

Shield AI V-BAT Selected as Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force's First Maritime ISR Platform



From Shield AI, Jan. 22, 2025

WASHINGTON (January 22, 2025) – Shield AI, the defense technology company building an AI-powered autonomy software platform and tools for the world, announced today that its V-BAT unmanned aircraft system (UAS) has been selected by the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) as the country's first-ever maritime-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) platform. V-BAT will provide advanced ISR capabilities to JMSDF surface vessels, reinforcing Japan's defense posture and operational readiness in the Indo-Pacific region.

This milestone deal represents the beginning of a planned

multi-year stream of increasing V-BAT orders to support JMSDF operations. Under the agreement, the JMSDF will acquire multiple V-BAT UAS from Shield AI, enhancing the surveillance and intelligence-gathering capabilities of its surface vessels.

“Japan is a vital ally in the Indo-Pacific and critical to regional deterrence efforts, and this partnership strengthens Japan’s ability to respond effectively to crises and ensures they are equipped with a reliable and proven platform for maritime ISR missions,” said Brandon Tseng, Shield AI’s President, Co-founder, and former Navy SEAL. “The JMSDF’s selection of V-BAT reflects their understanding of the future of warfare—where operational success requires blending high-cost assets with intelligent, affordable unmanned systems like V-BAT. Every U.S. and allied maritime vessel should be equipped with V-BAT to provide shipborne ISR capabilities wherever and whenever they are needed, and it’s fantastic to be making that vision a reality with JMSDF.”

The [V-BAT](#) is the only single-engine ducted-fan vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL) UAS operationally deployed in multiple regions globally. With its unique ducted fan design and the ability to launch and recover in confined spaces, it is ideally suited for shipborne and austere environments, ensuring flexibility and resilience in complex missions. V-BAT has earned its reputation for reliability, operating with impunity even in GPS- and comms-denied environments. Its proven performance in contested regions like Ukraine, the Black Sea, and the Indo-Pacific demonstrates its ability to withstand advanced electronic warfare threats that have grounded many traditional drones.

Delivering the strategic capabilities of much more expensive aircraft, V-BAT excels in missions ranging from ISR to strategic targeting, search-and-rescue, and maritime interdiction. Its versatility and cutting-edge autonomous features make it a critical asset in modern defense

operations.

DOD Orders 1,500 Troops, Additional Assets to Southern Border

Jan. 22, 2025 | By Matthew Olay, DoD News

The Defense Department is sending 1,500 active-duty service members and additional air and intelligence assets to the southern border to augment troops already conducting enforcement operations in that region, Acting Secretary of Defense Robert Salesses announced this afternoon via a statement to the media.

The announcement came roughly 36 hours after President Donald J. Trump issued an executive order directing DOD to address the situation at the border.

“On Monday, to protect the security and safety of United States citizens, President Trump declared that a national emergency exists at the southern border of the United States. The president directed me to take all appropriate action to support the activities of the secretary of homeland security in obtaining complete operational control of the southern border of the United States,” the statement reads.

The Pentagon has since established a task force to oversee the expedited implementation of border-related executive orders; with U.S. Northern Command heading up the effort and being supported by U.S. Transportation Command, the National Guard Bureau, the military services and the Department of Homeland

Security.

The 1,500 additional active-duty service members authorized by Salesses will initially be put to work on the placement of physical barriers and other border missions within the next 24 to 48 hours, a senior military official told the media.

The additional active-duty personnel includes 1,000 soldiers, as well as 500 Marines who had previously been on standby in Southern California to potentially help combat the Los Angeles County wildfires that broke out two weeks ago, the senior official said.

With 2,500 active-duty personnel already in the region, the additional 1,500 troops will represent a 60% increase in active-duty forces since Trump was sworn in on Monday, Salesses remarks in his statement.

“We anticipate that overall, on the southwest border, will provide real-time situational awareness of persons, vehicles, vessels and aircraft; and they’ll work with on operator-level maintenance, movement and staging of assets,” the senior military official said.

In addition to the additional active-duty ground personnel, DOD will provide airlift support for flights operated by DHS to implement the deportation of more than 5,000 individuals detained by CBP at the border sectors in San Diego and El Paso, Texas, Salesses’ statement reads.

Transcom is providing two C-130 Hercules and two C-17 Globemaster aircraft to assist in that support, the senior military official said.

Additionally, the official added that there are UH-72 Lakota military helicopters that began flying today in support of CBP.

DOD is also coordinating with the State Department to obtain

diplomatic visas and provide host-nation notification for those individuals who are deported, a senior defense official said.

DOD is also providing intelligence analyst support at the border.

“We’re in the process of sourcing those requirements right now,” the senior military official said.

“We also anticipate that there could be some additional airborne intelligence, surveillance and support assets that would move down to the border to increase situational awareness,” the official added.

Regarding DOD’s future activity on the border, the senior defense official said that – while there are no specifics to release at the moment – there will be a number of additional border enforcement missions developing.

“This is going to be a big priority for the department under the acting secretary and the secretary that will be coming on board,” the defense official said.

“In short order, will develop and execute additional missions in cooperation with DHS, federal agencies, and state partners to address the full range of threats outlined by the at our nation’s borders,” Salesses’ statement reads.

“President Trump directed action from on securing our nation’s borders and made clear he expects immediate results. That is exactly what our military is doing under his leadership,” the statement concludes.

SENEDIA Continues to Strengthen Defense Workforce

Real Jobs RI Grant Supports Rhode Island's \$7.6 Billion Defense Industry

From SENEDIA, Jan. 23, 2025

MIDDLETOWN, R.I. – SENEDIA, the alliance for defense tech, talent, and innovation, announced today a \$200,000 grant to continue their highly-successful Defense Partnership Program. The program, administered through Real Jobs RI, connects job seekers with direct hire, internship, and training opportunities in the defense sector, which represents more than 34,000 jobs and \$7.6 billion in economic output in Rhode Island.

“Real Jobs is critical to our efforts to fortify national security and grow the defense industry, an essential part of the economy in Rhode Island and across the region,” said Molly Donohue Magee, chief executive officer of SENEDIA. “The meaningful skill-building, on-the-job experience, and job search support we foster through this program ensures a strong defense workforce for today and tomorrow.”

Real Jobs RI has supported the Defense Partnership Program since 2016, enabling training and job placements in high-wage, high-growth, high-demand careers in defense, including IT and cybersecurity, engineering/science, supply chain management, technology, and business support. In 2024, the program placed more than 60 applicants into good-paying jobs and facilitated employment support for more than 100 candidates, including resume and interview prep, direct outreach to employers, internship opportunities, and technical certifications.

“Defense is a key part of the Rhode Island economy, and its impact reverberates across many other industries,” said

Matthew Weldon, director of the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training that oversees the Real Jobs RI program. “Connecting Rhode Island companies with talented and skilled workers – from recent high school graduates pursuing rewarding careers to mid-career professionals looking to leverage new skills – is a win for the employer, for the candidate, and for our state.”

The Defense Partnership Program builds on SENEDIA’s broader portfolio of workforce development and industry advocacy. Through the Department of Defense sponsored New England Submarine Shipbuilding Partnership, SENEDIA has facilitated the training of more than 5,100 people for employment opportunities in Rhode Island and has strengthened the talent pipeline across the K-12, higher education, and advanced training levels.

Building a strong workforce pipeline is essential to sustaining and growing the industry. According to [SENEDIA’s 2023 Economic Impact Report of the Defense Cluster in New England](#), defense represents more than 10 percent of the state’s economy and generates \$3 billion in labor income for Rhode Island workers. Across the region, the sector accounts for \$119.1 billion in economic output, more than 407,000 jobs, and more than \$40 billion in income.

To learn more about hosting an intern or pursuing an internship through SENEDIA, visit www.SENEDIA.org/internships. Candidates interested in direct hire opportunities can visit www.SENEDIA.org/defense-careers, or view defense-related job openings from SENEDIA member companies at members.SENEDIA.org/jobs.

General Dynamics Mission Systems To Provide Advanced Electronics In MK 54 Torpedoes For The U.S. Navy



Sailors aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81) maneuver a Mark-54 torpedo to the flight deck. Photo Credit: U.S. Navy
From General Dynamics Mission Systems, Jan. 21, 2025

FAIRFAX, Va. – General Dynamics Mission Systems announced today that it was [awarded](#) a fixed-price-incentive, firm-fixed-price, cost-plus-fixed-fee, and cost-only contract from the U.S. Navy in December for up to \$808.6 million to produce MK 54 MOD 1 Lightweight Torpedo Kits and related test equipment, spares, provisioned item orders, engineering support and hardware support for the MK 54 Lightweight Torpedo Program. Work will be performed in Canonsburg, Pennsylvania, and is expected to be completed by December 2032.

“Our Progeny Systems employees have been providing advanced torpedo electronics to the U.S. and allied Navies for 18 years. This contract ensures that our surface ships and aircraft will have the most modern and capable torpedoes in the world for many years to come,” said Laura Hooks, vice president and general manager of Maritime and Strategic Systems at General Dynamics Mission Systems.

Progeny Systems was acquired by General Dynamics Mission Systems in 2022. Headquartered in Manassas, Virginia, Progeny Systems provides a wide spectrum of capabilities and lifecycle support services for U.S. submarines and surface ships.

General Dynamics Mission Systems provides mission-critical solutions for defense, intelligence and cybersecurity customers across all domains. Headquartered in Fairfax, General Dynamics Mission Systems employs approximately 12,000 people worldwide. More information about General Dynamics Mission Systems is available at gdmissionsystems.com.

NAWCAD Lakehurst Hosts Groundbreaking Ceremony For New Test Site Capability



Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division Lakehurst held a groundbreaking ceremony on Jan. 14 for an upgrade of the Runway Arrested Landing Site testing facility. The update will house a Joint Precision Approach and Landing System (JPALS) and an Unmanned Carrier Aviation Mission Control System for the MQ-25 and other aircraft programs. (U.S. Navy Photo)
From Naval Air Systems Command, Jan. 22, 2025

JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST, N.J. – On a day when the ground at Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division Lakehurst was so cold it made digging into the dirt a challenge, a groundbreaking ceremony for an upgrade of the Runway Arrested Landing Site testing facility welcomed the start of a new chapter in the installation's testing capabilities.

The Jan. 14 event was attended by representatives of the Unmanned Carrier Aviation (PMA-268), Aircraft Launch and Recovery Equipment (ALRE) (PMA-251) program offices, and NAWCAD Lakehurst leadership, including Capts. Daniel Fucito and Mike Kline, as well as other stakeholders of the project.

When completed, the update will house a Joint Precision Approach and Landing System (JPALS) and an Unmanned Carrier

Aviation Mission Control System for the MQ-25 and other aircraft programs.

“This groundbreaking represents a significant step forward in Lakehurst’s ability to complete the initial carrier suitability testing for one of the Navy’s major North Star programs in the MQ-25,” said CDR. Adam Pawlak, NAWCAD Lakehurst Officer-in-Charge.

The JPALS update will allow compatibility testing for the MQ-25 on ALRE systems, starting with the TC-13 steam catapult and MK-7 arresting gear currently used on legacy aircraft carriers. Future testing will also be conducted using the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System and Advanced Arresting Gear found on the newer Ford-class carriers.

The update will also include a Mobile Integrated Telemetry System, which can be used to set up temporary aircraft data management telemetry systems during testing.

Pawlak added the groundbreaking ceremony lays the foundation for Lakehurst’s ability to test critical unmanned platforms of the future.

U.S. Seventh Fleet Opens New Navigation, Seamanship and Shiphandling Trainer (NSST)

Facility



Vice Adm. Fred Kacher, center, commander of U.S. 7th Fleet, opens the new Navigation, Seamanship, and Shiphandling Trainer (NSST) facility during a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY), Jan. 16, 2025. With Kacher are Rear Adm. Greg Newkirk, left, commander of Task Force 70, Capt. Dave Huljack, deputy commodore of Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15, Capt. Shockey Snyder, back, commander of Naval Surface Group Western Pacific, and NSST team members. (U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Caroline H. Lui)

From Destroyer Squadron 15, Jan. 21, 2025

YOKOSUKA, Japan – Adm. Fred Kacher, commander, U.S. Seventh Fleet, opened the new Navigation, Seamanship, and Shiphandling Trainer (NSST) facility at a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Yokosuka, Japan, Jan. 16, 2024.

“I’ve seen how history and time bend to the winner who works hard and plans—this is what simulation allows us to do,” said Kacher. “It’s great to see the power of these trainers, and

we're thrilled to bring this capability to the fleet."

During the ceremony, Kacher received a tour of the new facility and observed Sailors and junior officers from the waterfront simulating harbor movements. Capt. Dave Huljack, deputy commodore of Commander, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15, also attended the ribbon cutting ceremony.

"Our teams are busy, and we're getting after it. We don't only use these facilities for certification, we practice close-quarters shiphandling, tactical maneuvering, and just getting better," said Huljack. "Building more trainers surges the volume of qualified and capable mariners that we're able to bring to the fight."

Members from the NSST staff Jesse Summerlin, Brad Stallings, and Bill Ault explained the capabilities of the new facility and spoke on the importance of the NSSTs as a whole.

"We're already booked at 95% capacity for the remainder of the calendar year," said Summerlin, an LB&B Associates NSST Instructor. "The demand from the ships has been overwhelming and our team stands ready to accept the challenge and continue to provide the best possible product to our customers on the Yokosuka waterfront."

DESRON 15 is the Navy's largest destroyer squadron and the U.S. 7th Fleet's principal surface force. It is forward deployed to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in support of security and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

U.S. 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy's largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, and routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

USS Philippine Sea Departs Naval Station Norfolk On Final Scheduled Deployment



NORFOLK, Va. (January 20, 2025) The Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea (CG 58), departs from Naval Station Norfolk, January 20th, 2024. Philippine Sea will deploy to the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility (USSOUTHCOM AOR) to support maritime operations with partners in the region, conduct Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) port visits, and support Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South) to deter illicit activity along Caribbean and Central American shipping routes. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Evan Thompson/Released)

From U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Jan. 20, 2025

NORFOLK, Va. - The Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea (CG 58) departed Naval Station Norfolk for a scheduled deployment to the U.S. 4th Fleet area of

operations, Jan. 20.

Philippine Sea will deploy to the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility (USSOUTHCOM AOR) to support maritime operations with partners in the region, conduct Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) port visits, and support Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South) to deter illicit activity along Caribbean and Central American shipping routes.

“The deployment of Philippine Sea to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility highlights the Navy’s ability to generate and certify out of cycle combat-ready forces in order to execute critical missions,” said Adm. Daryl Caudle, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command. “The ship and crew will play a pivotal role in enhancing regional security and supporting bilateral and multinational efforts to counter challenges unique to Fourth Fleet. This deployment also underscores our commitment to building a resilient and adaptable force that meets global demands while fostering trust and interoperability with our global maritime partners.”

This is scheduled to be Philippine Sea’s final deployment after more than 35 years in service.

The ship previously deployed on October 14, 2023 as part of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group (IKECSG) to U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet area of operations in support of maritime security operations, theater security cooperation efforts, and enhanced vigilance activities operations with NATO Allies and Partners.

“My sailors have received the highest level of training and are fully prepared to meet the challenges of our deployment,” said Capt. Steven Liberty, commanding officer of Philippine Sea. “The vigilant and hard work of the War Dogs is a

testament to the level of pride, professionalism, and resiliency in all of them.”

U.S. 4th Fleet employs maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations in order to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships that foster regional security in the USSOUTHCOM AOR.

USSOUTHCOM AOR encompasses 31 countries and 16 dependencies and areas of special sovereignty, including the land mass of Latin America south of Mexico, waters adjacent to Central and South America, and the Caribbean Sea. The region represents about one-sixth of the landmass of the world assigned to regional unified commands.

U.S. Fleet Forces Command is responsible for manning, training, equipping, and providing combat-ready forces forward to numbered fleets and combatant commanders around the globe.

President Trump Removes Coast Guard Commandant



Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Linda Fagan salutes the national ensign while embarking U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Calhoun (WMSL 759), April 20, 2024, following the cutter's official commissioning in North Charleston, South Carolina. *Photo credit: U.S. Coast Guard | Petty Officer 2nd Class Brandon Hillard*

President Trump's new administration has removed Admiral Linda L. Fagan as commandant of the Coast Guard, an early end to the tenure of the first female to head a U.S. military branch.

The removal, on Trump's first full day back in office, was first reported by Fox News, which said Acting Homeland Security Secretary Benjamin Huffman removed Fagan. Admiral Kevin Lunday, the vice commandant, is now the acting commandant.

"She was terminated because of her leadership deficiencies, operational failures, and inability to advance the strategic objectives of the U.S. Coast Guard," a senior Department of Homeland Security official told *Seapower* in a statement.

The list of reasons includes failure to address threats at the

southern border, “especially in interdicting fentanyl and other illicit substances” and “insufficient coordination with the Department of Homeland Security to prioritize operations along maritime borders.”

It also includes “inadequate leadership” in recruitment and retention; persistent cost overruns in icebreakers and helicopter programs; “inadequate accountability for acquisition failures highlighted during the Trump 45 Administration;” the “mishandling and coverup of Operation Fouled Anchor,” an investigation into sexual harassment at the Coast Guard Academy and in the service; and “excessive focus on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies including at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, diverting resources and attention from operational imperatives.”

Fagan was the Coast Guard’s first four-star admiral and was confirmed as commandant in 2022.

Rep. Joe Courtney (D-Connecticut), ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee’s Seapower and Projection Forces subcommittee, posted on X that Fagan’s dismissal “is an abuse of power that slanders her good name and outstanding record. Under Admiral Fagan, Coast Guard recruitment is up, not down, and drug interdictions too. Trump’s fecklessness harms morale and confidence in the chain of command.”

On Jan. 21, the Coast Guard released a statement attributed to Lunday, which said, “Per the president’s executive orders, I have directed my operational commanders to immediately surge assets – cutters, aircraft, boats and deployable specialized forces – to increase Coast Guard presence and focus starting with the following key areas:

- The southeast U.S. border approaching Florida to deter and prevent a maritime mass migration from Haiti and/or Cuba;
- The maritime border around Alaska, Hawai’i, the U.S.

territories of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands;

- The maritime border between the Bahamas and south Florida;
- The southwest maritime border between the U.S. and Mexico in the Pacific;
- The maritime border between Texas and Mexico in the Gulf of America; and
- Support to Customs and Border Protection on maritime portions of the southwest U.S. border.

Together, in coordination with our Department of Homeland Security and Department of Defense teammates, we will detect, deter and interdict illegal migration, drug smuggling and other terrorist or hostile activity before it reaches our border.”

Navy, Industry Working to Surge Capability as 2027 Draws Closer



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti participates in a Q&A session moderated by retired Vice Adm. Richard Hunt at the Surface Navy Association National Symposium in Arlington, Virginia, Jan. 14, 2025. *Photo credit: U.S. Navy | Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist Elliott Fabrizio*

As the U.S. military braces for a potential conflict with China in 2027, maritime defense and industry leaders alike are trying to get the most out of the existing fleet while planning for a more capable future fleet with a mix of manned and uncrewed platforms.

“The countdown clock in my office continues to tick away and it tells me when I walked in today that there are 716 days left until 1 January, 2027. There is no time to waste,” Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Lisa M. Franchetti said this week at the Surface Navy Association’s annual symposium, referring to a year when Chinese President Xi Jinping has reportedly told his generals to be ready for war.

“The People’s Republic of China is our pacing challenge and presents a complex multi-domain and multi access threat,”

Franchetti said. "And I'm eyes wide open that the challenge posed by the PRC to our Navy goes well beyond just the size of the PLAN [People's Liberation Army Navy] fleet. It includes gray zone and economic campaigns, expansion of dual use infrastructure like airfield and dual use forces like the Chinese maritime militia and a growing nuclear arsenal."

To counter that, and guard against the expected threat to Taiwan, Franchetti said she needs a larger fleet and one with more robotic and automated systems from programs such as the Replicator initiative, the rapid development effort NavalX and the Disruptive Capabilities Office.

From the Russian invasion of Ukraine to the Houthis in the Red Sea, "we are seeing the increase in use and effective adaptation of robotic and autonomous systems in every domain," she said. "It's abundantly clear that we need to both have these capabilities and have the capability to defeat 'em kinetically and non kinetically ... the future of war at sea is neither fully robotic nor fully manned."

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro, in his last address as SECNAV to the Surface Navy Association, agreed.

"...Our challenge is not only about maintaining naval superiority, but also ensuring that the U.S. military is prepared to confront the evolving threats that are opposed by the People's Republic of China, especially in the realms of advanced technology, maritime claims, and military modernization," he said. "Much like President Kennedy's recognition of the need for modernized nuclear deterrent, today's Navy and Marine Corps must continue to adopt, leveraging both man and unmanned capabilities to counter the PRC's growing naval and technological advances."

Admiral Daryl Caudle, commander of Fleet Forces Command, has the job of training and equipping the fleets that will need to contain China's potential military expansion.

“The speed of modern warfare, combined with ever-shrinking indications and warnings windows, means we won’t have the luxury of long lead times to bring the full capabilities of our fleet to bear,” Caudle said in his keynote address to the SNA.

“Every day, about 100 [U.S. Navy] ships are deployed around the globe. Furthermore, about 100 ships are in lengthy depot maintenance availabilities that would take weeks, if not months, to close out just by buttoning up all the existing work and returning systems to service. This leaves the last 100 ships that are not deployed nor in depot, and the question – can we do more with those ships to make them ready to flow into combat? The answer is hell yes, and we are,” Caudle said.

That includes making use of the Combat Surge Ready certification for ships, a formal process and designation for getting ships on the Response Plan watchbill.

Efforts like the ongoing Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program, or SIOP, won’t add a lot of ship mass to the Navy by 2027, Caudle said, but the combat surge effort can up those numbers in the short term.

“When we sustain 80% Combat Surge Ready or better for all ships not in depot maintenance, the number of platforms ready to surge and flow into combat step-increases from around 100 to 180,” Caudle said. “...The goal of sustaining 80% Combat Surge Ready will require some new ways of thinking and may be uncomfortable for some, but we know our force structure will certainly not change between now and 2027 and will not significantly change over the next decade. Bottom Line: We must be constantly making ready ships not in depot or currently deployed.”

Industry Efforts

Getting more ships to the fleet requires having a large, well-trained workforce, something the maritime industry has been

struggling with in recent years.

Christopher Kastner, CEO of shipbuilding giant HII, sat down with reporters on the eve of the SNA symposium to discuss how his company is trying to attract more workers, particularly more experienced ones, and dealing with an “almost arthritic” supply chain.

One way is by buying relevant suppliers. HII announced in December it has agreed to buy W International SC and Vivid Empire SC, South Carolina metal fabricators specializing in building structures, modules and assemblies for shipbuilders.

“We did that simply to increase capacity and increase throughput,” Kastner said. “We’re going to where the labor is, right? ... We’re expanding into Texas, Louisiana, we’ve expanded in Norfolk, Virginia. You see this expansion in South Carolina. We’re going to where the labor is.”

Paying better wages for the shipbuilding workforce is also key, he said, and the Navy has taken steps to help do that for the submarine industrial base. It’s a key effort at a time when the gap between shipbuilding work and less demanding retail work has narrowed, making it harder to attract new workers.

“I definitely think there’s momentum, there’s recognition by the Navy, as you saw on the [defense budget] supplemental, that they want to address wages in the submarine industrial base. I don’t think it should be limited at the submarine industrial base, and it should be all of shipbuilding, [we] should be able to adjust wages to attract and increase talent into the industry.”

Raytheon is Cranking Out SPY-6 Radars for the Fleet



By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – Raytheon, a sector of RTX, is humming with production of its SPY-6 family of four naval radars as the first three variants are either operational or installed on ships and the fourth variant enters production.

Scott Spence, Raytheon's vice president for Naval Integrated Solutions, told Seapower that the company is "now really cranking them out" – referring to production and delivery of shipsets of the radars from its Andover, Massachusetts, facility.

The SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar, which became operational in 2024 on the Flight III Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer (DDG)USS Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125), is

succeeding the SPY-1 as a sensor in new-production the Aegis Combat System and is the main sensor for the Flight III Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers (DDGs). Spence said that the flat-face fixed array(V)1 is in full-rate production and that Raytheon had delivered nine or ten shipsets so far for installation on the Flight III DDGs.

Spence said the Jack H. Lucas's (V)6 has been going through integrated combat testing with the Aegis Baseline.

The SPY-6(V)2 Enterprise Air Search Radar (EASR) is the rotating version of the radar that will be installed on amphibious platform dock ships, amphibious assault ships, and Nimitz-class aircraft carriers, replacing the SPS-48 and SPS-49 radars. The radar has been installed on future San Antonio-class amphibious platform dock ship USS Richard M. McCool Jr. (LPD 29) and has been accepted by the Navy following the ship's builder's and acceptance trials.

The first SPY-6(V)3 EASR – which included three fixed-face arrays – has been installed on the future Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79), which is scheduled for delivery to the fleet in 2025. The (V)3 was selected in lieu of the SPY-3 Dual Band Radar that is installed on the Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78).

The SPY-6(V)4 is on contract by the Navy for backfit onto Flight IIA Arleigh Burke-class DDGs. The (V)4 features four flat-face fixed arrays. The modularity of the system will ease the retrofit as the ships will have the same cooling and power systems of the (V)1. The Navy plans to equip 15 Flight IIA DDGs with the (V)4, the first being the USS Pinckney (DDG 91). Arrays are now being built for the (V)4.

Although unable to release details, Spence said that Raytheon continues to work “hand in glove” with the Navy to tweak the SPY-6 radars to be able to counter the latest threats. The lessons from the Navy's combat with Houthi missiles and drones

over the Red Sea over the last 14 months are being studied by Raytheon.

The SPY-6 “is clearly designed for that environment,” Spence said.

He also said that Raytheon has expand its supply chain to include companies in Japan to ensure reliable sources of some SPY-6 components.

Last summer year Raytheon entered contracts with MELCO (Mitsubishi Electric) and Sampa Kogyo to supply components of the SPY-6 for U.S. Navy ships and any potential future SPY-6(V) customers, said Briana Gabrys, a Raytheon spokeswoman.