

Future USS Tripoli Completes Builder's Trials



The future USS Tripoli during her builder's trials. Huntington Ingalls Industries PASCAGOULA, Miss. – The Navy's newest America-class amphibious assault ship, the future USS Tripoli (LHA 7), successfully completed builder's trials on July 19. The ship returned to the Huntington Ingalls Industries shipbuilding division's shipyard following four days underway in the Gulf of Mexico.

Builder's trials are the Navy's first opportunity to assess the operational readiness of a ship. During the trials, the multipurpose amphibious assault ship underwent dock trials followed by more than 200 at-sea test events.

"The Navy and industry team did a commendable job this week," said Tom Rivers, amphibious warfare program manager for Naval Sea System Command's Program Executive Office-Ships.

USS Tripoli's christening ceremony. "America-class ships bring tremendous capability to our Sailors and Marines, and Tripoli will be the first large deck amphib to reach the fleet fully ready to integrate the Marine Corps air combat element to include Joint Strike Fighters."

Tripoli is the second ship of the America (LHA 6) class, built to facilitate forward presence and power projection. LHA 7 is the last Flight 0 ship planned for construction and features an enlarged hangar deck, realignment and expansion of the aviation maintenance facilities, an increase in available stowage for parts and support equipment and increased aviation fuel capacity.

LHA 8 will be the first Flight I ship, reincorporating a well deck to enhance expeditionary warfighting capabilities while maintaining the principal aviation characteristics of the Flight 0 ships.

LHA 7 incorporates gas turbine propulsion plant, zonal electrical distribution and fuel-efficient electric auxiliary propulsion systems first installed on USS Makin Island (LHD 8). LHA 7 will be 844 feet in length, will have a displacement of about 45,000 long tons and will be capable of operating at speeds of more than 20 knots.

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

Navy Recon Aircraft Approached by Venezuelan Fighter in Unsafe Manner



A Venezuelan fighter as it shadowed a U.S. EP-3 Aries II in international airspace over the Caribbean Sea on July 19. U.S. Southern Command

MIAMI, Fla. –

A U.S. Navy EP-3E Aries II aircraft, flying a mission in approved international airspace on July 19, was approached in an unprofessional manner by a SU-30 Flanker

Venezuelan fighter aircraft, according to the U.S. Southern Command.

“After reviewing video documentation, we have determined the Russian-made fighter aggressively shadowed the EP-3 at an unsafe distance in international airspace for a prolonged period of time, endangering the safety of the crew and jeopardizing the EP-3 mission,” according to a July 21 release from Southern Command.

*A Venezuelan Su-30 fighter plane "aggressively shadowed" a U.S. reconnaissance aircraft operating over the Caribbean Sea, according to U.S. Southern Command, in a move the U.S. is calling "unprofessional." <https://t.co/pq9JV02Znj>
[pic.twitter.com/Vd2mjRyVtg](https://t.co/pq9JV02Znj)*

– ABC News (@ABC) [July 22, 2019](#)

“The U.S. routinely conducts regionally supported, multinationally recognized and approved detection and monitoring missions in the region to ensure the safety and security of our citizens and those of our partners. The EP-3 aircraft was adhering to international standards and rules.”

“The Maduro regime continues to undermine internationally recognized laws and demonstrate its contempt for international agreements authorizing the U.S. and other nations to safely conduct flights in international airspace,” according to the release.

Ricardo Technology Used in Navy Prototyping, Experimentation Exercise

LONDON – Ricardo Defense’s Mobile Fuel and Energy Management (MFEM) system has successfully completed its participation in Phase 1 of the U.S. Navy’s Fight the Naval Force Forward Advanced Naval Technology Exercise, the company

announced July 22.

The Ricardo MFEM provides dynamic visibility and management of liquid fuel to help ensure that forces in the field have the resources needed to attain their objectives. The Ricardo MFEM provides the tools and information needed to understand fuel usage, distribution and availability in the theater of operations.

Manual procedures for fuel management – measuring, collecting, aggregating, calculating usage and projecting needs – are replaced with fully automated processes, significantly improving the commander's ability to plan and monitor fuel use and status with the speed, accuracy and efficiency needed for field operations. MFEM offers commanders with insight into fuel status that can be incorporated into a battlefield "common operating picture."

Ricardo Defense demonstrated the capabilities of the MFEM system during Phase 1 of the Fight the Naval Force Forward Experimentation Campaign, a multimonth exploration phase that allowed for the detailed assessment of technologies integrated into actual mission scenarios. Technologies were examined in live, virtual or constructive simulation demonstrations as a part of the Advanced Naval Technology Exercise over a two-week period that ended on July 18.

The collaboration with a variety of system stakeholders during the exercise positions Ricardo Defense for future development and fielding of these capabilities. The Ricardo MFEM is being assessed for a follow-on Phase 2 project that would include a six- to 18-month prototyping period, limited use in the field and experimentation, as part of Fleet/Force Experiments and/or Rapid Fielding.

“We are very excited to have had the Ricardo MFEM included in this year’s Advanced Naval Technology Exercise,” Ricardo Defense President Chet Gryczan said. “MFEM helps improve military personnel decision-making through an accurate, up-to-date shared view of fuel resources. The award of a Phase 2 effort, if granted, will validate the value of MFEM and pave the way for maturation of the capabilities it provides.”

Navy to Commission USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul in Duluth



Duluth Mayor Emily Larson (left) and Deputy Undersecretary of the Navy Jodi Greene announce Duluth as the commissioning city of the future USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul during a joint press conference at City Hall during Duluth Navy Week. U.S.

Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Evan Thompson
DULUTH, Minn. – Deputy Undersecretary of the Navy Jodi Greene
announced Duluth as the commissioning location for the future
USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul in a joint press conference July 18
with Duluth Mayor Emily Larson.

Greene is LCS
21's sponsor and is in Duluth for Duluth Navy Week, an
outreach effort in which
Sailors and naval personnel from different commands across the
country are in
the city meeting with people from all walks of life to talk
about the Navy and
why it is important.

Greene
expressed excitement during at the announcement, underlining
the importance of
the Navy maintaining ties to cities in America's heartland.

"We are
eager to announce that Duluth has been chosen as the city in
which we will hold
the commissioning for the USS Minneapolis/Saint Paul," said
Greene. "The city
of Duluth is an important port on Lake Superior and your Navy
is looking
forward to continuing a strong partnership with Mayor Larson
and the people of
Duluth as well as the people in Minneapolis and St. Paul."

Larson
mirrored Greene's enthusiasm, highlighting Duluth's historic
connection to the
Navy.

"Duluth is
a city full of people linked to the Navy," Larson said. "We

have both active
servicemembers and veterans who call Duluth their home, and we
proudly display
the anchor from the decommissioned USS Duluth where everyone
can see it. I am
grateful to be able to continue honoring our Navy.”

The Navy recently
held a christening and launching ceremony for the future USS
Minneapolis-Saint
Paul in Marinette, Wisconsin, where it is being built.

The ship
is being built by an industry team led by Lockheed Martin at
Fincantieri
Marinette Marine Corp. in Marinette. The future USS
Minneapolis-Saint Paul will
be about 388 feet in length and have a beam of nearly 58 feet.

LCS is a modular,
reconfigurable ship designed to meet validated fleet
requirements for surface
warfare, anti-submarine warfare and mine countermeasures
missions in the
littoral region. An interchangeable mission package is
embarked on each LCS and
provides the primary mission systems in one of these warfare
areas. 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 forces access to critical
theaters.

USS Stethem Arrives at New San Diego Homeport



Sailors assigned to the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Stethem (DDG 63), compete in a tug-o-war competition during the 80th annual Shimoda Black Ship Festival in May in Shimoda, Japan. The ship arrived back in San Diego July 18 after 14 years of service. U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Jeremy Graham
SAN DIEGO –

The guided-missile destroyer USS Stethem (DDG 63) arrives at its new homeport, Naval Base San Diego, July 18, following 14 years of forward-deployed service in the Indo-Pacific region operating from Japan, the commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, said in a July 17 release.

As part of the U.S. 7th Fleet's Forward Deployed Naval Forces in Japan, Stethem worked alongside allies and partners to provide security and stability throughout a free and open Indo-Pacific. Stethem arrived in Yokosuka, Japan, in June of 2005. While serving in 7th Fleet, Stethem conducted a wide range of operations, exercises and port visits, including disaster relief as well as search-and-rescue missions. In 2011, the ship supported Operation Tomodachi to provide relief to Japanese citizens affected by the Fukushima earthquake and

tsunami, and this year, joined Japan-led search operations for a missing Japan Air Self-Defense Force F-35.

While in San Diego, Stethem will undergo a planned maintenance and modernization period. Stethem will be fitted with the latest combat system suite, which includes state-of-the-art air defense, ballistic-missile defense, surface warfare and undersea warfare capabilities.

Delaware Sub Nearing Operational Status as Crew Eats First Meal



Sailors enjoy the first meal prepared on the Virginia-class submarine Delaware (SSN 791). HUNTINGTON INGALLS INDUSTRIES / Ashley Cowan

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries (HII) took another step toward delivery of the submarine Delaware (SSN 791) to the U.S. Navy when the first meal recently was served aboard the nuclear-powered fast attack submarine.

On the menu: salad, sausage and spaghetti with a choice of meat sauce or Alfredo.

“The first meal is a significant event in construction for both shipbuilders and the Navy crew,” said Bob Bolden, director of Virginia-class submarine construction at HII’s Newport News Shipbuilding division. “This is a result of shipbuilders and Sailors working side by side and is one of the last steps in the journey to bringing the ship to its operational state to support sea trials and delivery.”

The Virginia-class submarine is pierside at Newport News and is in the final stages of construction and testing.

“I appreciate Newport News Shipbuilding’s superb work through our construction process and am immensely proud of my crew’s efforts to open our galley, support our crew and take this next step toward Delaware becoming a self-sufficient, sea-going warship,” said Cmdr. Brian P. Hogan, commanding officer of the pre-commissioning unit.

Delaware is the 18th Virginia-class submarine built as part of the teaming agreement with General Dynamics Electric Boat. More than 10,000 shipbuilders from Newport News and Electric Boat have participated in Delaware’s construction since the work began in September 2013; more than 5,000 suppliers across 48 states have provided parts and materials critical to the submarine’s construction.

Delaware was christened in October 2018 and launched into the James River for the first time two months later. Following successful sea trials later this year, Delaware will be the ninth Virginia-

class submarine
delivered by Newport News.

Navy Announces Commissioning Date for Future USS Indianapolis



The future USS Indianapolis during acceptance trials in Lake Michigan on June 19. Lockheed Martin.

SAN DIEGO

– The U.S. Navy has approved the commissioning date for the future USS Indianapolis (LCS 17), the commander of Naval Surface Forces announced July 17.

The littoral combat ship will be commissioned Oct. 26 in Burns Harbor, Indiana. The commissioning ceremony signifies the acceptance for service and the entrance of a ship into the active fleet of the U.S. Navy.

Burns

Harbor is on the shores of Lake Michigan in northwest Indiana and is 160 miles north of Indianapolis.

Jill

Donnelly, the wife of former Indiana Sen. Joe Donnelly, is the ship's sponsor.

As the sponsor, Donnelly leads the time-honored Navy tradition

of giving the order during the ceremony to “man our ship and bring her to life!” At that moment, the commissioning pennant is hoisted and Indianapolis becomes a ship of the fleet.

Cmdr.

Colin Kane, a Columbus, Ohio, native, is the ship’s commanding officer.

“The future USS Indianapolis honors more than a city; it pays tribute to the legacy of those who served during the final days of World War II on board USS Indianapolis,” Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer said at the ship’s christening ceremony. “This ship will continue the proud legacy of service embodied in the name Indianapolis and is a testament to the true partnership between the Navy and industry.”

LCS 17 is the fourth ship to carry the name of Indiana’s capital city. The first Indianapolis was a steamer built for the U.S. Shipping Board (USSB) and commissioned directly into the Navy in 1918. After two runs to Europe, the ship was returned to the USSB following World War I.

The saga of the second Indianapolis (CA 35), a cruiser, and its crew is well documented by the Naval History and Heritage Command. The loss of the ship was a tragic

moment following the completion of a secret mission that directly contributed to the end of World War II.

After a successful high-speed run to deliver atomic bomb components to Tinian, the decorated Portland-class cruiser continued to Guam. Indianapolis was en route from Guam to Leyte when she was torpedoed and sunk by the Japanese submarine I-58 on July 30, 1945. The ship's wreckage was located on Aug. 19, 2017.

Survivors of the cruiser met with the crew of the future Indianapolis earlier this year to screen a documentary about the discovery of the lost ship.

The most recent Indianapolis was a Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine, which was commissioned Jan. 5, 1980, and served through the end of the Cold War before being decommissioned in 1998.

The future Indianapolis will be homeported in Naval Station Mayport, Florida, upon her commissioning.

Kratos Awarded \$15 Million

Order to Continue Training Support to Royal Saudi Naval Forces

SAN DIEGO –

Kratos Defense & Security Solutions Inc. was awarded a follow-on task order by the Naval Air Warfare Center Training Systems Division, the company announced July 17.

Valued at \$15.1 million, it was issued against a U.S. Foreign Military Sales (FMS) sole-source, three-year, single-award, indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity contract to provide training-related products and services in a variety of disciplines to the Royal Saudi Naval Forces (RSNF).

When combined with the value of previous awards, the contract funding to date is \$95 million and has a potential value to Kratos of \$99.3 million, depending on the number of task orders issued and anticipated contract modifications under the FMS agreement.

“This award expands our ability to continue to support the RSNF’s commitment to the transformational goals of the Ministry of Defense as it modernizes its growing naval fleet,” said Jose Diaz, senior vice president of Kratos’ training

division.

Esper Nominated as Defense Secretary, Spencer Steps Into Acting Role



Acting Defense Secretary Richard V. Spencer walks into his office at the Pentagon on July 15 following the announcement of the nomination of Army Secretary Mark T. Esper to be defense secretary. Esper had served as acting defense secretary since June 24. U.S. Army/Sgt. Amber I. Smith
WASHINGTON

– Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer has become acting defense secretary, as the Senate has received the packet nominating Mark T. Esper to be the confirmed secretary of defense.

Eric

Chewning, the chief of staff to the defense secretary, said the transition from Esper to Spencer went smoothly. “There is only one secretary of defense, and that person is fully capable of defending the country and protecting the homeland,” Chewning said.

LIVE: [@SecArmy](#) Dr. Mark T. Esper testifies at a [#SASC](#) hearing for his nomination to be secretary of defense. <https://t.co/uS3lLN7CJJ>

– Department of Defense ☐☐ (@DeptofDefense) [July 16, 2019](#)

Esper was named acting defense secretary when Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick M. Shanahan stepped down from the position last month. President Trump nominated Esper for the position – a move that requires Senate confirmation. By law, Esper cannot continue to serve as acting secretary while he is under consideration for the permanent job. He reverts to his position as secretary of the Army.

The principals involved in this program met to discuss how the transition would happen. This included Esper, Spencer, David L. Norquist, the undersecretary of defense who continues to perform the duties of the deputy defense secretary, Marine Corps Gen. Joe Dunford, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Chewning.

When Spencer became acting secretary, he assumed the full authority and responsibility of the secretary of defense.

To ensure continuity, the team supporting the Office of the Secretary of Defense remains in place.

“We’ve been working closely with Senate leadership and the Senate

Armed Services

Committee, and we thank them for their efforts and commitments to swiftly consider top DoD leadership,” Chewning said.

DoD does

not assume Esper’s confirmation, and Chewning was quick to point out that it is the Senate’s prerogative to take as long as it believes is necessary to examine and confirm the nominee. “Secretary Spencer is prepared to remain in the role until there is a Senate-confirmed secretary of defense,” he said.

If Esper is confirmed by

the Senate, then Norquist will be formally nominated to be the deputy defense secretary. In deference to the Senate, he will step out of his role of performing the duties of the deputy secretary of defense while that nomination is pending. If this happens, Spencer will then perform the duties of the deputy secretary.

First Boeing P-8A Poseidon for United Kingdom Takes Flight

SEATTLE – The

first Boeing P-8A Poseidon for the United Kingdom Royal Air

Force (RAF) took off from Renton, Washington, at 10 a.m. PT on July 12, marking the first flight of this inaugural U.K. P-8A.

During the 90-minute flight, key testing took place before the aircraft touched down and moved to the next phase of preparation before customer delivery, installation of military systems.

U.K. Ministry of Defence (MOD) and Royal Air Force personnel, along with Boeing P-8 program leaders, were on hand to witness the takeoff and landing of the recently painted aircraft, number ZP801.

“This is a great milestone in the U.K. P-8A Poseidon’s journey to the U.K., as we are one step closer to its arrival in Scotland,” said Air Commodore Richard Barrow, the senior responsible owner for the U.K.’s P-8A program. “The platform will enhance the UK’s maritime patrol capability with advanced, state-of-the-art technology.”

The RAF P-8A Poseidon fleet will support maritime surveillance, anti-submarine warfare and anti-ship warfare for the United Kingdom and will increase protection of the United Kingdom’s nuclear deterrent and Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers.

The first of nine P-8As ordered by the United Kingdom now moves to the P-8 Installation and Checkout facility in Tukwila, Wash., where mission systems are installed and further testing happens before final delivery to the customer later this year. When the aircraft is delivered it will first fly to U.S. Naval Air Station Jacksonville for additional preparation and training by U.K. personnel before flying home to the United Kingdom. The RAF will take delivery of ZP801 later this year and it will move to the United Kingdom in early 2020.

The United Kingdom is one of six international customers for the P-8A Poseidon. As a direct commercial sale, India has received eight of the P-8I variant to date with four more in production. The U.S. Navy is on contract to receive 111 with the potential for additional quantities based on the fleet's needs. As a cooperative partner with the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Program Office, Australia began receiving their P-8A aircraft in 2016 with eight delivered and four more in production; Norway will begin receiving their five P-8As in 2022; both New Zealand and South Korea have signed agreements with the U.S. Navy to purchase four and six aircraft, respectively.