

# USS Fitzgerald Leaves Dry Dock, Continues Repairs Pierside in Pascagoula



PASCAGOULA, Mississippi – The guided-missile destroyer USS Fitzgerald (DDG-62) has taken another step toward returning to the fleet as a fully ready, combat-capable ship, Naval Sea Systems Command said in a release.

The destroyer achieved a milestone in its complex repair and restoration as it successfully launched and moored pierside at Huntington Ingalls Industries' shipyard on April 16. The launch reflects more than a year's worth of effort in restoring and modernizing one of the U.S. Navy's most capable warships.

Since the ship's arrival in Pascagoula in January 2018, work has focused on restoring the integrity of the hull and topside structures that were damaged during a 2017 collision with the containership MV ACX Crystal that killed seven Sailors and injured several others, including Fitzgerald's commanding officer at the time, Cmdr. Bryce Benson.

"The complexity of this overhaul has been challenging, but our planning team at Bath Iron Works and waterfront team at HII is executing repairs and installing upgrades so that Fitzgerald returns to our Sailors lethal and mission-ready," said Rear Adm. Jim Downey, deputy commander for surface warfare and commander, Navy Regional Maintenance Center. "We're excited to have the ship back in the water, where we can begin outfitting and testing efforts in support of getting the ship and crew back underway."

To restore the impacted spaces to full operations and functionality, various hull, mechanical and electrical, combat

system and command, control, communications, computers and intelligence repairs are being conducted. These repairs range from partial to complete refurbishment of impacted spaces to replacement of equipment such as the radar and electronic warfare suite. The ship is also receiving various modernization upgrades. Due to the extent and complexity of the restoration, both repair and new construction procedures are being used.

“This undocking is a step forward and brings us that much closer to getting Fitzgerald back out to sea – where the ship belongs,” said Cmdr. Garrett Miller, Fitzgerald’s current commanding officer. “I’m proud of this crew’s hard work over the past year and look forward to returning to the fleet with enhanced warfighting capability and lethality.”

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## **Marine Jet Power Awarded Taiwan Coast Guard Contract**

UPPSALA, Sweden – Marine Jet Power (MJP) has been awarded a multiunit, multiyear contract with CSBC Shipyard to provide propulsion for 15,100-ton class vessels for the Taiwan Coast Guard (TCG), the company said in a release.

The 34-meter vessels will be built at CSBC’s facility in Keelung, Taiwan. Featuring dual MJP stainless steel 750 DRB waterjets, the vessels are predicted to exceed 30 knots and will be powered by MTU inboard diesel engines.

“MJP has a long history with the Taiwan Coast Guard and, to date, we have been involved in TCG previous builds already operational; 50-ton, 100-ton and 500-ton class projects. We are excited to build TCG’s next generation of 100-ton class

vessels and the start of our relationship with CSBC,” said Nils Morén, sales manager for MJP.

Selected for its quality and durability in the field, MJP’s DRB line of waterjets are constructed from duplex stainless-steel and feature all inboard hydraulics. The mixed-flow pump design offers high performance and increased operational efficiencies resulting in lower maintenance cost and minimal service intervals.

“MJP’s all stainless-steel construction was a huge consideration for the shipyard and the end user when selecting a propulsion package,” said Michael Kuan from UDC Marine, MJP’s Taiwanese representative.

“CSBC ultimately selected MJP for durability and ease of maintenance in addition to the other long-term benefits waterjets provide to the operator over the life span of the vessels,” Kuan said.

Marine Jet Power will begin to deliver waterjets to the shipyard later this year and the 15 vessels will be constructed over the next four years.

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## **U.S. Coast Guard Patrols Micronesian Waters in Support of Operation to Combat Illegal Fishing**



HONOLULU – Crews of two U.S. Coast Guard cutters and a long-

range HC-130 patrol aircraft recently completed combined operations to help combat illegal fishing across Oceania, the Coast Guard 14th District said in a release.

The crews teamed with shipriders from the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) as part of Operation Rai Balang 2019, a Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) mission.

For three weeks, U.S. Coast Guard cutters Sequoia (WLB-215) and Kiska (WPB-1336) embarked FSM shipriders to patrol the FSM exclusive economic zone and on the high seas, supported by the HC-130.

In addition to the Coast Guard and FSM combined operations, Operation Rai Balang also involved ships and aircraft from the remaining Pacific Quadrilateral Defense Partners – Australia, New Zealand and France – in support of other Pacific Island countries across Oceania.

Illegal, unregulated and underreported fishing threatens resource security and sovereignty. Enforcing international fishing regulations on the high seas and helping Pacific island countries protect their waters from illegal fishing promotes maritime governance and reinforces a rules-based international order that is essential to a free and open Indo-Pacific.

“The U.S. Coast Guard and our Pacific Quadrilateral Defense Partners have two decades of experience working together with Pacific Island countries to help ensure resource security and the viability of tuna stocks in the Pacific,” said Capt. Riley Gatewood, chief of enforcement for U.S. Coast Guard 14th District.

“Working with experts from these nations and regional leaders like the [FSM] is vital to ensuring food security and the rule of law in Oceania. Working together we are helping to sustain and increase a secure, free and open Indo-Pacific,” Gatewood added.

Estimates show that illegal fishing accounts for about 30 percent of all fishing activity worldwide, representing up to 26 million tons of fish illegally harvested each year, valued at between \$10 billion and \$23 billion.

“IUU fishing can act as a nexus for economic, social and political instability or unwanted influence of countries looking to gain a foothold in the region – all having direct economic and security implications for the United States if not effectively controlled,” said Lt. Cmdr. Conor Sullivan, of fisheries enforcement for the Coast Guard 14th District.

The U.S. bilateral shiprider arrangement with FSM is only one of 11 such agreements across Oceania. The Coast Guard regularly conducts bilateral fisheries law enforcement with these Pacific Island Countries, often as part of planned FFA operations across the region.

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## **Coast Guard Interdicts Suspected Smuggler, 11 Cuban Migrants 41 Miles South of Key West**



KEY WEST, Florida – The Coast Guard interdicted 11 migrants and a suspected smuggler April 12 about 41 miles south of Key West attempting to illegally enter the United States, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

Coast Guard 7th District watchstanders received a notification from Cuban border security reporting an illegal vessel

departure with an unknown number of passengers aboard.

The Coast Guard Cutter Isaac Mayo (WPC-1112) crew arrived on scene after a Customs and Border Patrol Air and Marine Operations aircraft crew sighted the 30-foot center console with four adult Cuban males, five Cuban adult females, one Cuban minor aboard and embarked them with no medical concerns.

The 10 Cuban nationals were transferred to the Coast Guard Cutter Charles Sexton (WPC-1108) and will be transferred back to their home. The suspected smuggler and a male migrant were taken into custody.

“The waters of the Caribbean and Florida Straits are dangerous for migrants on illegal voyages, in vessels with little or no safety gear,” said Lt. Otis Leonard, duty enforcement officer at Coast Guard 7th District. “The Coast Guard and its partner agencies continue to maintain a strong presence along our maritime border and will continue to interdict and rescue those who embark on these illegal and ill-advised voyages.”

Coast Guard Cutters Charles Sexton and Isaac Mayo are 154-foot fast-response cutters homeported in Florida.

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## **Coast Guard Interdicts 9 Cuban Migrants on Cay Sal**

CAY SAL, Bahamas – The Coast Guard interdicted nine Cuban migrants April 12 on Cay Sal, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

Coast Guard 7th District watchstanders received a notification from a Coast Guard Air Station Miami HC-144 Ocean Sentry

aircraft crew reporting two people hiding in nearby bushes. The Coast Guard Cutter Charles Sexton (WPC-1108) crew arrived on scene and deployed a boarding team ashore to investigate the situation. The Charles Sexton boarding team was able to locate the nine Cuban nationals and embarked them with no medical concerns.

The nine Cuban nationals were transferred to Bahamian Immigration officials in Freeport, Bahamas, by the Coast Guard Cutter Robert Yered (WPC-1104) crew and will be transferred back to their home.

“It’s the second time this month that we’ve seen a case like this and its why maintain our presence in the Caribbean Sea and Florida Straits,” said Lt. Patrick Leavitt, command duty officer at Coast Guard 7th District. “The Coast Guard will remain consistent with the missions of protecting the safety of life at sea and enforcing our federal laws.”

Coast Guard Cutters Robert Yered and Charles Sexton are 154-foot fast-response cutters homeported in Florida.

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## **Future USS Richard M. McCool Jr. Keel Authenticated**



PASCAGOULA, Miss. – The keel for the future USS Richard M. McCool Jr. (LPD 29) was ceremoniously laid during a ceremony at Huntington Ingalls Industries Ingalls Shipbuilding Division on April 12, the Naval Sea Systems Command said in a release.

Shana McCool and Kate Oja are the ship’s sponsors and granddaughters of the namesake and authenticated the keel by

etching their initials into the keel plate. This tradition symbolically recognizes the joining of modular components and is the ceremonial beginning of the ship.

“We are honored to have Ms. McCool and Ms. Oja with us today to recognize this major ship event,” said Capt. Brian Metcalf, LPD 17 class program manager for Program Executive Office Ships. “The San Antonio class has proven essential to expeditionary warfighters, and we are excited to bring the 13th and final ship of the Flight I configuration to the fleet.”

The ship is named in honor of Navy veteran and Medal of Honor recipient Capt. Richard M. McCool Jr. and is the Navy’s 13th San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship. McCool was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1945 for the heroism he displayed after his ship was attacked by kamikaze aircraft in the Battle of Okinawa. Despite suffering from shrapnel wounds and painful burns, he led efforts to battle a blazing fire on his ship and rescue injured sailors.

Fabrication on LPD 29 began on July 30 and the ship is scheduled to be delivered in 2023. Eleven San Antonio-class ships have been delivered to date, the most recent being USS Portland (LPD 27), which was commissioned in 2018. LPDs 28 and 29 will serve as transition ships to LPD 30, the first ship of the Flight II. LPD 17 Flight II ships will replace the Navy’s aging LSD 41/49 class ships.

The LPD 17 San Antonio class amphibious transport dock ships are designed to transport and deploy combat and support elements of Marine expeditionary units and brigades. The LPD 17 Flight I ships carry about 720 troops and can transport air cushion or amphibious assault vehicles. These ships support amphibious assault, special operations and expeditionary warfare missions through the 21st century.

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# **HII Awarded Advance Procurement Contract Modification for Virginia- Class Block V Submarines**

NEWPORT NEWS, Virginia – Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding division has received a \$727.4 million contract modification from General Dynamics Electric Boat to continue the procurement of long-lead-time materiel for Virginia-class submarines, the company announced in an April 12 release.

The award provides new funding to an existing contract for long-lead-time material to support construction of Block V submarines. The current contract brings the overall contract value to \$1.04 billion.

"We are pleased to have received additional advanced procurement funds, which allows us to continue procuring long-lead-time materials and is important to our submarine industrial base of more than 5,000 companies across 48 states," said Dave Bolcar, Newport News' vice president of submarine construction. "The start of early manufactured material is already underway for Block V submarines, which will include enhanced technology for today's warfighters."

Newport News is teamed with General Dynamics Electric Boat on the Virginia class, a class of nuclear-powered fast attack submarines being built to replace the Los Angeles-class submarines as they are retired.

Virginia-class submarines incorporate dozens of new

technologies and innovations that increase firepower, maneuverability and stealth and significantly enhance their warfighting capabilities. These submarines are capable of supporting multiple mission packages and can operate at submerged speeds of more than 25 knots for months at a time.

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## **Coast Guard Interdicts 33 Haitian Migrants Near Tortuga**



A migrant vessel is shown in the Caribbean after an interdiction, April 2019. The Coast Guard Cutter Spencer (WMEC-905) crew transferred 33 Haitian nationals back to their home of origin, April 12, 2019 after interdicting their 25-foot motor vessel April 10, 2019. (Coast Guard Photo)

MIAMI – The Coast Guard interdicted 33 migrants April 8 about 35 miles northeast of Tortuga, Haiti, attempting to illegally enter the United States, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

At about 7:30 a.m. April 8, the Coast Guard Cutter Spencer (WMEC-905) crew detected an overloaded 25-foot motor vessel and launched an over-the-horizon small boat crew.

While en route, the small boat crew recovered six softball-sized packages of marijuana floating about 100 yards from the vessel. The small boat crew then boarded the vessel and discovered 27 adult Haitian males, six adult Haitian females, three additional packages of marijuana and a package that tested positive for amphetamines.

The Spencer crew safely embarked the 33 migrants, transferred the interdicted drugs aboard the cutter and destroyed the

vessel as a hazard to navigation.

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter and basic medical attention.

The Spencer crew transferred the 33 Haitian nationals back to their home of origin April 12 for possible prosecution.

“The Coast Guard diligently patrols the Florida Straits and Caribbean Sea to ensure the safety of life at sea and the security of the United States,” said Lt. Cmdr. James Hodges, 7th District response officer. “Neither illegal migration nor drug smuggling will be tolerated, and the Coast Guard will continue to enforce federal laws while maintaining a strong presence out on the water.”

The Coast Guard Cutter Spencer is a 270-foot medium endurance cutter homeported in Boston.

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## **Coast Guard Cutter Decisive Conducts Ops With Special Operations Helos**



The crew of the Coast Guard cutter Decisive conducted helicopter operations with three Army H-6 helicopters in the Gulf of Mexico, March 9, 2019. The training is meant to help pilots land on a moving platform and for crewmembers to work with unfamiliar aircraft. (U.S. Coast Guard courtesy photo/Released)

PENSACOLA, Fla. – The crew of the Coast Guard cutter Cypress was to return home to Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida on April 12, following a 58-day patrol, during which it conducted

training with Army special operations helicopters, the Coast Guard 8th District said in a release.

The 75-person crew departed to complete a three-week Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA) in Mayport, Florida, during which time the cutter's material condition, administration and drills are assessed. During TSTA, the crew performed 110 drills with a 98.2% average score across all mission areas.

Following TSTA, Decisive became the first 210-foot cutter to conduct ship-helicopter operations with three Army H-6 helicopters, "Little Birds," from the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment.

The crew patrolled in support of the 7th Coast Guard District, focusing on protecting living marine resources through daily law-enforcement boarding of commercial fishing vessels along the southwest coast of Florida.

Decisive's crew embarked a rescue-and-assistance team to a fishing vessel taking on water, the Miss Winnie, with three people onboard. The team stabilized the vessel.

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## **DARPA's Biological Technology Office Selects Northrop Grumman for Living Sensors Program**

ORLANDO, Florida – Coda Octopus Group Inc. reported in an April 11 announcement that the Defense Advanced Research

Projects Agency (DARPA) Biological Technology Office selected Northrop Grumman Corp. to prototype sensing capabilities using undersea organisms to assist in passively detecting and tracking undersea threats.

As part of the PALS program, Northrop Grumman will develop biological sensing hardware that has increased sensitivity for certain sensor modalities, achieving greater range. Artificial intelligence will be applied to observe patterns in the marine environment to help classify targets. Northrop Grumman is partnered with Coda Octopus, Duke University, University of Maryland, Baltimore County and the University of Memphis.

“The detection, classification and tracking of undersea objects is a critical military capability, and we are excited to work with DARPA to develop this next-generation approach,” said Mike Meaney, vice president of advanced missions for Northrop Grumman.

“We are delighted to further our partnership with Northrop Grumman on this important project for DARPA,” said Annmarie Gayle, CODA’s chairman and CEO.