

BOLLINGER SHIPYARDS DELIVERS 6TH AND FINAL BOSTON-BOUND FAST RESPONSE CUTTER TO U.S. COAST GUARD



Release from Bollinger Shipyards

USCGC Melvin Bell is the sixth of six FRCs to be homeported in Boston, MA

LOCKPORT, La., – (November 16, 2023) – Bollinger Shipyards LLC (“Bollinger”) today announced it has delivered the USCGC Melvin Bell to the U.S. Coast Guard in Key West, Florida. This

is the 181st vessel Bollinger has delivered to the U.S. Coast Guard over a 35-year period and the 55th [Fast Response Cutter](#) (“FRC”) delivered under the current program.

“We’re incredibly proud to deliver the USCGC Melvin Bell, the final of six Fast Response Cutters to be homeported in Boston, the birthplace of the U.S. Coast Guard,” said Bollinger President & C.E.O. Ben Bordelon. “We’re confident that pound for pound, the quality and capabilities of the FRC platform are unmatched and that this vessel will outperform its mission requirements and expectations in the challenging conditions where it will operate in the North Atlantic. Our unique experience building for the Coast Guard is unparalleled and has shown time and time again that we successfully deliver the highest quality vessels on a reliable, aggressive production schedule. We look forward to continuing our historic partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard.”

The USCGC Melvin Bell will be the sixth of six FRCs to be homeported in Sector Boston, which is known as “The Birthplace of the Coast Guard.” The sector is responsible for coastal safety, security, and environmental protection from the New Hampshire-Massachusetts border southward to Plymouth, Massachusetts out to 200nm offshore. Sector Boston directs over 1,500 Active Duty, Reserve, and Auxiliary members whose mission is to protect and secure vital infrastructure, rescue mariners in peril at sea, enforce federal law, maintain navigable waterways, and respond to all hazards impacting the maritime transportation system and coastal region.

The Coast Guard’s FY2024 Unfunded Priorities List includes procuring four more FRCs (which would be the 66th through 69th vessels in the program) to provide increased Coast Guard presence and engagement with allied and partner countries in the Indo-Pacific region. Earlier this year, Adm. Linda Fagan, the commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, said, “The Indo-Pacific is clearly a consequential region for America’s

future. The United States Indo-Pacific Strategy identifies an expanded role for the U.S. Coast Guard as a top Administration priority as we seek to ensure a region that is free and open. The U.S. Coast Guard will continue its long history of operational presence in the region with additional cutter patrols and deployable specialized forces.”

Each FRC is named for an enlisted Coast Guard hero who distinguished themselves in the line of duty. Bell, a minority pioneer and Pacific war hero was a patriot whose distinguished career in service of his country spanned 65 years in military and civil service. During his active-duty career, Bell held many distinctions. In 1943 he became the first Pacific Islander advanced to chief petty officer. He later held the distinction of a dual rating as Chief Radioman and Chief Electronics Technician. In 1958 he became the first minority Master Chief in the history of the Coast Guard.

His decorations included the Coast Guard Good Conduct Medal (five awards), Navy Commendation Medal, Navy Unit Commendation, National Defense Service Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal, American Defense Medal, American Campaign Medal and Victory World War II Medal.

ABOUT THE FAST RESPONSE CUTTER PLATFORM

The FRC is an operational “game changer,” according to senior Coast Guard officials. FRCs are consistently being deployed in support of the full range of missions within the United States Coast Guard and other branches of our Armed Services due to its exceptional performance, expanded operational reach and capabilities, and ability to transform and adapt to the mission. FRCs have conducted operations as far as the Marshall Islands—a 4,400 nautical mile trip from their homeport. Measuring in at 154 feet, FRCs have a flank speed of 28 knots, state of the art C4ISR suite (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance), and stern launch and recovery ramp for a 26-

foot, over-the-horizon interceptor cutter boat.