf (DDG 138) are also in production at BIW.

HII Successfully Completes Builder's Sea Trials for Destroyer Ted Stevens

From HII

PASCAGOULA, Miss., (Sept. 27, 2025) – HII's (NYSE: HII) Ingalls Shipbuilding division successfully completed builder's sea trials for guided missile destroyer Ted Stevens (DDG 128), marking a major milestone in the construction of the second Flight III destroyer built at Ingalls. The trials were conducted over several days in the Gulf of America, and tested the ship's engineering, navigation, and combat systems to ensure readiness for the future acceptance trials and eventual delivery to the U.S. Navy.

"The Ingalls and Navy team worked diligently to get DDG 128 ready for sea, and I want to recognize the team's determination in reaching this major milestone," Ingalls Shipbuilding DDG Program Manager Ben Barnett said. "Their efforts reflect the urgency we all share in delivering these

ships with the highest quality and technological advancements needed to support the U.S. Navy fleet and to protect our national security."

During builder's trials, the Ingalls test and trials team completed a full range of hull, mechanical and electrical tests, as well as Flight III AN/SPY-6 (V)1 radar array testing. These tests are designed to validate critical system performance and ensure the ship meets or exceeds Navy requirements.

Flight III Arleigh Burke-class destroyers represent the next generation of surface combatants for the U.S. Navy and incorporate a number of design modifications that collectively provide significantly enhanced capability. Upgrades include the AN/SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar (AMDR) and the Aegis Baseline 10 Combat System required to keep pace with the threats well into the 21st century.

Ingalls has delivered 35 Arleigh Burke-class destroyers to the U.S. Navy including the first Flight III, USS Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125), in June of 2023 and currently has five Flight IIIs under construction including Ted Stevens (DDG 128), Jeremiah Denton (DDG 129), George M. Neal (DDG 131), Sam Nunn (DDG 133) and Thad Cochran (DDG 135).

Earlier this month, HII announced that the company would be partnering with several shipyards and fabricators in multiple states to grow its throughput and meet the requirements of increased demand for ships by the U.S. Navy. This effort included Ingalls Shipbuilding selecting outfitted structural units for Arleigh Burke-class destroyers to be constructed, inspected and accepted at partner locations and later delivered to Ingalls for final integration.

As the largest manufacturing employer in Mississippi, Ingalls Shipbuilding has designed, built and maintained amphibious ships, destroyers for the U.S. Navy for over 86 years.

Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star Returns to Seattle After 308 Days

After 308 days away from its Seattle home port, the 49-year-old U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star (WAGB 10) and crew returned home, Sept. 23, 2025. Upon completing Operation Deep Freeze 2025, Polar Star returned directly to Mare Island Dry Dock in Vallejo, Calif., to complete the final year of a five-year Service Life Extension Program prior to returning to Seattle. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Annika Hirschler.

From U.S. Coast Guard Northwest District, Sept. 25, 2025

SEATTLE – After 308 days away from its Seattle home port, the 49-year-old U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star (WAGB 10) and

crew returned home Tuesday.

Upon completing **Operation Deep Freeze (ODF) 2025**, Polar Star returned directly to Mare Island Dry Dock in Vallejo, Calif., to complete the final year of a five-year Service Life Extension Program (SLEP).

Polar Star's SLEP completion comes at a time when the Polar Regions are becoming more consequential, and the demand for U.S. Coast Guard presence, leadership, and vigilance continues to grow.

The maintenance work completed over the past five years recapitalized integral systems, including propulsion, communication, and machinery control systems. These efforts are designed to extend the cutter's service life as the Coast Guard **begins construction of its first Polar Security Cutter**. Until PSCs becomes operational, Polar Star will remain the only U.S. icebreaker capable of completing the annual breakout of McMurdo Sound, Antarctica in support of the U.S. Antarctic program (USAP).

"Much has been asked of this ship over the past five decades," said Capt. Jeff Rasnake, Polar Star's commanding officer. "The completion of this extensive five-year maintenance and recapitalization project is a major milestone in enabling Polar Star's operations into the future."

Polar Star's SLEP has been completed in five phases to maintain its operational capability to complete annual polar deployments. Phase Five, the last phase in its SLEP, began March 30, 2024, focusing on these projects:

Gyro repeater recapitalization to ensure that these critical pieces of navigation equipment are updated to modern standards, enabling safe navigation of the cutter.

Ancillary pumps and motors recapitalization through the replacement of critical main propulsion and auxiliary systems

with modern supportable units.

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems refurbishments; multiple zones were refurbished with ventilation trunks, fans, and heaters to improve air circulation and maintain a comfortable living environment for the ship’s crew during extended deployments.

The completion of Polar Star’s five-year SLEP underscores the importance of the annual ODF mission, the U.S. military support mission for the USAP, which facilitates the transport of personnel, equipment and supplies required to maintain the U.S.’s strategic presence in Antarctica. Having participated in a majority of these missions since they began in the 1950s, the U.S. Coast Guard will continue to support the U.S.’s continued presence on the Antarctic continent as part of the Joint Task Force – Support Forces Antarctica.

Work completed in Phase Five took 175 days and represented an additional $12.7 million investment in the U.S. Polar capability. While at Mare Island, Polar Star received support from both Coast Guard Base Seattle and Base Charleston’s Naval Engineering Departments to perform a center section overhaul on one of Polar Star’s nine main diesel engines. In parallel with this work, members from the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore completed vital work on the ship’s sanitary systems.

Additional major work completed includes removing the centerline shaft for servicing and inspection, exchanging all three propellers, and renewing both forward and aft main deck surfaces.

“This is a tremendous ship, and it is in better shape today than it was ten years ago,” said Rasnake. “That’s a testament to the unrelenting efforts of the crew, the enduring support of our mission partners, and the renewed enthusiasm and investment in our nation’s polar icebreaking capabilities.”

Commissioned in 1976, Polar Star is 399 feet, weighing 13,500 tons with a 34-foot draft. Despite reaching nearly 50 years of age, Polar Star remains the world's most powerful non-nuclear icebreaker with the ability to produce up to 75,000 shaft horsepower.

Coast Guard offloads more than $156 million worth of cocaine in San Diego

Crew members of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Midgett (WMSL 757) stand at parade rest on the flight deck of the cutter in San Diego, Sept. 25, 2025. The Midgett's crew prepared to offload drugs interdicted in the Eastern Pacific during counter-narcotic patrols, eliminating 21,126 pounds of cocaine worth

an estimated $156 million in value. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Roberto A. Nieves Felix)
SAN DIEGO – The crew of U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Midgett (WMSL 757) offloads approximately 21,126 pounds of cocaine, with an estimated value of more than $156.4 million, Thursday in San Diego.

The offload resulted from four separate interdictions of suspected drug-smuggling vessels in international waters off the coasts of Mexico, Central America, and South America. Midgett's crew conducted the interdictions during counter-narcotics patrols during the months of August and September 2025.

"This offload represents the hard work and dedication of our crew and the strength of our partnerships in keeping dangerous drugs from reaching our communities," said Capt. Brian Whisler, commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter Midgett. "Maritime interdiction remains one of the most effective ways to disrupt narcotics trafficking, and together with our partners, we are holding transnational criminal organizations accountable."

This operation is part of Operation Pacific Viper, a Coast Guard led surge effort to counter the flow of illicit narcotics in the Eastern Pacific Ocean. The operation leverages the Coast Guard's Title 14 maritime law enforcement authorities and capabilities, supported by interagency and international partners.

This offload reflects the combined efforts of multiple agencies working together to combat illegal narcotics from entering the United States. Partners include the U.S. Navy, Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, working closely with allied and regional maritime forces.

Currently, 80% of all narcotics seized in the transit zone are

interdicted at sea, underscoring the impact of Coast Guard operations. The fight against cartels and transnational criminal organizations requires unity of effort at every stage, from detection and monitoring to interdiction and prosecution by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and international partners.

Midgett is one of two Legend-class national security cutters homeported in Honolulu. These cutters are built to operate in the most challenging open ocean environments and play a vital role in protecting the maritime approaches of the Pacific, where much of the world's illicit narcotics trafficking occurs.

U.S. Navy Decommissions Avenger-class Mine Countermeasures Ships in Bahrain

MANAMA, Bahrain (Sept. 3, 2025) U.S. Sailors man the rails of the Avenger-class mine countermeasures ship USS Dextrous (MCM 13) during a decommissioning ceremony for the ship in Manama, Bahrain. The recently decommissioned Avenger-class mine countermeasures ships USS Sentry (MCM 3), USS Dextrous (MCM 13) and USS Gladiator (MCM 11), and their crews, were recognized during the final decommissioning ceremony for USS Devastator (MCM 6) on board Naval Support Activity Bahrain, following nearly 40 years of active service. (Official U.S. Navy photo)

From Commander U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs, Sept. 25, 2025

After nearly 40 years of active service, three recently decommissioned U.S. Navy Avenger-class mine countermeasures ships and their crews were recognized in conjunction with a final decommissioning ceremony for USS Devastator (MCM 6) on board Naval Support Activity (NSA) Bahrain, Sept. 25.

“As you carry the plank you own of Douglas fir away with you today, remember that with it you carry the legacy of the thousands of Sailors who come before you,” said Lt. Cmdr. Alex

Turner, commanding officer, USS Devastator. “Today, Devastators’ watch has ended; her service is complete, but her legacy will endure… and in every Iron Man who is honored to call this wooden ship home, there are truly no greater heroes.”

U.S. Navy Vice Adm. George Wikoff, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) and U.S. 5th Fleet (C5F) presided over the final decommissioning ceremony that recognized the proud history of not only Devastator, but also USS Sentry (MCM 3), USS Dextrous (MCM 13) and USS Gladiator (MCM 11).

“For more than three decades, USS Devastator, USS Dextrous, USS Gladiator and USS Sentry have been critical to maritime missions around the globe – defending the freedom of navigation, promoting stability and deterring and defeating efforts by adversaries to harm the innocent,” said Wikoff. “To all, past and present, who have served on [these ships], thank you for standing the watch, being true trailblazers in the fleet and maintaining a constant presence in our area of operations… what a proud legacy you leave in your wake.”

Avenger-class ships were designed as mine sweepers/hunter-killers capable of finding, classifying and destroying moored and bottom mines. The ships used sonar and video systems, cable cutters and a mine detonating device that could be released and detonated by remote control. They were also capable of conventional sweeping measures. The ships were a fiberglass-sheathed, wooden hull construction.

U.S. 5th Fleet’s Task Force 55/Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 50, responsible for surface forces across the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, including patrol craft, independently deploying ships and now, littoral combat ships, is charged with the mine countermeasures mission.

Four littoral combat ships (LCS) are slated to deploy to

Bahrain to replace the decommissioned MCM ships that have operated forward in 5th Fleet area of operations for decades.

USS Canberra (LCS 30) was the first Independence-variant LCS to deploy with the mine countermeasures mission package to the region and arrived at NSA Bahrain, May 22. Canberra has an integrated suite of unmanned maritime systems and sensors, and is designed to locate, identify and destroy mines while increasing the ship’s standoff distance from a threat.

NAVCENT/C5F is the maritime component commander of U.S. Central Command, whose area of responsibility encompasses about 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf of Oman and parts of the Indian Ocean. This expanse, comprised of 21 countries, includes three critical chokepoints at the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal, and the Bab al-Mandeb Strait at the southern tip of Yemen.