

# HII Achieves Significant Light-Off Milestone aboard First Flight III DDG



Ingalls Shipbuilding electrician Joe Ditsworth and electrical foreman Lisa Avery initiate light-off of the Aegis Combat System aboard Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125) in the ship's combat information center. *INGALLS SHIPBUILDING* / Luis Solis  
PASCAGOULA, Miss. – Huntington Ingalls Industries' Ingalls Shipbuilding division recently achieved the Aegis light-off milestone on the Navy's first Flight III Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125), the company said Jan. 12.

This milestone marks the beginning of combat system testing as shipbuilders ready the ship for propulsion tests and eventually sea trials.

"I am again very proud of our DDG 51 team and the work they

have done,” said Kari Wilkinson, Ingalls Shipbuilding president. “Not only have they completed a significant program milestone aboard the first Flight III destroyer, but they have done so in the face of a pandemic. This team continues to prove it’s as strong as the ships it builds.”

The Flight III upgrade incorporates a number of design modifications that collectively provide significantly enhanced capability. Aegis light-off is an important milestone for integrating and activating all of the new electric plant equipment and combat systems.

“Through perseverance, a good plan, execution of that plan and relentless follow up, our shipbuilders have reached ALO,” said Jeff J. Davis, DDG 125 construction manager. “There is a huge collaboration effort between Ingalls, the Navy, industry partners and multiple other contractors.”

Arleigh Burke-class destroyers are highly capable, multi-mission ships and can conduct a variety of operations, from peacetime presence and crisis management to sea control and power projection, all in support of the United States military strategy. Guided missile destroyers are capable of simultaneously fighting air, surface and subsurface battles. The ship contains a myriad of offensive and defensive weapons designed to support maritime defense needs well into the 21st century.

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## **CNO to Elevate Navy Safety Center to a Two-Star Command**



A helicopter from Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 3 combats a fire aboard the amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6). *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class David Mora Jr.*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The chief of naval operations is increasing the focus of the Navy on safety in its operations by elevating the Naval Safety Center to a full command.

CNO Adm. Michael Gilday, speaking Jan. 11 to an audience at the Surface Navy Association's annual symposium in Arlington, said the Naval Safety Center in Norfolk, Virginia, would be redesignated the Navy Safety Command and its commander would be a two-star admiral with experience as a carrier strike group commander.

"That command will evaluate how the entire Navy – from the fleet commander down – manage safety and risk, and it will grade how effectively commands are self-assessing performance," the CNO said.

The commander of the Navy Safety Command would report directly

to the CNO.

Gilday said he considered the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey as a model for the Naval Safety Command and how it will perform.

The Navy has suffered a number of high-profile collisions at sea in recent years, most notably the 2017 collisions of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Fitzgerald and USS John McCain with merchant ships, resulting in the deaths of 17 Sailors. The amphibious assault ship US Bonhomme Richard was damaged beyond economical repair in 2020 by a fire while pierside.

Gilday noted in his speech that the fleet had suffered "14 other major fire events in the past 12 years."

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## **Kitchener: SWO Retention on An Upward Trend**



Vice Adm. Roy Kitchener, speaking at the Surface Navy Association's annual symposium. *U.S. NAVY*  
ARLINGTON, Va. – The retention of surface warfare officers is improving, the U.S. Navy's "surface boss" said, one metric that affirms the Navy's efforts to assess its readiness and to take action to address the challenges.

"Within the wardroom, SWO retention continues on an upward trend, a 5% increase over the past five years, exceeding or remaining on par with the aviation and submarine communities," said Vice Adm. Roy Kitchener, speaking Jan. 11 to an audience at the Surface Navy Association's annual symposium in Arlington, Virginia.

"While a positive indication, there's still a lot of work to do, and we're really not satisfied where we are," Kitchener said.

"We'll be looking at the entire career spectrum through an analytical lens to determine what our officer retention goal

should be,” he said. “We need to think differently about how we manage retention. I would submit that past retention policies may not help us retain the best talent as we move into the future.”

Kitchener said the Navy is looking at how other services and other high-performing organizations “manage their talent pool.”

He also said the Navy will look at important factors such as childcare and family planning.

“We’re also devoting resources to retention in a number of ways throughout the SWO career path with increased compensation, diverse education opportunities, tours within industry, and additional flexibility in their career path,” he said. “We have a lot of work to do in this area, but we are committed to the task.”

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## **CNO Gilday Issues New ‘Charge of Command’ to Commanders**



Adm. Mike Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations, addresses media in the hangar bay of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) as part of maritime exercise Malabar 2021, Oct. 14, 2021. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Emily Claire Bennett*

WASHINGTON – Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday issued a new “charge of command” to commanders Jan. 10, the CNO’s public affairs said in a release.

The document highlights and lays out CNO’s expectations for commanders at every level and focuses on several key topics, including professional competency, integrity, character and preparing for and leading in combat.

“The responsibility of command is absolute, and we take our commanding officers’ performance very seriously,” said Gilday. “We place a great amount of trust and confidence in our commanding officers, rely on them to manage risk, make decisions, and communicate openly and honestly, especially in crisis.”

Gilday said his expectation is that leaders use the charge as a foundational point for conversations about standards of performance.

“Above all, command, whether at sea or ashore, is fundamentally about preparing for and leading in combat,” the charge reads. “Never lose sight of this – seize absolute ownership of your assigned mission, and all that goes into its accomplishment. When called upon to sail into harm’s way, you and your team must be ready. Your command’s mission is absolutely essential to the Navy’s ability to fight and win. Imbue this belief in your team.”

Gilday also stressed the need for commanders to set the example for their Sailors.

“As the commander, you are the example your team reflects,” the charge reads. “Embody humility, selflessness, and complete transparency. Acknowledge the value of every Sailor and civilian. Take care of them and their families. Embrace diversity of thought and background. Foster inclusion and connectedness. Always do the right thing, especially when it is hard. In doing these things, keep close watch on your own mental, physical, and emotional health, and the health of those you lead.”

The last charge of command was issued by former CNO Adm. John Richardson in 2018.

The charge of command can be viewed here: <https://go.usa.gov/xt2hP>.

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**Commander, Naval Surface  
Force Releases Force**

# Alignment Document



Vice Adm. Roy Kitchener released a new surface force alignment document, "Surface Warfare: The Competitive Edge," on Jan. 11. *U.S. NAVY*

ARLINGTON, Va. – Vice Adm. Roy Kitchener, commander of Naval Surface Forces released "Surface Warfare: The Competitive Edge," at the Surface Navy Association National Conference, Jan 11, the Navy said in a release.

The document was designed to better align the surface force in the face of increasing technological complexity and rising strategic challenges.

In the paper, Kitchener cites the strategic importance of the surface force to America's forward-deployed conventional deterrence posture, a posture that depends on surface ships creating "...numerous operational dilemmas arising from present, powerful, networked, interoperable forces."

“The surface force and the surface warfare enterprise must better align in order to get in front of the challenges we face – challenges stemming from serious strategic competition and the complexity of the force we are becoming,” said Kitchener.

Citing five main lines of operation along which the surface force must plan, Kitchener pointed to the coming decade as one of unprecedented complexity, in which 10 new or modified platforms will either join the fleet or begin production. Adding to this complexity will be the fielding of a new fleet radar, (the SPY-6 family), a new electronic warfare system (SEWIP Block III) and a new computer program that integrates them, Aegis Baseline 10.

“This document directs action to lead the target, thereby providing our ships and crews with the tools they need,” said Kitchener. “Together, we will remove obstacles and break through barriers that impede our success.”

The five lines of effort in the document (develop the leader, warrior, mariner, and manager; deliver more, ready ships; achieve excellence in fleet introduction; create clear and innovative operational concepts; and establish infrastructure for the future force) are each assigned to responsible flag officers, called LOE owners, for action, and include specific tasks with deadlines for completion.

Kitchener will lead these efforts and require periodic updates, as well as provide the surface warfare community with regular updates.

### **The Five Lines of Effort**

- Develop the leader, warrior, mariner, and manager: LOE owner is commander, Naval Surface Forces. “The surface force builds leaders, warriors, mariners, and managers, and each of these roles requires training, education and mentoring. While we continue to field increasingly sophisticated technology, the

human element remains central.”

- Produce more ready ships: LOE owner is commander, Naval Surface Forces. “The essence of this LOE is to force new thinking about the force we have and consider ways of getting more out of it by planning, maintaining, and operating it more wisely.”

- Achieve excellence in fleet introduction: LOE owner is commander, Naval Surface Forces Atlantic. This LOE focuses on improving surface force performance in platform and capability introduction by applying lessons learned from both the successes and the challenges of the past 50 years.

- Create clear and innovative operational concepts: LOE owner: Commander, Surface and Mine Warfare Development Command. This LOE tasks SMWDC with developing the people, the concepts and the facilities necessary to derive and provide innovative warfighting concepts to accompany new platforms and capabilities.

- Establish infrastructure for the future force: LOE owners are OPNAV N95/96. This LOE focuses on the command and control infrastructure of surface forces, the physical infrastructure of surface forces, and the land-based, developmental infrastructure necessary to support Surface Force development.

### **Highlights of ‘The Competitive Edge’**

- Recognizes both the complexity of platforms and capabilities entering the force in the next decade and the strategic challenges those platforms and capabilities are addressing.

- Assigns responsible parties with required dates of accomplishment.

- Strengthens force emphasis on data analytics.

- Considers the introduction of warfare tactics instructors to

program offices to ensure tight coupling of concepts with acquisition.

- Requires OPNAV N96 to produce an integrated combat system campaign plan and PEO IWS to produce an integrated combat system roadmap. The roadmap will have at least a 10-year horizon.

- Considers the return of fleet introduction teams to enhance transition of new platforms to the force.

- Assigns SMWDC to develop a capability introduction road map for Maritime Strike Tomahawk, as part of a larger emphasis on SMWDC growing into the center of warfighting innovation, experimentation and virtual warfighting.

- Requires a 10-year roadmap for class-specific land-based facilities and infrastructure requirements to reduce technical risk in capability introduction.

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## **Bollinger to Build Pontoon Launcher for General Dynamics Electric Boat**



An artist's rendering of the future U.S. Navy Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines. *U.S. NAVY*

LOCKPORT, La. – Bollinger Shipyards LLC will construct a new pontoon launcher for General Dynamics Electric Boat to support the construction and launching of the United States' Columbia-class ballistic-missile submarines (SSBNs), which will replace the aging Ohio-class of SSBNs and is a top strategic defense priority for the United States.

“Bollinger Shipyards is excited to expand our ongoing relationship with Electric Boat and to continue to support the capitalization and infrastructure improvements that Electric Boat has undertaken in reshaping and modernizing its Groton shipyard,” said Bollinger Shipyards President and CEO Ben Bordelon. “We’re honored to have been selected to build this pontoon launcher with the quality craftsmanship of the hardworking men and women of Bollinger Shipyard and we continue to be laser-focused and committed to being a leader in pushing our industry forward and ensuring that the U.S.

Industrial Base is fully self-sufficient.”

“Electric Boat continues to expand and upgrade its infrastructure to support construction of the Columbia class, the nation’s top strategic defense priority,” said Joe Drake, vice president, Real Estate and Facilities, General Dynamics Electric Boat. “Our partnership with Bollinger is an important part of that strategy.”

The concept and contract design for the 496-foot-by-95 foot pontoon launcher was performed by the Bristol Harbor Group in Rhode Island. The detail design engineering will be performed at the Bollinger facility in Lockport, Louisiana. The launcher is scheduled to be delivered to Electric Boat’s Groton, Connecticut, shipyard in 2024.

Electric Boat is the prime contractor on the design and build of the of the Columbia-class SSBN.

This is Bollinger Shipyards’ third contract awarded with Electric Boat. In late 2019, Bollinger Shipyards was selected to construct the ocean transport barge for Electric Boat, which was delivered in 2021 and in late 2020, Bollinger was selected to construct a floating dry dock, all of which support the construction and maintenance of the Columbia-class SSBN.

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## **Fairbanks Morse to Provide Engine Parts for Coast Guard**

# Icebreaking Tugboats



The Coast Guard Cutter Katmai Bay (WTGB 101) was the first of nine 140-foot Bay Class tugs built for the Coast Guard's domestic icebreaking mission. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

BELOIT, Wis. – Fairbanks Morse Defense, a portfolio company of Arcline Investment Management, has been awarded a five-year indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity requirements contract by the U.S. Coast Guard Surface Forces Logistic Center, the company announced Jan. 10.

The agreement, worth up to \$13 million, makes FMD the required source of supply for all opposed piston engine parts listed in the contract's schedule of supplies. These parts primarily support OP engines on nine 140-foot Bay Class Icebreaking Tugboats (WTGBs).

Since 1977, WTGBs have been used as critical icebreakers on many Northeast and Midwestern U.S. rivers and the Great Lakes, ensuring waterways remain open year-round. More than 15

million tons of cargo such as food and petroleum products, as well as 90% of the nation's home heating oil, are transported annually in January and February along Northeast waterways, making it essential that these channels are kept open to avoid supply chain disruptions.

The contract also includes provisions for engine parts onboard the U.S. Coast Guard's decommissioned high endurance cutters (WHECs) that have been transferred or are in the process of being transferred to foreign navies.

"Fairbanks Morse Defense delivers an advantage to the U.S. Coast Guard by offering best-in-class marine technologies, OEM [original equipment manufacturer] parts, and turnkey services," said FMD CEO George Whittier. "As a trusted partner to the Coast Guard, we live our ironclad commitment to the fleet and crew every day, on every job. Manufactured in the U.S. and serviced worldwide, our proven marine technology is engineered for excellence to ensure reliable operation and minimal downtime."

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**HII Launches Amphibious  
Transport Dock Richard M.  
McCool Jr.**



Huntington Ingalls Industries launched amphibious transport dock ship Richard M. McCool Jr. on Jan. 7. *HUNTINGTON INGALLS INDUSTRIES*

PASCAGOULA, Miss. – Huntington Ingalls Industries’ Ingalls Shipbuilding division announced Jan. 7 the successful launch of amphibious transport dock Richard M. McCool Jr. (LPD 29).

Richard M. McCool Jr., the 13th LPD in the San Antonio class of amphibious assault force ships, will support U.S. amphibious assault, special operations and expeditionary warfare missions through the first half of the 21st century.

“The LPD class ships, like all of our programs, are critically important to U.S. national security,” said Kari Wilkinson, president of HII’s Ingalls Shipbuilding division. “In addition, thousands of Americans, from engineers to electricians, have worked on LPD 29 over the years. Ingalls Shipbuilding is proud to build them and even more proud of the talented people that make up our shipbuilding team.”

With the assistance of tugs, Richard M. McCool Jr. came off

the floating dry dock Wednesday morning, after first being translated via Ingalls' rail car system. The dock was moved away from the pier and then ballasted to float off the ship.

Launching Richard M. McCool Jr. is the first of a series of significant milestone events in bringing the ship to life, and eventual delivery to the U.S. Navy which is planned for later next year.

Ingalls Shipbuilding is building the entire San Antonio class of ships, the newest addition to the Navy's 21st century amphibious assault force. The 684-foot-long, 105-foot-wide ships that displace 25,000 tons are used to embark and land Marines, their equipment and supplies ashore via air cushion or conventional landing craft and amphibious assault vehicles, augmented by helicopters or vertical takeoff and landing aircraft such as the MV-22 Osprey.

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## **USCGC Stone Returns to Homeport after 61-Day Patrol**



The crews of U.S. Coast Guard Legend-class national security cutter USCGC Stone (WMSL 758) and the Colombian navy OPV-80 offshore patrol vessel ARC Victoria (PZE-48) conduct passing exercises in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, Dec. 4, 2021. *U.S. Coast Guard / Petty Officer 2nd Class Shannon Kearney*

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. – USCGC Stone (WMSL 758) returned to its homeport in Charleston following a 61-day patrol in the Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific Ocean in support of the U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area, the Coast Guard’s Joint Interagency Task Force South and the Coast Guard 11th District, the Coast Guard Atlantic Area said Jan. 7.

Stone’s crew successfully interdicted two suspected drug smuggling vessels, recovering approximately 2,246 pounds of cocaine and 4,870 pounds of marijuana with an estimated combined street value of \$57.1 million. The cutter’s crew subsequently transferred 20 suspected narcotics smugglers to the 7th Coast Guard District and U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration personnel, signaling the culmination of a successful joint interagency effort in the Eastern Pacific.

The Stone embarked observers from Panama, Costa Rica, Colombia, Ecuador, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to perform joint operations to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and conduct counter-drug operations off the coast of South America.

An embarked MH-65 helicopter aircrew from the U.S. Coast Guard's Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron was integral in counter-drug operations. Interagency partners provided additional aerial surveillance and reconnaissance support throughout the patrol.

During the cutter's port call in Manta, Ecuador, Stone's commanding officer, Capt. Clinton Carlson, attended an international IUUF symposium with Arthur Young, the embarked National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration enforcement officer, to share experiences and increase awareness of the regional issue. The crew of the Stone also participated in a friendly soccer match with Cuerpo de Guardacostas de la Armada personnel from the local coast guard station while in Manta.

"This is our crew's first patrol outside of their initial shakedown cruise, and I am extremely proud of the dedication and pride they have shown toward getting qualified to conduct the missions expected of a national security cutter crew," said Carlson. "Throughout these past months, everyone aboard displayed enthusiasm during the drills we've run every week and have proven that through teamwork and a shared understanding of the mission, we can accomplish even the most difficult tasks. I am honored to lead this impressive crew of Coast Guard women and men."

The fight against drug cartels in the Eastern Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea requires unity of effort in all phases from detection, monitoring, and interdictions, to criminal prosecutions for these interdictions by U.S. attorney's offices from the Middle District of Florida, the Southern District of Florida and the Southern District of California.

The law enforcement phase of counter-smuggling operations in the Eastern Pacific Ocean is conducted under the authority of the 11th Coast Guard District, headquartered in Alameda. The interdictions, including actual boardings, are led and conducted by U.S. Coast Guard members.

The Stone is the ninth Legend-class national security cutter in the Coast Guard fleet and currently is homeported in Charleston, South Carolina. The national security cutters can execute the most challenging national security missions, including support to U.S. combatant commanders.

The Charleston-based Legend-class cutters fall under the command of the U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area. Based in Portsmouth, Virginia, U.S. Coast Guard Atlantic Area oversees all Coast Guard operations east of the Rocky Mountains to the Arabian Gulf. In addition to surge operations, they also allocate ships to work with partner commands and deploy to the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific to combat transnational organized crime and illicit maritime activity.

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## **Lockheed Martin Upgrading SPY-1 Radars on 21 DDGs to Counter Evolving Threats**



Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Barry (DDG 52) pulls into Commander, U.S. Fleet Activities Sasebo, Japan, in 2016. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kristopher S. Haley*

ARLINGTON, Va. – Lockheed Martin is continuing to upgrade primary radars on a number of the U.S. Navy’s guided-missile destroyers (DDGs), a company official said. Older SPY-1 versions are being modified with digital Low Noise Amplifiers, or LNAs, which can improve their sensitivity and thereby improve the accuracy, range and discrimination of the radar.

“How do you develop a low-cost, high-payoff solution to keep SPY-1 relevant as the threat evolves?” Jon Rambeau, Lockheed Martin’s vice president and general manager for Integrated Warfare Systems and Sensors, asked rhetorically in an interview with *Seapower*, pointing to the LNA as a step in that direction.

The SPY-1 radar is the primary sensor of the Aegis Combat System on the U.S. Navy’s Ticonderoga-class cruisers and

Flight I, II and IIA Arleigh Burke DDGs and is used to detect and track aircraft, cruise missiles and ballistic missiles.

The LNA is part of the upgrade of the 21 Flight I and II DDGs to enable a “full BMD [ballistic missile-defense] capability in accordance with the 2030 Missile Defense Review,” Rambeau said.

He said Lockheed Martin is under contract for upgrading nine SPY-1 arrays under funding provided by the Navy and the Missile Defense Agency. The arrays are being tested and made ready for installation of the DDGs.

Rambeau there was “some discussion around the Navy’s future plans for those 21 ships and that’s something we’re watching very carefully.”

He said the LNA upgrade may be something the company thinks can be relevant for international customers as well.