SASC Leaders Request DoD Orders and Information on Counternarcotics Operations

Release From the Senate Armed Services Committee

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) and Ranking Member Jack Reed (D-R.I.) released two letters to Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth requesting execute orders (EXORDs), legal rationale, and designated terrorist organization lists related to Department of Defense operations against drug trafficking cartels.

The September 23, 2025 letter addresses existing legal requirements under the National Defense Authorization Acts for Fiscal Years 2020 and 2025 that mandate congressional oversight of military execute orders. The senators are seeking all EXORDs approved by the Secretary of Defense or combatant commanders that underpin DOD activities to combat drug trafficking cartels.

The October 6, 2025 letter requests any written opinion from the Department of Justice's Office of Legal Counsel regarding the domestic or international legal basis for these operations and strikes, and a complete list of all designated terrorist organizations and drug trafficking organizations with whom the President has determined the United States is in a non-international armed conflict and against whom lethal military force may be used.

To date, these documents have not been submitted. These oversight requests were made pursuant to Section 1067 of the FY2025 NDAA, Section 1744 of the FY2020 NDAA, and Section 1230 of the FY2024 NDAA.

A copy of the September 23rd letter may be viewed here.

A copy of the October 6th letter may be viewed here.

Coast Guard Cutter Arrives at New Homeport in Honolulu After Restorative Maintenance

The seagoing buoy tender USCGC Hollyhock (WLB 214) transits toward Honolulu Oct. 14, 2025. After a 806-day restorative

maintenance period, the Hollyhock crew arrived at their new homeport prepared to assist in maintaining and deploying aids to navigation. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jennifer Nilson)
Release From U.S. Coast Guard Oceania District

HONOLULU — The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Hollyhock (WLB 214) arrived at their new homeport in Honolulu Oct. 14 after 806 days of restorative maintenance.

The primary mission of the Hollyhock, a 225-foot Juniper-class seagoing buoy tender, is to maintain and deploy aids to navigation within the navigable waters of the main Hawaiian Islands, American Samoa, and Midway Atoll, servicing buoys that mark shipping channels, ports and hazardous areas.

Additionally, the Hollyhock's presence in the region will support Operation Blue Pacific, the Coast Guard's initiative to promote security, safety, sovereignty, and economic prosperity in Oceania. While deployed, the cutter's crew will conduct law enforcement, fisheries boardings, and support maritime safety through the servicing of navigational aids throughout the region in cooperation with allies and partners.

Commissioned in 2003, the Hollyhock was originally homeported in Port Huron, Michigan, before entering maintenance at the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore on July 31, 2023.

The Hollyhock crew departed for Honolulu on Aug. 31, 2025.

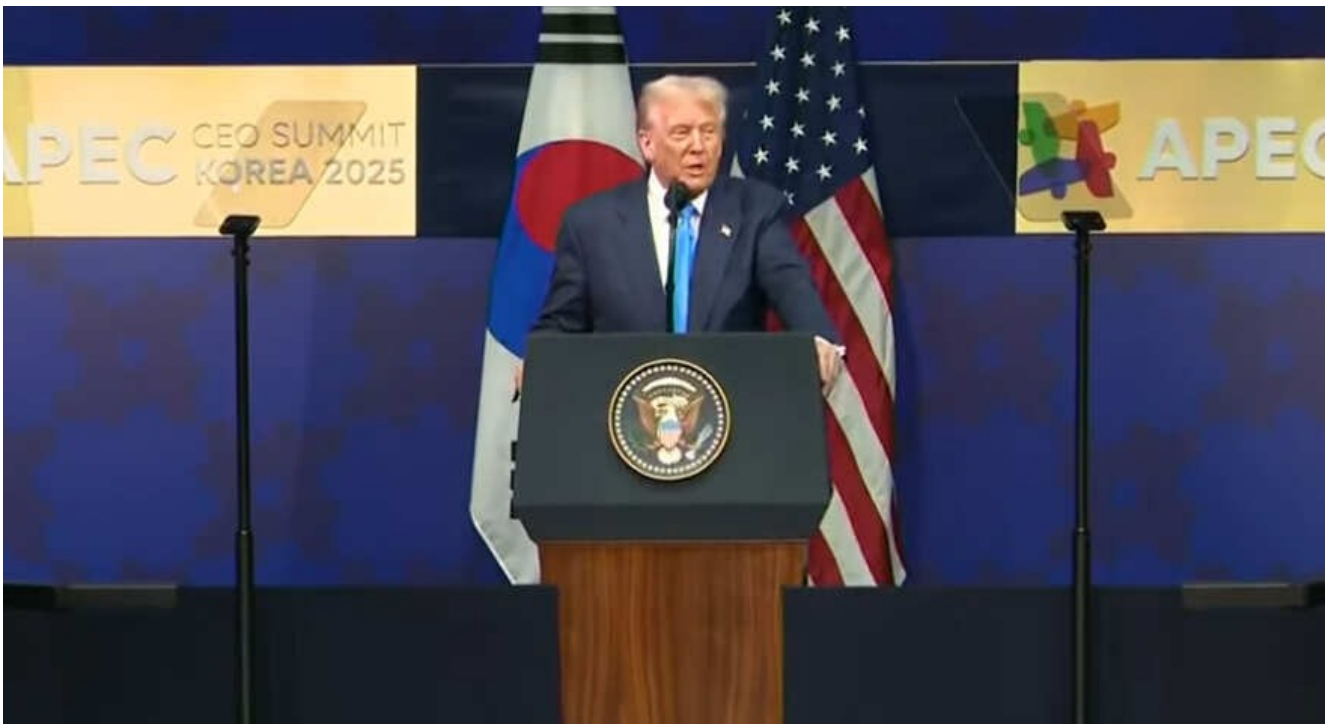
"The crew is excited to arrive in Honolulu and support critical operations throughout Oceania," said Cmdr. Jessica McCollum, commanding officer of the Hollyhock. "Our arrival enhances the Coast Guard's capacity to maintain vital navigational aids that facilitate the safe flow of maritime commerce. This is especially crucial in Hawaii, where more than 90% of goods arrive by sea."

The Hollyhock is the last of the Coast Guard's 16 seagoing buoy tenders to **complete the major maintenance availability (MMA)** program, ensuring the cutter achieves its full 30-years of designated service.

Maintenance work included completion of hull and structural repairs and replacement of obsolete, unsupportable or intensive maintenance equipment, including updates to the machinery control system, propellers, and heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems.

The MMA is part of the **Coast Guard's In-Service Vessel Sustainment (ISVS) program**, a strategic class-by-class evaluation offering the most cost-effective solution for delivering essential maintenance and upgrades, ensuring Coast Guard surface vessels meet or exceed their expected service life.

President Trump Touts Hanwha's Philly Shipyard During APEC Address



Release From Hanwha USA, Oct. 29, 2025

On Wednesday, President Trump addressed the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation CEO Summit and reinforced his partnership with South Korea to bolster shipyards in the United States.

“And today we’re not really building ships and we’re going to start and we’re going to have a very thriving, very thriving shipbuilding industry and we’re working it with South Korea very much so. In fact, some of the people in this room, they bought the Philadelphia shipyard.

“I think it’s going to be one of the most successful yards in the world anywhere in the world. It’s great.”

Why it matters: In August 2025, Hanwha announced a multibillion-dollar infrastructure plan for Hanwha Philly Shipyard that will be dedicated to the installation of two additional docks and three quays to increase capacity and is reviewing plans for a new block assembly facility.

In addition to its multibillion-dollar commitment to build capacity, it will also train skilled shipbuilding personnel and bolster the shipbuilding industrial base. Hanwha’s planned expansion at Philly Shipyard, from roughly one ship annually

to as many as 20, aligns directly with U.S. goals to restore competitive shipbuilding capacity and rebuild the industrial workforce.

Read more about Hanwha's commitment to the Philly Shipyard here.

The full transcript of President Trump's remarks can be found here.

Hanwha, Havoc AI Pursue Global Partnership in Unmanned Maritime Systems

Joint Demonstration Marks First Major Collaboration Between Global Shipbuilder and U.S. Defense Technology Company

Release From Hanwha

SEOUL – Hanwha is accelerating its entry into the U.S. market through a strategic collaboration with U.S.-based autonomy solutions company Havoc AI, following a joint technology demonstration of autonomous navigation and remote operations for maritime unmanned systems.

On Tuesday, Havoc AI CEO Paul Lwin and members of the company's research team visited Hanwha Ocean's Geoje shipyard, where they reviewed Hanwha's naval shipbuilding and maritime systems capabilities.

Havoc AI then conducted a live demonstration in which a Havoc AI unmanned surface vessel (USV) off the coast of Hawaii was remotely controlled from Geoje, Korea.

“Hawnha’s global defense strategy is focused on our evolution from the leading Korean aerospace company to a leading global aerospace company,” said Michael Coulter, CEO of Hanwha Global Defense. “This partnership seeks to incorporate both our technology and industrial strength with a leading U.S. technology company to create new, scalable capabilities in the U.S. while deepening the interoperability of our partners.”

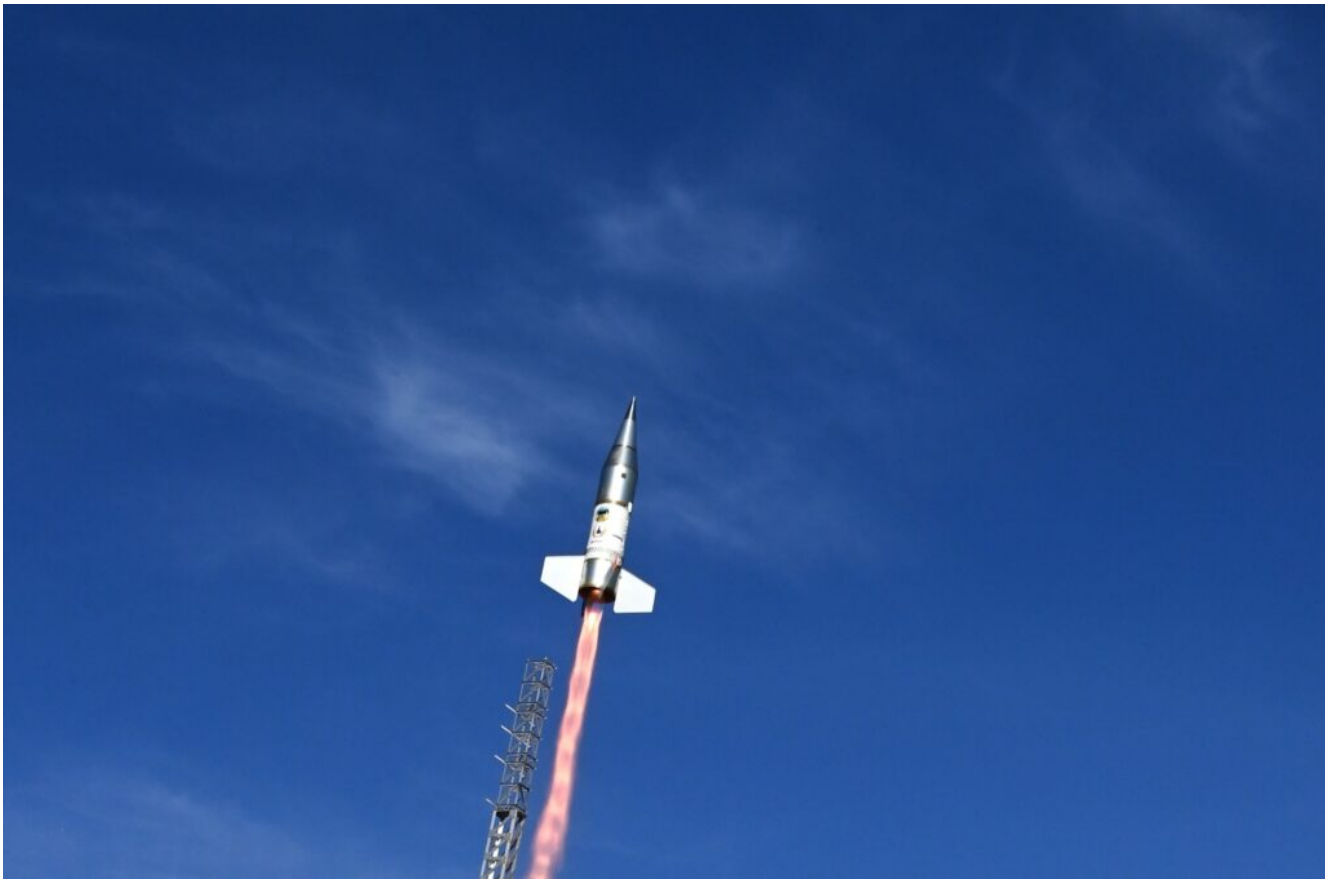
“Harnessing Hanwha Group’s maritime systems expertise and shipbuilding capabilities together with Havoc AI’s autonomy will expand the utility of existing vessels while enabling rapid fielding of new unmanned systems,” said Paul Lwin, CEO of Havoc AI.

The partnership will aim to integrate Hanwha Ocean’s warship construction expertise; Hanwha Systems’ combat management system (CMS) and platform/system integration capabilities; and Havoc AI’s advanced autonomous navigation software to deliver deployable products and solutions. Such a move could also provide scalable solutions across the defense and maritime domains.

Additionally, the collaboration highlights Hanwha’s commitment to investing in new technologies to expand its industrial partnership for allies across the United States, Europe, Australia, and the Middle East.

“We will leverage Hanwha Systems’ CMS and naval platform integration strengths, along with intra-group synergies, to work with Havoc AI and make tangible inroads into the global maritime unmanned systems market spanning Korea and the United States,” said Ryu Moon-Ghee, head of the Naval Business Division at Hanwha Systems.

X-Bow First to Deploy Lockheed Martin's Secure AI for Rocket Production



Launching SRMs at the speed of software. X-Bow is the first to deploy the Astris AI Factory (a Lockheed Martin Co. platform) to establish a Defense-Grade Digital Backbone. This accelerates manufacturing and delivers affordable capability.

Establishes Defense-Grade Digital Backbone to Accelerate Warfighter Capability

Release From X-Bow Systems

WASHINGTON, October 29, 2025 – X-Bow Systems Inc (X-Bow), the leading non-traditional producer of advanced manufactured solid rocket motors (SRMs) and defense technologies, announced today an agreement that establishes the company as the first customer to adopt defense-grade artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities within the Astris AI Factory, a secure, end-to-

end AI platform from Astris AI, a Lockheed Martin company.

This move is designed to accelerate X-Bow's ability to meet urgent national security production demands by establishing a trusted digital backbone for its factory operations.

Why It Matters: Faster, Affordable Rockets

This is about applying defense-grade AI to X-Bow's most sensitive, mission-critical functions—from secure data governance to factory control. This shift directly enables affordable and faster delivery of tactical rocket motors to the warfighter.

· Defense Focus: X-Bow is establishing an accredited digital environment with its first application being a secure AI agent. This initial governance step is critical to rapidly scaling affordable production for U.S. missile and hypersonics programs by proving the platform's security for all proprietary Advanced Manufactured Solid Propellant (AMSP) processes.

· Security & IP: Using the Astris AI Factory, which is proven in classified environments, allows X-Bow to handle its core manufacturing IP with defense-grade security, ensuring data integrity from design to deployment.

· Manufacturing Control: The platform's strategic operational focus is on advanced manufacturing control, leveraging Astris AI Factory's generative AI and MLOps framework to free up engineering time and improve process control, enabling rapid, reliable iterations essential for defense production.

· Scale & Affordability: The agreement paves the way for X-Bow to rapidly extend this accredited platform across its manufacturing enterprise, enabling real-time production execution and higher throughput for tactical and large-scale rocket motors.

The Tech Stack

The platform integrates the latest AI enterprise software to operationalize sophisticated models.

· This framework allows X-Bow's custom AI tools to securely retrieve and analyze proprietary technical data in real-time while drawing on multiple large language models for process optimization and digital twin fidelity.

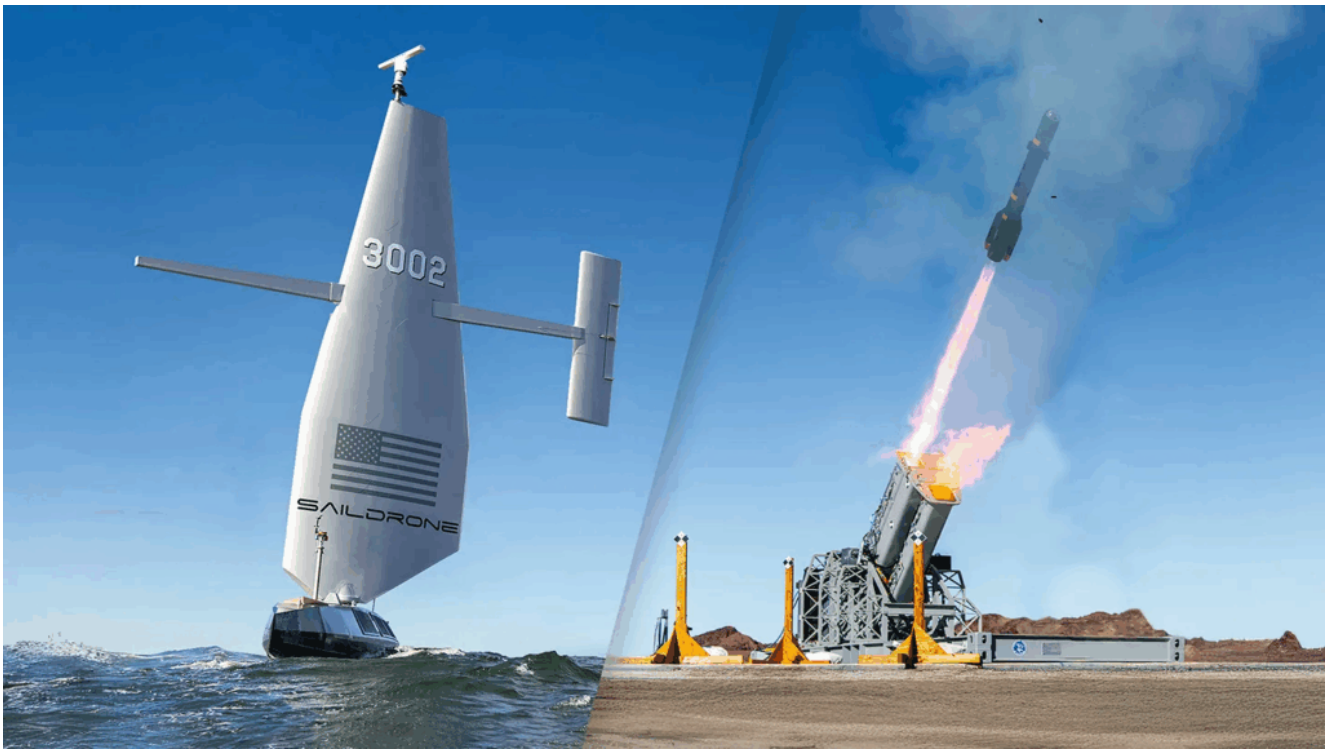
· This architecture is designed to simplify and accelerate the accreditation process, a huge factor for defense suppliers operating on government programs.

The Takeaway

"This customer agreement dramatically improves our ability to secure the necessary accreditation to scale up manufacturing," said Jason Hundley, Founder and CEO of X-Bow Systems. "This secure, accredited digital backbone is a game-changer for data governance and production integrity, allowing us to focus our engineering resources on delivering rapid, affordable solid rocket motors for our customers."

"This collaboration marks a defining moment in bringing trusted and reliable AI directly to mission-critical environments," said James Droskoski, CRO, Astris AI. "By integrating the Astris AI Factory platform into X-Bow's advanced manufacturing operations, we're helping deliver a secure, data-driven foundation that accelerates production, strengthens supply chain resilience, and upholds the highest standards of national security. Together, we're proving that AI can transform both speed and affordability for critical systems that protect our nation."

Lockheed Martin Invests $50M in Saildrone to Advance Unmanned Surface Vehicle Capabilities



Lockheed Martin will rapidly equip Saildrone USVs with all-domain defense technology for lethal military applications.

From Saildrone, Oct. 29, 2025

BETHESDA, Md. – Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) today announced a $50 million investment in Saildrone, a global leader in maritime autonomous systems. This strategic collaboration will deliver commercially available unmanned surface vehicles (USV) equipped with lethal, combat-proven defense technology. The companies will collaborate with a goal of delivering integrations, including on-water, live fire demonstrations, in 2026.

Why it matters

This commercial relationship marries the world's most sophisticated and trusted defense technology with the most capable and operationally tested USV technology. This combination will be key to realizing the US Navy's USV vision for critical missions such as fleet defense, undersea surveillance, reconnaissance, and attack. Work will begin immediately, applying an open architecture approach along with secure command and control capability to integrate Lockheed Martin's JAGM Quad Launcher (JQL) system onto the Saildrone Surveyor platform.

Larger Saildrone vehicles are already in development to support significantly larger payloads and capabilities to include the Lockheed Martin Mk70 VLS launcher and thin line towed arrays.

Expert perspectives

Stephanie C. Hill, president, Rotary and Mission Systems, Lockheed Martin:

"Lockheed Martin and Saildrone are leading the way to answer President Trump's call for the defense industry to act differently and leverage the strength of all of industry for our national defense. Together, we are combining the most sophisticated commercial and defense technologies to deliver a lethal naval solution at speed and scale. The nation needs this capability to maintain dominance over our adversaries, and we will deliver it."

Richard Jenkins, founder and CEO, Saildrone:

"For the last 10 years, we have focused on evolving the reliability, endurance, and autonomy of the Saildrone platform, which has been demonstrated in over 2 million nautical miles of active customer missions. With our technology proven, de-risked, and mission-ready, now is the right time to augment Saildrone USVs with sophisticated payloads to meet warfighter needs. This collaboration will

give Saildrone the tools we need to transform the capabilities of our platforms, to include electronic warfare, anti-submarine warfare, sophisticated surveillance and reconnaissance, as well as deploying kinetic effects, all seamlessly integrated with Lockheed Martin's trusted command, control, and fire control systems."

Additional Information

Fast Fielding of Commercial Technology for Defense: Saildrone USVs have been accomplishing complex maritime missions in the remote ocean since 2013. First deployed by the U.S. Navy in 2021, they are currently operational today, working 24/7/365 alongside American Sailors in combat theaters around the world. This commercial relationship will harness Saildrone's decade-plus of commercial expertise to quickly field new defense applications. Saildrone will maintain all shipbuilding responsibilities, and Lockheed Martin will serve as lead mission integrator.

Investing Ahead of Need and Accelerating Capability: Lockheed Martin is investing in Saildrone to accelerate and de-risk deployment of urgently needed defense technologies. The investment will establish a collaborative relationship between Lockheed Martin and Saildrone systems integration teams to accelerate manufacture of new larger platforms and integrate Lockheed Martin payloads onto a variety of platforms. Lockheed Martin is also investing in its existing products to facilitate fully autonomous operations.

Ready Now: The companies are focusing on integrating ready-now, proven capabilities with Saildrone USVs to get unmatched lethality into the hands of warfighters as soon as possible.

Powering Economic Growth: Developing these transformational USVs will create jobs at Austal USA on the coast of the Gulf of America, where Saildrone's larger systems are produced. However, this work is shipyard-agnostic; as we scale, it has

the potential to power economic growth at all of America’s shipyards and across the wider maritime and defense industrial bases.

Master Boat Builders Unveils State-of-the-Art Floating Dry Dock to Boost Throughput

Master Boat Builders Unveils StateoftheArt Floating Dry Dock to Boost Throughput

Conrad designed and built dry dock streamlines launches, increases throughput at Coden, and readies Master Boat for future government work

CODEN, Ala. – October 29, 2025 – Master Boat Builders, Inc. (“Master Boat”) today announced it has taken delivery of a new, stateoftheart floating dry dock, giving the company direct control over launch schedules and accelerating vessel deliveries.

Designed and built by Conrad Shipyard, the dry dock measures 155’ long x 66’ wide with 41’ tall wing walls, features a 2,000ton lifting capacity, and incorporates a barge bow to enable efficient towing. Master Boat will use the dock to launch recently constructed vessels. Previously, Master Boat rolled vessels onto a barge and towed them to third-party facilities in Alabama and Mississippi for launch – forcing Master Boat to be dependent on the availability and schedule of other yards. Now, Master Boat will have the ability to launch directly from its facility along the Theodore Industrial Canal, eliminating external constraints while improving reliability and cadence.

“This is about improving our capacity, schedule certainty and cadence of delivery, especially as we begin to take on more work, especially government and defense programs,” said Garrett Rice, President of Master Boat Builders. “By modernizing how we launch and bringing that capability under our own roof, we’re now able to deliver critical vessels with greater predictability and certainty.”

The new dry dock complements Master Boat’s recently announced strategic partnership with Austal USA. The two companies aim to strengthen the domestic maritime industrial base by increasing the ability of proven, regional shipyards to take on large, complex programs for the U.S. government. Under the MOU, the companies will collaborate on current programs under contract to Austal USA as well as on future efforts, enabling greater flexibility to meet evolving fleet requirements. By distributing work across complementary facilities, Austal USA and Master Boat aim to reduce bottlenecks, shorten production schedules, and create surge capacity for future demand. The companies also intend to co-invest in workforce development initiatives.

“This is one more step in derisking schedules for our customers,” added Rice. “When we control launch windows on our term, we protect delivery momentum, reduce bottlenecks, and

keep our focus where it belongs – building hardworking boats, on time.”

Dry Dock at a Glance

- 155’ L × 66’ W × 41’ wing walls
- 2,000ton lifting capacity
- Barge bow for efficient towing

Textron Aviation Defense Announces Wichita Production Plans for Beechcraft M-346N

Advanced jet trainer program could bring major investment and jobs to Kansas

From Textron Aviation Defense

WICHITA, Kan. (Oct. 28, 2025) – Textron Aviation Defense LLC, a Textron Inc. (NYSE: TXT) company, today announced that if awarded the Undergraduate Jet Training System (UJTS) program contract by the U.S. Navy, it will assemble the Beechcraft M-346N at its east campus in Wichita, Kansas – the historic home of the Beechcraft brand for nearly a century. The announcement reinforces the company's commitment to delivering the most advanced jet integrated training system for the U.S. Navy.

Textron Aviation Defense expects to invest more than $38 million to modernize more than 50,000 square feet of existing manufacturing space on the company's east Wichita campus if awarded the contract. The program is expected to create an estimated 100 direct manufacturing jobs in Wichita, along with numerous indirect jobs supporting aircraft production and

assembly.

Wichita has long been the center of innovation for Beechcraft, and we're proud to continue that tradition as we prepare to support the Navy's next-generation training needs. This announcement underscores our 85-year legacy of supporting the U.S. government with training aircraft from the American heartland.Travis Tyler, president & CEO, Textron Aviation Defense

The Beechcraft M-346N is the centerpiece of a low-risk, operationally proven integrated training system featuring Live-Virtual-Constructive capabilities optimized for advanced naval training. With more than 100 M-346 aircraft produced by Leonardo and a decade of performance training aviators for fourth- and fifth-generation aircraft, the M-346N offers a reliable, high-performance solution for the Navy's next-generation training needs.

The U.S. Navy has issued several Requests for Information ahead of an anticipated Request for Proposals for the UJTS program. Textron Aviation Defense anticipates the Navy will announce the contract award in January 2027 and believes that it is well-positioned to support the Navy's objective of accelerating Initial Operational Capability (IOC).

"Textron Aviation's decision to assemble the Beechcraft M-346N in Wichita is a testament to the world-class aviation workforce present in Kansas," said Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kansas. "This aircraft is the right solution to meet the Navy's future training requirements. I will continue my work on the Senate Defense Appropriations Subcommittee to make certain our Navy pilots have the necessary resources and equipment to support their mission.

About the Beechcraft M-346N

The Beechcraft M-346N is a twin-engine, tandem-seat aircraft equipped with fully digital flight controls and avionics. It

features a fly-by-wire flight control system with quadruple redundancy, a Head-Up Display and Large Area Display in each cockpit and hands-on throttle and stick (HOTAS) controls. Innovative safety features include the Automatic Ground Collision Avoidance System (Auto-GCAS).

Powered by two Honeywell F124-GA-200 turbofan engines, the M-346N delivers a maximum cruise speed of more than 590 knots and a service ceiling of 45,000 feet. Its advanced aerodynamic design enables exceptional maneuverability and energy management, while the elevated rear cockpit provides instructors with excellent visibility throughout all phases of flight.

Textron Aviation’s commitment to assembling the Beechcraft M-346N in Wichita is a testament to their rich heritage in the Air Capital of the World and their responsiveness to the needs of the United States Navy. As a steady defender of our aviation industry, I commend Textron’s leadership for investing in our skilled Kansas workforce and strengthening our military readiness.U.S. Congressman Ron Estes (Kansas)

Navy Withdraws from Navy Museum Land Swap Agreement with DC

Then-Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro unveiled conceptual renderings from five architecture firms at the National Museum of the U.S. Navy in April 2023. *Photo credit: Naval History and Heritage Command*

Secretary of the Navy John Phelan has withdrawn the service from a land swap with the District of Columbia that was to have created a home for a long-awaited new Museum of the United States Navy, the Navy's Office of Legislative Affairs notified Congress.

"We want to notify you directly that, in consultation with the White House, the Secretary of the Navy has decided to strategically shift away from the leasing arrangement that contemplated private or mixed-use development of the O Parcel at the Washington Navy Yard in the interest of national security," the OLA said in a statement provided to *Seapower* by the Naval History and Heritage Command.

"Given the sensitive work at the WNY, evolving national security threats, and a renewed focus on force protection, private development on the Washington Navy Yard property is

not feasible from a national security perspective.

“This decision does not reflect a negative assessment of the land exchange, the developer [RedBrick], or the future National Museum of the Navy; instead, we are focused exclusively on the national security concerns of private development on the Washington Navy Yard. Please be assured we are committed to the future National Museum of the Navy.”

Former Navy Secretary Kenneth Braithwaite, now chair of the Navy Museum Development Foundation that is raising money for the new museum, first made the news public at a panel discussion at the Congress of the Naval Order of the United States in Philadelphia.

In a recent edition of the Tuesday Tidings newsletter of the National Maritime Historical Society, Braithwaite said the move means fundraising is on hold until a new site can be identified.

The location of the new museum was the subject of a press briefing last October, where then-Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro and other officials, including Braithwaite, praised the location, which would have been near the Navy Yard as well as the Washington Nationals baseball stadium and the Audi Field soccer stadium.

Even had the site development continued there, it would have been a long time before anyone walked through the door. The foundation was charged with raising nearly half a billion dollars for the museum and the groundbreaking wouldn’t have been before 2030 at the earliest.

Kratos Forms Strategic Partnership with Korean Industry Leader to Advance Manned-Unmanned Teaming

Release From Kratos Defense & Security Solutions

SAN DIEGO, Oct. 27, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) — Kratos Defense & Security Solutions, Inc. (Nasdaq: KTOS), a leading technology company in the defense, national security, and global markets, today announced the formation of a strategic partnership with Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI), a major Korean defense organization to advance Manned-Unmanned Teaming (MUM-T) technologies and capabilities.

The collaboration builds on Kratos' deep experience in affordable, high-performance tactical unmanned aerial systems—including the XQ-58A Valkyrie, Mako, and Tactical Firejet—and KAI's aerospace technologies. Together, the organizations will work to integrate complementary systems and expertise to accelerate the development of interoperable, next-generation MUM-T solutions that enhance joint force readiness and operational flexibility.

"This partnership represents the next step in evolving how crewed and uncrewed aircraft operate together in contested environments," said Steve Fendley, President of Kratos' Unmanned Systems Division. "By combining Kratos' proven autonomous jet systems with KAI's advanced technologies, we are expanding the boundaries of affordable mass and collaborative combat capability for U.S. and allied forces."

"Kratos has long believed that strategic international partnerships are key to ensuring readiness and deterrence through innovation," said Eric DeMarco, President and CEO of

Kratos. “Our collaboration with KAI, a world-class Korean organization, underscores our shared commitment to developing advanced, interoperable defense technologies that strengthen allied capability, resilience, and industrial cooperation.”

The strategic partnership will focus on joint research, system integration, and evolution of scalable MUM-T applications, including autonomous loyal wingmen, distributed sensing, and collaborative strike missions, all focused on affordable mass. Kratos and KAI will also evaluate opportunities for technology co-development, production, and export in alignment with U.S. and allied defense requirements.