

# **AEROVIRONMENT AWARDED \$16 MILLION U.S. NAVY CONTRACT FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF VIDEO ANALYTICS AND COMPUTER VISION RESEARCH TO SUPPORT MULTI-DOMAIN ROBOTICS INITIATIVES**

Release from AeroVironment Inc.

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ARLINGTON, Va., December 12, 2023 – AeroVironment, Inc. today announced it received a \$16,098,922 cost-plus-fixed-fee contract from the U.S. Navy for the advancement of video analytics and computer vision research to support multi-domain robotics initiatives. This contract is in support of the Small Business Innovation Research Phase III “Automated Entity Classification in Video Using Soft Biometrics” and will be managed by the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division in Lakehurst, New Jersey.

AeroVironment’s focus is on developing a video analytics software ecosystem for the government that can be used across platforms (both internal and external to AeroVironment) to provide enhanced situational awareness and capabilities for the warfighter in a wide range of mission areas.

“This is a multi-year effort that will allow us to explore and implement new research initiatives and provide critical processing capabilities to AeroVironment products, integration partners, and other research organizations,” said Jeff Rodrian, senior vice president and general manager for the MacCready Works Segment. “This investment will allow us to

optimize how current Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance (ISR) and Targeting are performed throughout the United States DoD.”

Building on 50 years of innovation, AeroVironment draws from a legacy in multi-domain robotic systems; its pioneering autonomy and advanced perception capabilities serve as a force multiplier for warfighters today and tomorrow.

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**Coast Guard Cutter Dauntless  
returns home to Florida after  
interdicting 19.4 million in  
illegal narcotics, 3  
suspected drug smugglers**



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area](#)

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Dec. 13, 2023

PENSACOLA, Fla. – The crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Dauntless (WMEC 624) returned to their homeport in Pensacola Tuesday following a 25-day counterdrug deployment in the Caribbean Sea.

While underway in the Coast Guard Seventh District's area of operations and in support of Joint Interagency Task Force–South, Dauntless's crew spent 25 days patrolling the Caribbean, where their primary mission was detecting and interdicting go-fast and other vessels suspected of smuggling illegal narcotics into the U.S.

During the patrol, Dauntless's crew interdicted one go-fast vessel smuggling illegal narcotics, seizing over 670 kilograms of cocaine worth an estimated 19.4 million, and apprehended three suspected drug smugglers.

“This interdiction truly showcased the impressive skill and relentless perseverance of the Dauntless crew,” said Cmdr. Aaron Kowalczyk, commanding officer of Dauntless. “Their ability to complete the seizure despite challenging conditions highlights the Coast Guard’s important role in countering transnational criminal organizations. The crew’s commitment to combating narcotics trafficking is emblematic of their dedication to service.”

In addition to interdicting illegal narcotics, Dauntless’s crew conducted joint operations with the USS Farragut and its embarked Law Enforcement Detachment to transfer 433 kilograms of illegal narcotics and six suspected traffickers, strengthening interoperability with Department of Defense partners and promoting maritime security and safety.

Dauntless is a 210-foot Reliance-class medium endurance cutter. The cutter’s primary missions are counter-narcotics operations, migrant interdiction, living marine resources protection, and search and rescue in support of U.S. Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.

For information on how to join the U.S. Coast Guard, visit [www.GoCoastGuard.com](http://www.GoCoastGuard.com) to learn more about active duty and reserve officer and enlisted opportunities. Information on how to apply to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy can be found at [www.uscga.edu](http://www.uscga.edu).

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**BlastOne Commissions State-of-the-Art Blast and Paint**

# Facility at Fincantieri Marinette Marine



Release from BlastOne

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Premier shipbuilder launches facility to accelerate delivery of new Constellation-Class Frigates to US Navy

COLUMBUS, Ohio, Dec. 13, 2023 /PRNewswire-PRWeb/ – BlastOne International, a leader in industrial sandblasting and coating solutions, announces the completion of its advanced naval blast and paint booths for Fincantieri Marinette Marine (FMM) in Wisconsin. The new facility significantly enhances FMM's shipyard efficiency as it was designed to specifically eliminate the most pervasive bottleneck in production: the surface preparation and coating phase.

The state-of-the-art installation delivers the highest blast and paint capacity in North American shipyard manufacturing, which now boosts FMM's delivery of Constellation-Class

frigates to the maritime defense capabilities of the US Navy. The Constellation-Class Frigates embody the United States' dedication to modernize the American Fleet.

BlastOne's role in helping FMM expedite the delivery of these vessels as quickly as possible is a proud achievement, as expressed by CEO Matthew Rowland: "As speed and deliverability are critical to FMM's success, contracting BlastOne in a Design-Build capacity allowed us to streamline processes and deliver the facility at a 25% lower cost and in a 30% faster time-frame than traditional Design-Bid-Build projects. The faster we delivered for them, the faster they can continue to deliver for the US Navy."

Key Features of the Modernized Blast and Paint Facility:

- **Optimized Space:** 25,000 square feet of climate-controlled finishing space with two dedicated painting bays and two blast and paint combination bays.
- **Maximum Output:** Capacity for 16 blasters and eight paint sprayers across four modules.
- **Enhanced Safety:** Each of the four process areas are equipped with state-of-the-art ventilation systems with continuous air quality monitoring as well as camera systems to increase the safety of FMM personnel.
- **Maximum Energy Efficiency:** Utilization of heat from the compressed air plant for winter heating.

Pierroberto Folgiero, CEO of Fincantieri, highlights the facility's impact: "This improved facility allows for larger portions of ships to be prepared and painted with modern environmental controls, ensuring our shipyard remains one of the safest, most efficient, and environmentally responsible in America."

The deployment of Constellation-Class Frigates, equipped with cutting-edge technology, helps deliver on the Navy's

commitment to ensure global peace and stability.

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# Insitu Announces Successful Shryke Demonstration with Integrator Uncrewed Aircraft System



Release from Insitu

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BINGEN, Wash., Dec. 12, 2023 – Insitu, A Boeing Company, announced today the [first successful drop](#) of inert GPS-guided Shryke munitions from the Integrator Uncrewed Aircraft System (UAS) in collaboration with Corvid and L3Harris Technologies.

Shryke, developed by Corvid Technologies with L3Harris, is known for its multi-mission precision strike and versatility and is another option in a long line of highly sought-after strike capabilities that Insitu is offering to its customers.

“We were able to demonstrate a low signature munition with a safe separation sensor, fuze, and warhead on Integrator,” said Kyle Bowen, Corvid Technologies Director of Business Development. “Integrator delivered the munitions within 1-2 meters of the target in each test flight. We couldn’t have asked for a more successful demonstration,” Bowen said.

Integrator, a NATO Class 1 Small UAS (DoD Group 3 UAS) offers endurance of more than 24 hours and carries up to 40lb of payload capacity. Payload integrations are accommodated in the center CG bay, two wing trays, and two wing-mounted hardpoints. Integrator’s multi-payload capacity provides our customers the ability to carry multiple munitions and/or transition between kinetic and non-kinetic objectives as the mission requires.

“The two rounds of munitions were seamlessly fitted into Integrator’s CG payload bay and several mission sorties were executed demonstrating advanced navigation, targeting, and payload delivery systems,” said Justin Pearce, Insitu Vice President of Programs, Engineering & Flight. “Pairing kinetics with Insitu’s proven endurance and range gives our customers flexibility in how they address a dynamic battlefield.”

The Integrator was equipped with a MIL-STD-1316 Electronic Safe and Arm Device (ESAD) from L3Harris to provide safety-critical energetic systems initiation-on-command and to safely support the post-flight recovery of munitions still installed.

“The ESAD was designed for applications that require a reliable arming and firing sequence with precise timing events, as well as vital personnel safety precautions,” said

Steve Stasiak, General Manager, L3Harris Technologies. “We were able to validate this capability on Integrator and are very pleased with the way the ESAD configurations performed during the flight test.”

Insitu continues to work with customers and industry partners in testing and integrating additional munition payloads.

With three decades of experience, more than 3,500 uncrewed aircraft manufactured to date, and more than 1.4 million operational flight hours, Insitu continues to deliver the most advanced capabilities available to our global customer base in more than 35 countries. Visit [Insitu.com](http://Insitu.com) to learn more about the most capable, reliable, and combat-proven small tactical UAS on the market.

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## **Coast Guard Upgrades Two Detachments to Full Bases**

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Coast Guard has upgraded two of its land-based detachments stations to full bases, according to two Coast Guard directives.

The Coast Guard’s Operational Logistics Command formally established Base St. Louis, Missouri, in ceremonies held Nov. 30, with Lieutenant Commander John Waters in command, and established Base Borinquen, Puerto Rico, on Dec. 12, with Lieutenant Commander Thomas Kai in command.

The directives noted that each base “provides a new junior command opportunity for the mission support enterprise.”

Base St. Louis will provide support to Coast Guard operations in the Western Rivers and heartland of the United States. Base Borinquen will provide support to Coast Guard operations in the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Ocean.

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# **AUKUS-Related Foreign Military Sales Case Goes to Congress**



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Release from NAVSEA Office of Corporate Communications and  
AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Program Office Public  
Affairs

Dec. 11, 2023

By NAVSEA Office of Corporate Communications and AUKUS  
Integration and Acquisition Program Office Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – The Department of State endorsed, and the Defense Security Cooperation Agency delivered congressional notification of, a proposed Foreign Military Sales (FMS) Case for submarine training devices, personnel training, planning, and nonrecurring engineering (NRE) services in support of the AUKUS Pillar One Optimal Pathway. The case will span nine years and have a ceiling of \$2 billion pending passage of several legislative proposals.

“The submarine trainers are the same ones used by U.S. crews assigned to Virginia Class boats,” said Capt. Lincoln Reifsteck, the AUKUS Integration and Acquisition (AUKUS I&A) Program Manager. “The systems will be used by Australian submariners and U.S. crews on boats assigned to HMAS *Stirling* in Western Australia as part of Submarine Rotational Force – West (SRF-W) which will be established as early as late 2027. The Royal Australian Navy will utilize the trainers to train its crews ahead of buying and operating their own Virginia Class submarines.”

The United States, with Congressional approval, will sell three Virginia Class submarines to Australia starting in the early 2030s with the potential of increasing the total number to five. The training devices will be used for the life of the Australian-flagged Virginia Class SSNs.

The FMS case also provides the mechanism to train Australian civilians and contractors at United States Naval Shipyards. Pending Congressional approval, the first Australian submarine maintainers will begin training at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard

& Intermediate Maintenance Facility (PHNSY & IMF) in the second quarter of calendar year 2024.

“Right now we have Australian Maintenance Personnel, or AMPs, observing how we plan and execute SSN maintenance at PHNSY & IMF,” said Reifsteck. “They’re also laying the ground work to have up to 75 Australians per quarter living and training in Hawaii so we can bring them over as soon as we’re able to so.”

The AUKUS partnership is a strategic endeavor that strengthens the three nations’ national security and promotes peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Australia will acquire conventionally armed SSNs for the Royal Australian Navy under AUKUS Pillar One via the Optimal Pathway announced by the heads of the three partner nations on March 13, 2023. AUKUS I&A is responsible for executing the trilateral partnership to deliver conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered attack submarines to the Royal Australian Navy at the earliest possible date while setting the highest nuclear stewardship standards.

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## **SECNAV Del Toro Establishes DON Office of Strategic Assessment**

[Release from SECNAV Public Affairs](#)

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11 December 2023

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro today announced the

establishment of the Department of the Navy Office of Strategic Assessment (DON OSA).

✘ A cornerstone of the Secretary's Maritime Statecraft initiative, DON OSA will inform the development of guiding principles and priorities to promote a modernized and more lethal force that stands ready to deter high-end conflict while simultaneously protecting and advancing the global maritime interests of the Nation.

DON OSA will provide the Secretary independent, data-driven assessments and recommendations that will help drive smart choices for the Department of the Navy to balance current readiness investments and future modernization, enhancing the Department's competitiveness against the pacing threat. OSA demonstrates the Secretary's commitment to ensure the DON is the best possible steward of taxpayer dollars.

"The Office of Strategic Assessment will provide a critical capability ensuring that we are ready to build upon our maritime supremacy across the globe today while also preparing for the dynamic challenges of the future," said Secretary Del Toro. "Data-driven assessments looking strategically across the entire DON enterprise in support of the Joint Force will help us make smarter choices as we balance investments in current readiness and future modernization in order to enhance the Department's competitiveness against the pacing threat."

Additionally, Secretary Del Toro appointed Dr. Cara LaPointe to serve as the first Director of Strategic Assessment. A U.S. Naval Academy graduate, LaPointe brings more 25 years of national security, technology policy, and leadership experience to the position. LaPointe's deep background of government service includes service as a Naval Surface Warfare Officer and experience within the acquisition community as an Engineering Duty Officer. She also has served within the Executive Office of the President under three administrations, including as a Senior Advisor. Most recently, LaPointe came

from Johns Hopkins University, where she was a founding Co-Director of the Institute for Assured Autonomy. She has also served as an expert advisor for global emerging technology initiatives at both the United Nations and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, as well as an inaugural member of the DON Science and Technology Board.

“I am deeply honored to serve in this new role as Director of OSA. I look forward to collaborating with the Navy and Marine Corps as well as with our other key partners across the Department of Defense, academia, and industry as we collectively chart a course for the future of the DON in the face of dynamic global change,” said LaPointe. “In close partnership with our One Navy-Marine Corps Team, OSA will build on the transformational paths the Services have charted to advance the Department’s enduring priorities.”

By aligning investments and actions to the Department’s enduring priorities of strengthening maritime dominance, building a culture of warfighting excellence, and enhancing strategic partnerships, OSA will ensure the Department continues to field the world’s most dominant maritime force.

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## **U.S. 3rd Fleet Hosts RIMPAC Mid-Planning Conference**



[Release from U.S. 3rd Fleet Public Affairs](#)

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Dec. 6, 2023

KANELOHE BAY, Hawaii – Commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet unveiled the new Rim of the Pacific 2024 logo at the kick-off of the middle planning conference for the exercise at Marine Corps Base Hawaii Dec. 5, 2023.

More than 800 personnel from representing nations participating in RIMPAC 2024 were in attendance to view the official logo before it was displayed to the public.

Of the 47 highly competitive entries from around the world, the final design was a combination of two separate submissions – one from Lt. Tristan Robertson of the Royal Canadian Navy and one from Lt. Emily Paiz of the U.S Navy.

“The logo for RIMPAC represents the progress that has been made since the inception of the first exercise back in 1971,” said U.S. 3rd Fleet Deputy Commander Capt. Richard Meyer. “The

design reflects the development of new and longstanding relationships while also highlighting the versatility in training that is a direct result of having a joint exercise of this scale.”

The RIMPAC 2024 theme “Partners: Integrated and Prepared” was the inspiration behind the creation of the logo. The creators wanted the logo to convey that RIMPAC is not just an exercise designed to bring multiple nations together, but also an event that allows its participants the opportunity to develop the relationships and partnerships required to meet the needs of each nation’s training and interoperability objectives.

“There has been tremendous growth with partnerships among nations,” said RIMPAC coordinator Royal Australian Navy Lt. Cmdr. Timothy Gill. “We continue to have more nations who want to join, want to train with us, and also want to train with all nations as a unit. We are all focused on the same goal of maritime safety and security.”

Unlike the previous RIMPAC, the entire exercise will solely take place in and around the Hawaiian Islands. To commemorate that, the backdrop of the logo features a tropical landscape. At the center of the logo is a trident that is representative of both U.S. 3rd Fleet and the joint warfighting capabilities of land, air and sea.

The logo was revealed at beginning of the mid-planning conference for RIMPAC 2024, a biennial event that allows participants from all partner nations to conduct detailed exercise planning, synchronize all aspects of the exercise, including harbor, force integration and tactical phases, and review draft schedules of events.

“I anticipate that this RIMPAC will be more dynamic than previous iterations, and will provide increased opportunities for all participating nations to work together as an

integrated and interchangeable force,” said Meyer. “While its focus on the maritime remains, the scale and scope of RIMPAC has grown and evolved over the years into a true multi-domain exercise. We see particular growth in the air and land domains. In keeping with the updated RIMPAC theme, vision and objective, RIMPAC 2024 will mark a notable advancement in the history of the exercise.”

The world’s largest international maritime exercise, RIMPAC provides a unique training opportunity while fostering and sustaining cooperative relationships among participants critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security on the world’s oceans.

RIMPAC 2024 is the 29th exercise in the series that began in 1971 and was held annually until 1974, when it became a biennial exercise due to its increasing scale. The founding nations were Australia, Canada and the United States.

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## **U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Waesche returns home after 89-day counternarcotics patrol in Eastern Pacific Ocean**



[Release from U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area](#)

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Dec. 10, 2023

ALAMEDA, Calif. – Coast Guard Cutter Waesche (WMSL 751) and crew returned to homeport, Saturday, following an 89-day counternarcotics patrol in the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

The 418-foot national security cutter and its crew patrolled more than 19,750 nautical miles conducting law enforcement and search and rescue operations in international waters off Central and South America.

Waesche deployed with a Jacksonville, Florida, based Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron (HITRON) MH-65 Dolphin helicopter and aircrew, members from Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) 101 and 102, and contractors who flew Scan Eagle, an advanced unmanned aircraft system. While conducting flight operations with Air Station San Diego off the coast of

San Diego, Waesche's crew received notification from of a mariner 300 nautical miles west of San Diego aboard a disabled sailing vessel with no food in 8-10 foot seas. Waesche diverted from its position to the disabled sailing vessel and launched its Over-The-Horizon (OTH) small boat crew to rescue the survivor and bring him aboard.

Waesche participated in San Francisco Fleet Week 2023, hosting several days of public tours and representing the service during the Parade of Ships event, which involved formation maneuvering with U.S. Navy vessels and rendering honors to the Secretary of the Navy in a pass-in-review.

After departing San Francisco, Waesche began its counternarcotics patrol in the Eastern Pacific, and interdicted five smuggling vessels operating in international waters, deploying the cutter's Over-the-Horizon (OTH) small boats with boarding teams, the Scan Eagle drone, and a helicopter with a precision marksman. Waesche's last interdiction was a self-propelled semi-submersible, resulting in the seizure of 2,510 kgs of cocaine. [Waesche's crew offloaded more than 18,000 pounds of cocaine in San Diego, Wednesday](#), which included two seizures of drug-smuggling vessels made by U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Active's crew.

Waesche is the second Legend-class cutter of the U.S. Coast Guard and is homeported at Coast Guard Island in Alameda, CA. Waesche is 418-foot long with a top speed of 28 knots and a range of 12,000 nautical miles. It is equipped with a flight deck and hangars capable of housing two multi-mission helicopters and is outfitted with the most advanced command, control, and communications equipment.

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# L3Harris' VAMPIRE System Helps U.S. Navy Fill Ukraine's Counter-UAS Gap with Speed and Agility



L3Harris has delivered all Vehicle Agnostic Modular Palletized ISR Rocket Equipment – or VAMPIRE™ – counter UAS systems on schedule to strengthen Ukrainian security defense efforts. (L3Harris photos)

[Release from L3Harris](#)

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MELBOURNE, Fla., Dec. 11, 2023 – L3Harris Technologies' (NYSE:LHX) Vehicle Agnostic Modular Palletized ISR Rocket Equipment (VAMPIRE™) multi-purpose weapons systems are having an immediate impact in Ukraine's wartime efforts.

“Early customer reports say VAMPIRE is already having a positive effect in Ukraine thanks to the U.S. Navy's ability to respond with [‘unprecedented speed and agility,’](#)” said Jason

Lambert, President, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, L3Harris. "As adversary tactics evolve, our customers rely on us to anticipate, design and rapidly deliver reliable mission capabilities. We'll continue partnering with the Department of Defense to field critical capabilities that will help save lives."

VAMPIRE enables Ukrainian ground forces to target and destroy enemy drones and defend against adversary ground threats. L3Harris designed the system to deliver advanced reconnaissance and precision strike capabilities to protect Ukrainian civilian infrastructure from enemy attacks.

L3Harris completed installation and delivery of all systems, in support of Ukrainian defense efforts, on time to DoD.

VAMPIRE's mission management system integrates an advanced company [WESCAM MX™-10 RSTA](#) targeting sensor with its weapons station, allowing an operator to engage targets quickly and accurately. It combines affordability with accuracy from the Advanced Precision Kill Weapons System rocket, selected specifically for use in Ukraine, which will incorporate L3Harris' [proximity fuze](#) for increased system lethality for engaging ground and aerial targets.