Navy Accepts Delivery of Ship to Shore Connector, LCAC 115

By Team Ships Public Affairs, March 11, 2026

NEW ORLEANS – The U.S. Navy accepted delivery of Ship to Shore Connector (SSC), Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) 115 from Textron Systems on March 10.

The delivery of LCAC 115 comes after completion of Acceptance Trials conducted by the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey,

which tested the readiness and capability of the craft to effectively meet its requirements.

With delivery complete, the craft will transition for fleet integration, crew training, and certification in preparation for operational employment.

LCAC 115 increases the Navy’s capacity to move personnel, vehicles, and equipment across contested littoral environments, directly supporting distributed maritime operations and global crisis response.

“LCAC 115 represents the continuation of Amphibious capability being delivered to the Fleet,” said Capt. Chris Causee, program manager, Amphibious Assault and Connectors Programs, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships. “Our focus is accelerating the transition from delivery to readiness for operational employment. Each additional connector strengthens the Navy-Marine Corps team’s ability to maneuver, sustain, and respond decisively in complex environments.”

The SSC program restores critical over the beach maneuver capability essential to amphibious operations. Textron Systems is in serial production for LCACs 116-129.

SSC retains the dimensions and well deck compatibility of the legacy LCAC while delivering capabilities with designs for improved reliability and maintainability. Fully compatible with well deck equipped amphibious ships, the craft carries a 60-to-75-ton payload and transports weapon systems, vehicles, cargo, and assault personnel across open ocean and over the beach.

As a Department of War acquisition program, PEO Ships is responsible for executing the development and procurement of destroyers, amphibious ships and craft, and auxiliary ships, including special mission ships, sealift ships, and support ships.

Statement of USS Gerald R. Ford on Shipboard Fire

By Commander U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs | March 12, 2026

MANAMA, Bahrain – On March 12, USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) experienced a fire that originated in the ship's main laundry

spaces. The cause of the fire was not combat-related and is contained.

There is no damage to the ship’s propulsion plant, and the aircraft carrier remains fully operational.

Two Sailors are currently receiving medical treatment for non-life-threatening injuries and are in stable condition. Additional information will be provided when available.

The Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group is currently operating in the Red Sea in support of Operation Epic Fury.

USS Mustin to forward-deploy to Japan

The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Mustin (DDG 89) transits San Diego Bay past Point Loma, Feb. 23, 2026. The ship departed Naval Base San Diego and will forward deploy to Yokosuka, Japan, as part of a scheduled rotation of forces in the Pacific. (U.S. Navy photo by Mark D. Faram)
From Courtesy Story, March 11, 2026

Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Mustin (DDG 89) will forward deploy to Yokosuka, Japan, as part of a scheduled rotation of forces in the Pacific. This move will be a permanent change of station for the crew and family members.

Mustin will replace Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Robert Smalls (CG 62), which will depart Yokosuka and shift to San Diego.

The forward presence of Mustin supports the United States' commitment to the defense of Japan, enhances regional deterrence and ensures we maintain combat credible force ready to operate in a contested environment. Mustin will

directly support the Defense Strategic Guidance to posture the most capable units forward in the Indo-Pacific Region.

The United States values Japan’s efforts to strengthen its defense capabilities and its hospitality in hosting U.S. forces forward deployed there. The U.S.-Japan alliance is important to upholding deterrence and preserving peace in the Indo-Pacific region. These forward deployed forces, along with their counterparts in the Japan Self-Defense Forces, make up the core capabilities needed to improve coordination and upgrade the alliance for effective denial defense and joint warfighting.

The Department’s peace through strength approach is rooted in credible military power, forward-postured forces, and sustainable alliances deter aggression and preserve peace. By positioning the most capable ships forward, this posture rapidly brings our most capable ships with the greatest operational capability to bear in the event of a crisis.

Maintaining a forward deployed naval force capability with the most advanced ships supports the Department’s priority of preserving combat credible forces forward to deter aggression and ensure peace through strength in the Indo-Pacific region.

Navy Announces Commissioning of the Future USS Harvey C. Barnum Jr.

ATLANTIC OCEAN (July 15, 2025) – U.S. Marine Corps Col. (Ret) Harvey C. Barnum Jr. , a Medal of Honor recipient, poses for a photo during sea trials aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer Pre-Commissioning Unit Harvey C. Barnum Jr. (DDG 124), July 15. The ship is named in honor of Barnum, who received the Medal of Honor for valor during the Vietnam War. (U.S. Navy Photo by Neil Boorjian)
From Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, 11 March 2026

The U.S. Navy will commission the future USS Harvey C. Barnum Jr. (DDG 124) on April 11, 2026, in Norfolk, Virginia.

The Arleigh Burke-class destroyer is the first ship to bear the name of Medal of Honor recipient, U.S. Marine Corps Col. Harvey Curtiss “Barney” Barnum Jr. The ship honors Barnum’s gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life beyond the call of duty during the Vietnam War.

On Dec. 18, 1965, then-1st Lt. Barnum assumed command of his company after the commander was mortally wounded. His actions

stabilized decimated units and ultimately led to a successful counterattack against key enemy positions. With two armed helicopters under his control, he moved fearlessly through enemy fire to lead air attacks against the enemy's well-entrenched positions while directing one platoon in a successful counterattack on the key enemy positions. Having cleared a small area, he requested and directed the landing of two transport helicopters to evacuate the deceased and wounded. He then assisted in the seizure of the battalion's objective. He is among the few living namesakes to witness the commissioning of his ship.

The sponsor of DDG 124 is Barnum's wife, Martha Hill. Since the ship's keel laying ceremony in 2021, Barnum and Hill have maintained a close relationship with the crew. In keeping with Navy tradition, she will give the order during the commissioning to "man our ship and bring her to life!" At that moment, the crew will hoist the commissioning pennant, and USS Harvey C. Barnum Jr. will become a warship and enter the fleet.

Following its commissioning, DDG 124 will be homeported at Naval Station Norfolk.

Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers are the backbone of the U.S. Navy's surface fleet. DDG 124 is a Flight IIA destroyer equipped with Aegis Baseline 9, which provides Integrated Air and Missile Defense capabilities, increased computing power, and radar upgrades that improve detection range and reaction time against modern air warfare and Ballistic Missile Defense threats. These highly capable, multi-mission ships provide a wide range of warfighting capabilities in multi-threat air, surface, and subsurface environments.

The commissioning ceremony will stream on the Defense Video Information Distribution Service (DVIDS) at www.dvidshub.net/webcast/37421. The live stream will begin at 9:50 a.m. EST, and the ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. EST on April 11.

The mission of Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet (CNSP) is to man, train, and equip the Surface Force to provide fleet commanders with credible naval power to control the sea and project power ashore. For more news from Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, visit https://www.surfpac.navy.mil/.

Civilians Warned to Avoid Ports Used by Iranian Forces

From U.S. Central Command, March 11, 2026

TAMPA, Fla. – On March 11, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) is issuing a warning to civilians that the Iranian regime is using civilian ports along the Strait of Hormuz to conduct military operations that threaten international shipping.

This dangerous action risks the lives of innocent people. Civilian ports used for military purposes lose protected status and become legitimate military targets under international law.

CENTCOM urges civilians in Iran to immediately avoid all port

facilities where Iranian naval forces are operating. Iranian dockworkers, administrative personnel, and commercial vessel crews should avoid Iranian naval vessels and military equipment.

Iranian naval forces have positioned military vessels and equipment within civilian ports serving commercial maritime traffic.

Although the U.S. military also cannot guarantee civilian safety in or near facilities used by the Iranian regime for military purposes, American forces will continue taking every feasible precaution to minimize harm to civilians.

Issued Warning Message:

U.S. forces urge civilians in Iran to immediately avoid all port facilities where Iranian naval forces are operating. Iranian dockworkers, administrative personnel, and commercial vessel crews should avoid Iranian naval vessels and military equipment. The Iranian regime is using civilian ports along the Strait of Hormuz to conduct military operations that threaten international shipping. This dangerous action risks the lives of innocent people. Civilian ports used for military purposes lose protected status and become legitimate military targets under international law.

U.S. Coast Guard Authenticates Keels for First

Three Waterways Commerce Cutters

A rendering of the future U.S. Coast Guard Waterways Commerce Cutters Allen Thiele, Fred Permenter, and Samuel Wilson. The new "Chief Petty Officer Class" cutters will honor the legacy of senior enlisted leaders and strengthen the Coast Guard's inland fleet capabilities. (U.S. Coast Guard courtesy rendering Birdon Group)

From U.S. Coast Guard Headquarters

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Coast Guard authenticated the keels for future Coast Guard cutters Allen Thiele, Fred Permenter and Samuel Wilson on Friday in Bayou La Batre, Alabama.

In a special proceeding, the keels for three cutters were authenticated simultaneously, a departure from the traditional single-vessel ceremony. Keel authentication is a time-honored maritime tradition in which the ship's sponsor welds their initials onto a ceremonial plate that is permanently affixed to the cutter, signifying the foundation of the vessel.

"Today marks a monumental step forward in the modernization of

our inland fleet," said Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard Phillip Waldron. "The new fleet has been designated the 'Chief Petty Officer's Class' and the crews onboard who carry out critical missions on behalf of the Nation will honor the legacy of the senior enlisted leaders whose names they bear."

The "Chief Petty Officer Class" designation for these cutters highlights the close involvement of the chief petty officer community, many of whom were in attendance.

All three cutter sponsors attended the ceremony. They are Delia Corbley, sponsor for future cutter Allen Thiele and daughter of the cutter's namesake; Kristin Permenter Melvin, sponsor for future cutter Fred Permenter and granddaughter of the cutter's namesake; and Barbara Wilson, sponsor for future cutter Samuel Wilson and widow of the cutter's namesake.

Master Chief Petty Officer Allen Thiele, a boatswain's mate, served in the Coast Guard from 1958 to 1990 and was selected as the fifth master chief petty officer of the Coast Guard.

Chief Petty Officer Fred Permenter, a boatswain's mate, was awarded the Gold Lifesaving Medal in 1952 following the rescue of four of five crew members when St. George's Reef Light Station's motor launch capsized as it was lowered in heavy seas.

Chief Petty Officer Samuel Wilson, a boatswain's mate, was awarded the Coast Guard Medal of Extraordinary Heroism in 1979 during the rescue of 81 crew members from the Japanese Fishing Vessel Ryuyo Maru No.2 that ran aground on St. Paul Island, Alaska.

The cutters are the first three of 30 future WCCs that will replace the Coast Guard's legacy inland tender fleet, which will strengthen the Coast Guard's capabilities to facilitate commerce vital to economic prosperity, strategic mobility, and maritime dominance. The WCC fleet will will play

a critical role in controlling, securing, and defending America's ports and waterways. and maintaining the United States' 12,000-mile marine transportation system. This critical waterway network supports more than $5.4 trillion in annual economic activity and millions of American jobs.

Acquisition of the WCC fleet is supported by funding from the One Big Beautiful Bill Act – the largest single funding commitment in Coast Guard history – which included $162 million to accelerate production rates and deliver three cutters ahead of schedule. The first Waterways Commerce Cutter is expected to be completed in 2027.

Hegseth Says U.S. Attacks Intensify Under Epic Fury, While Iranian Responses Slow

March 10, 2026 | By C. Todd Lopez, DoW News

The U.S. launched strikes on Iran last week to stop the terrorist-run state from its continued and ill-advised pursuit of nuclear weapons it hopes to use to threaten the American homeland.

Nearly 11 days into Operation Epic Fury, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth says the U.S attacks continue to be strong while Iranian responses wane.

"Today will be, yet again, our most intense day of strikes inside Iran," Hegseth said during a press briefing today at the Pentagon. "The most fighters, the most bombers, the most strikes; intelligence more refined and better than ever.

So, that’s on one hand. On the other hand, the last 24 hours have seen Iran fire the lowest number of missiles they’ve been capable of firing yet.”

The secretary told journalists that much of what the Iranians are doing is lobbing missiles at their neighbors in the Middle East, making enemies of what may have once been bystanders, and launching those missiles from near their own schools and hospitals, putting innocent civilians at risk from retaliatory strikes.

“The [Iranians] are desperate and scrambling. Like the terrorist cowards they are, they fire missiles from schools and hospitals … deliberately targeting innocents … because they know their military is being systematically degraded and annihilated,” Hegseth said. “Iran’s neighbors and in some cases former allies in the [Persian] Gulf — they’ve abandoned them.”

Iranian proxy groups like Hezbollah, the Houthis and Hamas are also broken, ineffective, or on the sidelines now, Hegseth said.

“Iran stands alone, and they are badly losing,” the secretary said. “On day 10 of Operation Epic Fury, we are winning with an overwhelming and unrelenting focus on our objectives.”

The secretary said that, surprisingly, Iran’s response after the initial U.S. assault was to attack its neighbors. The result of that, he said, has not been good for Iran.

“The big mistake by the Iranian regime was to start targeting its neighbors,” Hegseth said. “I think it was a demonstration of the desperation of that regime … that they still think their pathway out is to try to alienate their Arab partners even more.”

Those neighbors, Hegseth said, have decided instead to side with the U.S.

“[They have] instead decided to come to us and have been willing to go on the offense, have been giving us access, basing and overflight in a new partnership that will continue to remake the region,” Hegseth said.

The U.S. has short-term, clearly defined goals in Iran. First, destroying Iranian missile stockpiles, missile launchers and their defense industrial base. Second, destroy the Iranian navy. And finally, permanently deny Iran the ability to have nuclear weapons.

“It’s a laser-focused maximum authority mission delivered with overwhelming and unrelenting precision,” he said.

Air Force Gen. Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, shared the latest tactical details of Operation Epic Fury.

“To date, [U.S. Central Command has] struck more than 5,000 targets,” Caine said. “[U.S.] Strategic Command bombers recently dropped dozens of 2,000-pound GPS penetrating weapons on deeply buried missile launchers across the southern flank.”

Also, Caine said, the U.S. struck several factories the Iranians use to make one-way attack drones.

“Alongside our regional partners along the southern flank, [we] continue to execute intercepts against one-way attack drones, using fighters and attack helicopters,” he said. “Our strikes mean we’ve made significant progress in reducing the number of missile and drone attacks out of Iran. Ballistic missile attacks continue to trend downward, 90% from where they started. And one-way attack drone [attacks] have decreased 83% since the beginning of the operation — a testament to our air defenders and our air defense systems.”

When it comes to taking out the Iranian navy, Caine said the

joint force is making “substantial progress.” So far, he said, the joint force has taken out more than 50 Iranian naval ships using artillery, fighters, bombers and sea-launched missiles.

“We struck and sank an Iranian drone carrier ship, and U.S. Centcom continues today to hunt and strike mine-laying vessels and mine storage facilities,” Caine said. “This work will continue.”

The secretary and President Donald J. Trump have said Operation Epic Fury will not be a long-term, nation-building endeavor, and the secretary reiterated that today.

“This is not [an] endless nation-building … quagmire — it’s not even close,” Hegseth said. “Our generation of soldiers will not let that happen again, and nor will this president — who very clearly ran against … never-ending, nebulously scoped missions; those days are dead. Instead, we’re winning decisively with brutal efficiency, total air dominance and an unbreakable will to accomplish the president’s objectives on our timeline.”

Navy Kicks Off Operation Ice Camp 2026 in the Arctic Ocean

ARCTIC CIRCLE – Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS Delaware (SSN 791) emerges from the ice after performing a vertical surfacing to kick off Operaetion ICE CAMP 2026, Mar. 7. ICE CAMP Boarfish is a three-week operation designed to research, test, and evaluate operational capabilities in the Arctic region (U.S. Navy Photo by MC1 Jacob D. Bergh)
From U.S. Fleet Forces Command, March 9, 2026

BARENTS SEA – Commander, Submarine Forces officially kicked off Operation Ice Camp (ICE CAMP) Boarfish in the Arctic Ocean on March 7, 2026, after the building of the camp and the arrival of two U.S. Navy fast attack submarines, USS Delaware (SSN 791) and USS Santa Fe (SSN 763).

ICE CAMP Boarfish is a three-week operation designed to research, test, and evaluate operational capabilities in the Arctic region. In addition to U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, and Air National Guard participation, personnel from the Royal Australian Navy, Royal Canadian Navy, Royal Canadian Air Force, French Navy, Royal United Kingdom Navy, Norwegian Defence Research Institute, and the Japan Agency for

Marine-Earth Science and Technology are also taking part.

This operation, held biennially, partners with the Arctic Submarine Laboratory and was elevated from an exercise to an operation to better reflect the Navy's strategic priorities in the Arctic. ICE CAMP provides the necessary training to maintain a working knowledge of a constantly changing region.

"The Arctic is a critical region for national security and global stability. Our commitment to a sustained presence and operational readiness here is unwavering," said Vice Adm. Richard Seif, Commander, Submarine Forces. "ICE CAMP Boarfish allows us to test and refine our capabilities, deepen our interoperability with key allies, and ensure our Submarine Force can project power and defend our nation's interests in any environment, at any time. Our strength in the Arctic is a testament to the skill and resilience of our sailors and partners."

The Navy's Arctic Submarine Laboratory, a detachment of the Undersea Warfighting Development Center, is the lead organization for planning and executing the operation. ASL serves as the "Center of Excellence" for Arctic matters for the U.S. Submarine Force. The Arctic is experiencing a trend of diminishing sea ice, which increases the likelihood of maritime activity in the region, including trans-oceanic shipping and resource extraction.

The camp, named Ice Camp Boarfish, serves as a command center for conducting operations and research. Established on a drifting ice floe, the camp consists of shelters, a command center, and the necessary infrastructure to safely house and support the multi-national contingent of personnel throughout the operation.

"Leading this multinational team in such a demanding environment is a privilege," said Capt. David Nichols, Officer

in Tactical Control of this year's ICE CAMP. "The complexity of establishing a fully functional base on a moving sheet of ice cannot be overstated. The professionalism and dedication of every service member and civilian here is what makes this vital mission possible. We are focused on executing our objectives safely and effectively, further enhancing our collective readiness for Arctic operations."

The camp gets its namesake from the USSBoarfish(SS 327), aBalao-class submarine commissioned on September 23, 1944.During her service in World War II,Boarfishearned a battle star for sinking two Japanese vessels in the South China Sea.

In 1947,*Boarfish*served as the flagship for Operation Blue Nose, the first-ever exploration under the polar ice cap, where she tested new under-ice sonar technology. This historic mission demonstrated that extended under-ice navigation was practical and paved the way for future submarine operations in the Arctic.

Submarines have conducted under-ice operations in the Arctic for more than 60 years. USS Nautilus (SSN 571) made the first transit in 1958, and USS Skate (SSN 578) was the first U.S. submarine to surface through Arctic ice at the North Pole in March 1959. Since those initial voyages, the U.S. Submarine Force has completed 99 such evolutions, with ICE CAMP Boarfish being the 100th.

U.S. Submarine Forces execute the Department of the Navy's mission in and from the undersea domain. In addition to lending added capacity to naval forces, Submarine Forces are expected to leverage those special advantages that come with undersea concealment to permit operational, deterrent, and combat effects that the Navy and the Nation could not otherwise achieve.

U.S. Submarine Forces and supporting

organizations constitute the primary undersea arm of the Navy. Submarines and their crews remain the tip of the undersea spear.

From MRAP to MADIS: Legacy of Innovation Endures at NIWC Atlantic

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. (January 13, 2026) Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Atlantic's Expeditionary Warfare (ExW) Department personnel work on integrating Marine Air Defense Integrated System (MADIS) software, components and weapons onto Joint Light Tactical Vehicles (JLTVs) at the command's Vehicle Integration Facility on Jan. 13, 2026. The engineers

and computer scientists are part of the ExW Department's Counter Threat Platforms team that for over a year now has been helping to field the drone-defeating MADIS capability to Marines at the 3rd Littoral Anti-Air Battalion and the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School. (U.S. Navy photo by Joe Bullinger/Released)
By Steve Ghiringhelli, NIWC Atlantic Public Affairs, March 10, 2026

As one of the Navy's top labs in systems integration, NIWC Atlantic engineering and ingrained innovation culture continue to deliver information warfare-dominant platforms that make the Naval and Joint Force more connected, resilient and lethal.

CHARLESTON, S.C. – Throughout 2025, Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Atlantic helped deliver the drone-defeating Marine Air Defense Integrated System (MADIS) to the Marine Corps, shepherding a critical breakthrough in air defense technology that significantly improves warfighter survivability and lethality.

The MADIS system, which is mounted on two Joint Light Tactical Vehicles (JLTVs), detects aerial threats and defeats them with a 30mm cannon, Stinger missiles and electronic warfare capabilities.

"As one of the Navy's top labs in systems integration, NIWC Atlantic collaborates with industry partners to adopt the latest software and engineering innovations and quickly turn them into information-dominant platforms," said Erick Fry, NIWC Atlantic acting executive director. "In the case of MADIS, our Expeditionary Warfare (ExW) Department very rapidly delivered a capability to U.S. Marines that defeats low-altitude threats and makes the Naval and Joint Force more connected, resilient and lethal."

The effort began in 2022, when ExW Department engineers used

commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) components and leveraged the command's On Demand Manufacturing Lab to outfit JLTVs with the necessary weapons, sensors, radar and other equipment to complete MADIS Increment 1.0 in less than one year's time. The capability then matured through rigorous tests and trials before fielding to Marines at the 3rd Littoral Anti-Air Battalion and the Marine Corps Communication-Electronics School in late 2024 and throughout 2025.

Fry said MADIS is one of many examples at NIWC Atlantic that builds upon the command's historic successes in working with the Marine Corps and industry partners to rapidly innovate, prototype and integrate command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR) components onto warfighting platforms like the JLTV.

"NIWC Atlantic engineers modernize and streamline the complex work of systems integration each time they iterate," Fry said. "I couldn't be prouder of their accomplishments and continued advances on the innovation front."

'Speed of MRAP'

A triumph still remembered today for its rapid warfighter response is NIWC Atlantic's C4ISR integration of thousands of Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles for Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan, an effort that began in 2008 and ended up blasting through slow bureaucratic processes to save countless lives.

Last November, Secretary of War Peter Hegseth invoked the MRAP effort during a speech he delivered at the National War College announcing sweeping reforms in how the Department of War (DOW) will procure warfighting capabilities. With the current backdrop of a complex and ever-evolving threat environment, the Secretary stressed an urgency to move at "the speed of MRAP."

“Our objective is simple—transform the entire acquisition system to operate on a wartime footing,” he told the crowd.

For a warfare center like NIWC Atlantic, rapidly integrating commercial products and information technologies onto mission-ready platforms is job No. 1.

But speed and government are not often synonymous.

Nevertheless, NIWC Atlantic has long been a driver for disrupting the status quo to gain greater flexibilities to navigate the complex world of military acquisitions. From MRAP to MADIS, NIWC Atlantic has rapidly delivered capabilities to provide warfighters speed, connectivity, lethality and survivability, despite the roadblocks.

For example, when the JLTV first entered the U.S. military, the ExW Department overcame strict size, weight and power limitations to integrate components like sensors, jammers, advanced radio systems, battle-management software and communications equipment onto four distinct JLTV variants. Eventually, the department would field more than 5,000 of the high-tech vehicles to the Marine Corps and another 17,000 JLTVs to the Army, Navy and Air Force.

Today, the JLTV and its advanced onboard suite of C4ISR services is considered by many a cornerstone platform of Marine Corps modernization in protected and expeditionary vehicles.

More recently, the ExW Department began integrating the new Amphibious Combat Vehicle (ACV), the Marine Corps’ next-generation, amphibious transport that will replace the older Assault Amphibious Vehicles.

“NIWC Atlantic is committed to delivering cutting-edge

capabilities to the warfighter with speed and precision," said ExW Department Head Ashlee Landreth. "By applying lessons learned from MRAP and embracing modularity, rapid prototyping, rigorous testing and warfighter feedback, we are accelerating the development and fielding of next-generation technologies that give the Naval and Joint Force a decisive edge on the battlefield."

Engineers who have worked at the command for decades say teams have refined and baked lessons learned into the systems-integration process, something that intricately includes COTS solutions, to build the systems for the platforms that Marines take to war.

For example, NIWC Atlantic's signature Networking on the Move (NOTM) technology was designed in 2012 in response to an urgent Marine Corps request by U.S. Central Command to expand the capability to vehicles beyond the MRAP. Once the JLTV emerged, the Marine Corps asked ExW Department to develop a transferrable variant for it.

So the team engineered a way for NOTM to be integrated onto three separate JLTVs, operating as one system, providing Marines a sophisticated communications hub to transmit and receive vital information across the battlespace in seconds, allowing infantry troops to fight at high speeds while still maintaining critical command and control functions.

More recently, the ExW Department also integrated long-term power supplies and a completely redesigned, state-of-the-art communications system onto the Ground/Air Task-Oriented Radar (G/ATOR), a 360-degree, 3D surveillance, air-defense and air-control radar system that has replaced five legacy systems for the Marine Corps.

The department also outfitted the JLTV with the Navy-Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System, or NMESIS, which is a

cutting-edge, land-based, anti-ship missile capability tailored for the complex littoral environment.

Jenny Bennett, who leads the ExW Department's platform integration team that was responsible for fielding the JLTV, said every integration has to be meticulously managed through workflow processes that ensure the end-user, the warfighter, always gets into the identical JLTV variant—same look, same feel, same function. "We baseline every truck before turning it over to our MADIS, NOTM or NMESIS teams," she said.

Modularity & Speed

As a result of MRAP lessons learned, the ExW Department eventually broke with tradition and began procuring technical data packages (TDPs) from industry. Owning the TDPs that are tied to a COTS solution ensured government could find alternative, competitive sources in the marketplace during times of supply chain instability.

Peter Ward, ExW Department deputy, who was a young systems engineer just joining NIWC Atlantic 20 years ago, said the department continued to innovate. It bought and standardized data and focused heavily on incorporating a more vendor-neutral, "modular open systems approach," or MOSA.

"We have focused on modularity for a long time," Ward said. "No matter which commercial solution is available, the MOSA framework specifically enables a collaborative environment for working with vendors and filling specific operational needs."

With TDPs and other sensitive data, Ward said MOSA concepts help ensure proprietary data does not later keep engineers from achieving interoperability.

Recently, MOSA also enabled ExW Department engineers to tailor COTS software to build a secure, hardware-agnostic platform

called the Common Hosting Environment (CHE). Using next generation technologies, CHE is the first container-hosting environment that can run apps for Marines in the field.

Perhaps just as important as the unseen innovations in software, agile processes and engineering insights, the physical infrastructures stood up at NIWC Atlantic since the MRAP buildup is paying enormous dividends now 20 years later.

In 2007, NIWC Atlantic first stood up Poseidon Park for radio frequency testing of vehicle-mounted antennas. Instead of shipping vehicles hundreds of miles away on rail, JLTVs, ACVs and other vehicles drive onto an automated vehicle turntable to be tested and validated under an overhead gantry through range checks, antenna cosite analysis and verifications of survivability.

In 2011, the command unveiled the nearby Small Autonomous Unmanned Systems Research (SAUSR) Range to support drone swarming technologies, resilient communications, C4ISR test and evaluation, and other science and technology research.

Last year, the SAUSR Range expanded its footprint and mission set to unveil a new laser range focused on advancing naval communications through the research and development of free-space optics.

In addition to the two outdoor capabilities, NIWC Atlantic began building indoor systems integration labs, or SILs, enabling engineers to test and integrate new commercial solutions within physically constructed replicas of real-world platforms, such as one resembling the inside of a JLTV and another one the Marine Corps' new advanced reconnaissance vehicle.

"The systems integration process becomes a lot more agile and iterative when you are working in these controlled

environments," said Jeff Sims, who leads the Expeditionary Platform Integration Division at ExW Department. "SILs enhance continuous improvements and the rapid adaptation of solutions."

SILs have also institutionalized rapid prototyping practices, bringing together diverse vendors, industry partners and subject matter experts to optimize the integration of the latest innovations, from GPS technologies, radios, ruggedized laptops, sensors and cameras to data-fusing AI, advanced networking, driver-vision systems and electronic warfare.

"The cool thing is how the SIL speeds us up, gives us more flexibility and gets us across the finish line through modeling and simulation," Ward said. "Instead of requiring that everyone come together all at the same time to integrate, whenever a program discovers a new commercial product offering, we can just go in with all the other equipment, see how it configures, design it, integrate a new system and get it out the door."

Platforms successfully integrated inside of a SIL are then dispatched for environmental and operational testing at Poseidon Park, SAUSR Range and other labs on base. Before final warfighter acceptance, a field user evaluation is typically coordinated with Marine units.

"All of these developments have helped us field equipment faster, because it's not only about researching and finding products off the shelf," Ward said. "When you procure them, you need to integrate them and modify them, so they work together and do no harm to one another, and then test them. Without these labs and ranges on site, where we can physically drive the vehicles to see which ones perform best, it would take forever."

At NIWC Atlantic, innovations in automation, engineering,

modularity, systems integration and software-defined communications have made the command good stewards of their many MRAP lessons-learned. Rather than be cloistered in labs, teams are external-facing, working closely with pioneers in industry, constantly experimenting with the integration of systems, walking lockstep with their Marine sponsors and very appreciative of the multifaceted stakeholder relationships a Navy lab like NIWC Atlantic must continually foster and support in order to continue delivering worldclass information warfare solutions to the Fleet.

“We know the Marine Corps requires information warfighting capabilities to create and exploit information advantages on all points of the competition continuum,” Landreth said. “This is why NIWC Atlantic—from MRAP to MADIS and beyond—plays such a critical role in the success of the modern-day Marine.”

About NIWC Atlantic

As a part of Naval Information Warfare Systems Command, NIWC Atlantic provides systems engineering and acquisition to deliver information warfare capabilities to the naval, joint and national warfighter through the acquisition, development, integration, production, test, deployment, and sustainment of interoperable command, control, communications, computer, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, cyber and information technology capabilities.

USS Nimitz Conducts Milestone

Departure from Naval Base Kitsap

U.S. Sailors man the rails underway aboard Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) during the ship's final departure from Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton, Washington, Mar. 7, 2026. Nimitz is underway in the U.S. 3rd Fleet area of operations as part of a scheduled homeport shift to Norfolk, Virginia. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jaron Wills)

by LT.J.G. Paul Fletcher, March 9, 2026

The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) departed Naval Base Kitsap in Bremerton, Washington, for the last time in its 51-year service history, as part of a scheduled homeport shift to Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, March 7.

Nimitz has spent the majority of its five decades of service as the "Pacific Northwest's Carrier," deploying around the

world to affirm the U.S. Navy’s commitment to forward presence, ensuring maritime security, deterring aggression, and protecting the American way of life.

“This ship and her crew could not be more thankful to the people of Washington State for their decades of hospitality, friendship and trust,” said Capt. Joseph Furco, commanding officer of Nimitz. “It is in no small part due to the support of our local community that Nimitz Sailors have been able to successfully train, fight and win, exemplifying the ship’s motto; Teamwork, a Tradition.”

Mostly recently, Nimitz returned to Bremerton in December after nine months underway in the U.S. 3rd, 5th, and 7th Fleets. As flagship of the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group (NIMCSG) during this period, the Nimitz and her crew completed more than 8,500 sorties and 17,000 flight hours, carried out 50 replenishments-at-sea aboard the carrier and sailed over 82,000 nautical miles combined.

Additionally, the NIMCSG supported U.S. Africa Command operations by conducting strikes against ISIS targets in Somalia.

The lead ship of her class, Nimitz was commissioned May 3, 1975, and named in honor of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz who achieved the highest rank in the United States Navy as Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet during World War II.

An integral part of U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. 3rd Fleet operates naval forces in the Indo-Pacific and provides the realistic and relevant training to ensure the readiness necessary to execute the U.S. Navy’s timeless role across the full spectrum of military operations. U.S. 3rd Fleet works together with our allies and partners to advance a shared vision of a free, open, and secure Indo-Pacific in which all nations are secure in their sovereignty and free from coercion.