

# Navy Accepts Delivery of Future USS Billings

MARINETTE, Wis. – The Navy accepted delivery of the future littoral combat ship USS Billings (LCS 15) during a ceremony at the Fincantieri Marinette Marine (FMM), shipyard, Marinette, Wisconsin, Feb. 1, the Naval Sea Systems Command said in a Feb. 4 release.

The future USS Billings is the 17th littoral combat ship (LCS) to be delivered to the Navy and the eighth of the Freedom variant to join the fleet. Delivery marks the official transfer of the ship from the shipbuilder, part of a Lockheed Martin-led team, to the Navy. It is the final milestone prior to commissioning, which is planned for later this year.

“Today marks a significant milestone in the life of the future USS Billings,” said Capt. Mike Taylor, LCS program manager. “I look forward to celebrating the commissioning of this fine ship alongside the crew later this year, where she will play an essential role in the new fleet of warships that will carry out our nation’s future maritime strategy.”

Several additional Freedom-variant ships are under construction at FMM. The future USS Indianapolis (LCS 17) is preparing for trials this summer. The future USS St. Louis (LCS 19) was christened and launched in December. The future ships Minneapolis-Saint Paul (LCS 21), Cooperstown (LCS 23), Marinette (LCS 25), Nantucket (LCS 27) and Beloit (LCS 29) are also in various stages of production, with yet-to-be-named LCS 31 awarded last month.

LCS is a highly maneuverable, lethal and adaptable ship designed to support focused mine countermeasures, antisubmarine warfare and surface warfare missions.

The LCS class consists of two variants, the Freedom variant

and the Independence variant, designed and built by two industry teams. The Lockheed Martin-led team builds the odd-numbered hulls. The Independence variant team is led by Austal USA, Mobile, Alabama, (for LCS 6 and the subsequent even-numbered hulls).

LCS is now the second-largest surface ship class in the U.S. Navy. In 2018, five LCSs were delivered to the fleet, and three are scheduled for delivery in 2019.

---

## **Coast Guard Interdicts 2 Suspected Drug Smugglers, 132 Pounds of Cocaine**

MIAMI – The Coast Guard interdicted two suspected smugglers and approximately 132 pounds of cocaine Thursday 5 miles east of Haulover Inlet, Florida, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a Feb. 1 release.

The Coast Guard Cutter Paul Clark (WPC 1106) crew initially detected a westbound 35-foot pleasure craft approximately 30 miles east of Haulover Inlet.

The Paul Clark boarding team discovered a Bahamian national, hidden under a blanket, along with approximately 132 pounds of cocaine in the vessel's engine room. Initial background checks identified that the Bahamian individual has multiple previous narcotics smuggling convictions and an active United States arrest warrant.

“This successful interdiction is the result of a diligent boarding team who safely stopped two criminals seeking to

bring contraband to the streets of South Florida,” said Capt. Megan Dean, commander of Coast Guard Sector Miami. “Our crews continue to maintain a constant presence and work daily with our DHS partner agencies to stop and stem this flow of illicit drugs and human smuggling that threaten our national security.”

The case was turned over to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations (HSI). HSI is the principle investigative arm of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, responsible for investigating transnational crime and threats. HSI special agents investigate, disrupt and dismantle terrorist, transnational and other criminal organizations that threaten or seek to exploit the customs and immigration laws of the United States.

---

## **HII Awarded \$15.2 Billion Block Contract For Two Ford-Class Aircraft Carriers**

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – For the first time in more than three decades, Huntington Ingalls Industries’ (HII’s) Newport News Shipbuilding division was awarded a multi-ship contract from the U.S. Navy to build two aircraft carriers. The company announced on Jan. 31 that it received a contract modification valued at \$15.2 billion for the detail design and construction of the Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carriers Enterprise (CVN 80) and CVN 81, which has not yet been named.

The Navy’s decision to partner with HII to create the best acquisition approach will save more than \$4 billion across the program.

“Today’s announcement is a triumphant step toward returning to a 12-ship aircraft carrier fleet and building the 355-ship Navy our nation needs,” said Jennifer Boykin, president of Newport Shipbuilding. “Most importantly for us, it provides stability into the year 2032 for our workforce and for our supplier businesses across the United States.”

The construction of Enterprise, which began in 2017, and CVN 81 will be completed at the company’s Newport News Shipbuilding division. The ships are scheduled to be delivered in 2028 and 2032, respectively.

Buying two aircraft carriers will stimulate Newport News’ aircraft carrier supplier base of more than 2,000 suppliers in 46 states, allowing businesses to phase in work more efficiently. These benefits will help accelerate production, enabling the company to build aircraft carriers every three to four years.

To support the contract, the company is making investment in facilities and will continue its digital transformation efforts.

“This contract award is something we should celebrate, and it is also something we should never take for granted,” Boykin said. “We have the responsibility to leverage the investments we are making in our workforce, the facility and in digital shipbuilding to become smarter, better, stronger. It is more important than ever that we execute efficiently and transform our business operations so that we leave a lasting legacy of our own.”

The strategy comes as a result of extensive collaboration with the Navy to reduce cost and drive efficiencies. The approach is not new, however. The Navy achieved substantial cost savings in 1980s when it used the procurement strategy to purchase the Nimitz-class aircraft carriers USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74), USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), USS Abraham

Lincoln (CVN 72) and USS George Washington (CVN 73). The four ships were built by Newport News.

This contract modification comes after previous contract awards for the advance procurement and advance fabrication of Enterprise, starting in May 2016.

“History has its eyes on Newport News Shipbuilding, and today is a great reminder that we are all part of something much greater than ourselves,” Boykin said. “I could not be more proud of our shipbuilders and excited for our future.”

---

## **Vigor Selects Vancouver, Washington, Site for a State-of-the-art, All-Aluminum Fabrication Facility**

PORTLAND, Ore. – Vigor has entered an agreement to take over the former home of Christensen Yachts in Vancouver, Washington, following a search for the best location to build the U.S. Army’s new landing craft, Maneuver Support Vessel (Light) or MSV(L), the company announced in a Feb. 1 release. The MSV(L) contract represents the largest award in Vigor’s history, with a total value of nearly \$1 billion over 10 years and hundreds of family-wage jobs.

Vigor expects to eventually employ approximately 400 workers at the site and will be investing millions in capital upgrades and equipment.

In addition to the Army landing craft production, other

programs to be constructed at the site will include ongoing production of the Combatant Craft Medium (CCM) for the U.S. Navy as well as for U.S. allies, the Response Boat-Medium (RB-M) for the U.S. Coast Guard and export market, Vigor' Fast Interceptor, aluminum fast ferries and commercial workboats. Vigor's aluminum marine work is currently performed primarily in Seattle (Ballard), Washington, and Clackamas, Oregon. Aluminum marine work in these locations will phase out as work is moved to the Vancouver site over the coming year.

Vigor looked in both Oregon and Washington state at building and buying options for this facility. Local, state and federal leaders in both states showed support throughout the process, demonstrating their commitment to the economic benefits and jobs created by strong manufacturing and maritime sectors in the Pacific Northwest.

"Vigor's decision to keep and grow jobs in Washington state is a testament to the great quality of life and workforce we have available here," said Gov. Jay Inslee. "Our team worked intently with Vigor to find a competitive solution to keep these jobs in Washington, and I'm glad to see the continued success of one of our great corporate citizens contributing to our economy by creating living wage jobs in Vancouver."

The Vancouver site was selected for a number of factors. The opportunity to bring its entire aluminum fabrication team together in one location was a primary driver, coupled with the livability of the community, its proximity to existing Vigor facilities and the suitability of the Christensen facility for Vigor's production needs.

"The synergies we will achieve by bringing these amazing builders together in one location strengthens our competitive advantage and builds upon our long-term goals as an outstanding industrial company," said Frank Foti, Vigor president and CEO. "While we've had operations in Vancouver since 1980, this move represents a substantial increase in the

number of Vigor employees who will be living and working here. Our Vigor team looks forward to getting to know the Vancouver community better and being a force for good through our remarkable people and the economic activity associated with our work.”

The approximate timeline is to begin production at the facility in May with existing work followed by the beginning of construction of the MSV(L) prototype in the summer. Once the MSV(L) prototype is completed and testing and refinements have occurred, the schedule calls for four vessels in the Low-Rate Production phase, followed by 32 vessels once Full Rate Production is underway.

---

## **Keel Laid for Future Destroyer USS Carl M. Levin**

BATH, Maine – The keel of the future USS Carl M. Levin (DDG 120) was ceremoniously laid at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works (BIW) shipyard, Feb.1, the company said in a release of the same date.

Speakers at the ceremony included Sens. Susan Collins and Angus King; Navy Secretary Richard Spencer; the ship’s namesake, former Sen. Carl Levin; and Reps. Chellie Pingree and Jared Golden.

Sen. Levin and the ship’s sponsors, his three daughters, Kate Levin Markel, Erica Levin and Laura Levin, authenticated the keel by etching their initials into the keel plate to symbolically recognize the joining of modular components and the ceremonial beginning of the ship.

"We are honored to be celebrating this milestone with Sen. Levin, Mrs. Levin, their daughters and so many distinguished guests," said Capt. Casey Moton, DDG 51 class program manager, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. "This has been a special occasion to lay the keel for our Nation's 70th Arleigh Burke destroyer, and to do so with a namesake that shares the same sense of purpose and commitment to service as our Sailors."

The ship's namesake served in the U.S. Senate for 36 years from 1979-2015. As the longest serving senator in Michigan state history, Levin became a staunch supporter of the armed services through his work and leadership as chairman and ranking member of the Senate Committee on Armed Services.

DDG 120 will be built in the Flight IIA configuration with the Aegis Baseline 9 Combat System, which includes Integrated Air and Missile Defense capability. This system delivers quick reaction time, high firepower and increased electronic countermeasures capability for anti-air warfare. Delivery to the fleet is planned for fiscal 2021.

These multimission surface combatants serve as integral assets in global maritime security, engaging in air, undersea, surface, strike and ballistic missile defense, as well as providing increased capabilities in antisubmarine warfare, command and control, and antisurface warfare.

In addition to Carl M. Levin (DDG 120), BIW has four additional Arleigh Burke class destroyers under construction – Daniel Inouye (DDG 118), John Basilone (DDG 122), Harvey C. Barnum Jr. (DDG 124) and Patrick Gallagher (DDG 127), as well as the Zumwalt class destroyer Lyndon B. Johnson (DDG 1002). BIW is under contract for an additional six Arleigh Burke class destroyers that will all be constructed in the Flight III configuration with enhanced air and missile defense capabilities.

---

# Vigor Will Feature Its State-of-the-Art Fast Patrol Craft at NAVDEX 2019

SEATTLE, Wash. – Vigor, the builder of the US Navy's Combatant Craft Medium and Combatant Craft Heavy as well as the U.S. Coast Guard Response Boat – Medium (RB-M) will feature its new 21-meter patrol boat, the Vigor Fast Inceptor (VFI) at NAVDEX 2019, the company said in a Jan. 30 release. VFI is the next evolution of a proven hull form based on thousands of hours of successful operation. Engineered for superior seakeeping in challenging environments, high-speed interdiction, addressing swarm threats, UAV launch and retrievals, the craft delivers powerful multimission capabilities with sprint speed of 70 knots.

“The design of VFI is a response to the needs of governmental agencies around the world to achieve the critical missions facing today's maritime security agencies,” said Bill Blount, Vigor International business development manager. “Our teams have been perfecting performance for the applications and we're excited to share the result at NAVDEX.” Vigor partnered with Michael Peters Yacht Design (MPYD), known for its pioneering work in high-speed hull forms including offshore racing and patrol craft to deliver a high-performance patrol boat with unequaled control and maneuverability and specifically tailored to the unique environment of the Middle East. The company is already in discussion with multiple government organizations for orders of the VFI and will display a model of the vessel at NAVDEX.

The craft features a hybrid aluminum/composite design,

multiple options for remote controlled weapons systems, crewed served weapons mounts and a FLIR night vision system. Suspension seats keep crew and passenger's mission-ready, and drive-by-wire propulsion and steering controls deliver unequaled control and maneuverability.

---

## **Coast Guard Academy Named a Best Value College**

Coast Guard Academy Named a Best Value College NEW LONDON, Conn., – The U.S. Coast Guard Academy was recently included in the Princeton Review's "The Best Value Colleges: 200 Schools with Exceptional Return On Investment for Your Tuition Investment" publication, which recommends institutions considered the nation's best for academics, affordability and career prospects, the academy announced in a Jan. 31 release.

According to the publication, the colleges were selected based on a return on investment rating score that includes institutional data from 658 institutions, student surveys, and alumni surveys covering starting and mid-career salaries as well as career social impact.

The publication states, "With a student body of about 1,000, it's easy to see why graduates of the Coast Guard Academy form such a lifelong dedication to the school and each other."

A student survey quotes a cadet saying, "I will have a guaranteed job once I graduate. And I am now part of the military family that takes care of its own."

The academy is a top military college, granting Bachelor of Science degrees in one of nine engineering or professional

majors. Cadets pay no tuition and receive a monthly stipend totaling approximately \$12,000 per year. Graduates also earn a commission as an ensign and serve in the U.S. Coast Guard.

---

## **Navy Secretary Names Independence-Variant LCS After Capital of Maine**

Washington – Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer announced on Jan. 31 that the next Independence-variant Littoral Combat Ship will be named USS Augusta (LCS 34), his public affairs officer said in a release.

The future USS Augusta (LCS 34) is named in honor of the capital city of Maine and is the sixth vessel to bear the name Augusta.

“It is an honor to name the next Independence variant LCS after the city Augusta,” Spencer said. “From the earliest days of the American Revolution to every conflict since, the citizens of Maine have been an important part of the Navy and Marine Corps team. I am pleased that a future ship will carry on that tradition of service by bearing the name and history of their great capital city.”

The future USS Augusta will be built by Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama. This ship will be 419 feet long with a beam length of 104 feet and be capable of operating at speeds in excess of 40 knots.

The Navy has accepted delivery of 17 littoral combat ships (LCSs). Including the recent contract modifications, a total

of 35 LCSs have been procured with 11 ships under construction (LCS 17, 19-26) and seven more ships in pre-construction ships (LCS 29-32, 34, 36 and 38).

The LCS is a highly maneuverable, lethal and adaptable ship, designed to support focused mine countermeasures, antisubmarine warfare and surface warfare missions. LCS integrates new technology and capability to affordably support current and future mission capability from deep water to the littorals.

---

## **L3 OceanServer Awarded Contract for Iver3 UUVs**

FALL RIVER, Mass. – L3 OceanServer has been granted a five-year General Services Administration (GSA) schedule for its Iver3 unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs), the company said in a Jan. 31 release. This GSA schedule gives registered government agencies a simple path to procure Iver3 UUVs using pre-established pricing and terms and conditions. A contract was awarded from the GSA schedule for two Iver3 UUVs and associated training, effective Dec. 19, 2018.

“L3 OceanServer is pleased to receive this GSA schedule and contract award. GSA schedules provide shorter procurement cycles for federal purchases to streamline ordering processes,” said Daryl Slocum, general manager of L3 OceanServer. “This award will allow us to develop existing customer relationships and build new ones.”

The Iver UUV is a commercial-off-the-shelf product built with warfighter-driven attributes. It features longer runtimes and precise navigational accuracy, enabling long ingress/egress

missions that provide greater standoff distances and increased mission safety. L3 OceanServer has a proud history of working with various government agencies, including the U.S Marine Corps and the U.S. Navy.

L3 OceanServer is part of the Integrated Maritime Systems sector within L3's Communications and Networked Systems business segment. Since its inception in 2003, L3 OceanServer has sold more than 300 autonomous underwater vehicles worldwide.

---

## **Coast Guard, DEA, Caribbean Border Interagency Group Partners Apprehend 4 Smugglers, Seize \$3 Million in Cocaine**

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Margaret Norvell (WPC-1105) offloaded 200 pounds of cocaine Jan. 30 evening and transferred custody of four suspected smugglers to U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration Special agents in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a Jan. 31 release.

Coast Guard and Caribbean Border Interagency Group (CBIG) law enforcement authorities seized the \$3 million dollar cocaine shipment and apprehended the suspected smugglers following the interdiction of a go-fast vessel Tuesday night in waters north of Arecibo, Puerto Rico.

This interdiction is the result of ongoing multi-agency law enforcement efforts in support of Operation Caribbean Guard, the Caribbean Border Interagency Group and the Caribbean Corridor Strike Force (CCSF).

The suspected smugglers are Dominican nationals who are facing likely federal prosecution by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Puerto Rico.

"Tonight's success was a total team effort," said Lt. Carl Luxhoj, Air Station Borinquen MH-65 helicopter pilot. "The combined air support from both the fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircrews made the surface intercept of the suspect vessel possible. The recovery of evidence would not have been possible without the support of the Puerto Rico Police Department [FURA]. The outstanding coordination from all involved prevented illegal migrants and contraband from reaching American soil."

While on a routine patrol, the crew of a HC-144 Ocean Sentry aircraft from Air Station Miami detected a suspicious go-fast vessel late Jan. 29 night transiting with four people onboard, approximately 20 nautical miles north of Isabela, Puerto Rico. The go-fast was transiting southeast without the use of navigational lights.

Coast Guard Watchstanders in Sector San Juan alerted CBIG partner agencies, launched a MH-65 Dolphin helicopter to provide air support and diverted the Coast

Guard Cutter Margaret Norvell to interdict the go-fast. The crew of a Puerto Rico Police Department FURA marine unit also responded and supported the interdiction.

Throughout the pursuit, the Coast Guard aircrews vectored-in the cutter Margaret Norvell to the go-fast's position. Once on scene, the Norvell's crew launched the cutter's Over-the-Horizon Boat IV that closed-in and interdicted the suspect vessel.

During the pursuit, the HC-144 Ocean Sentry crew observed multiple bales jettisoned into the water from the go-fast. The Coast Guard helicopter also vectored-in the crew of the Puerto Rico Police Department marine unit to the area of the jettisoned cargo, where the crew recovered three bales with 200 pounds of cocaine. The Norvell crew embarked the suspected smugglers along with the seized contraband.

The go-fast was destroyed as a hazard to navigation.

The detainees and seized contraband were transferred to the custody of DEA Special Agents assigned to CCSF, who are leading the investigation into this case.