

Navy Accepts Delivery of Second Next Generation Landing Craft



Ship to Shore Connector (SSC), Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) 100, conducts exercises in the local waterways of Louisiana. The craft is the evolutionary replacement for the existing fleet of Landing Craft Air Cushion vehicles. New Orleans. U.S. NAVY

NEW ORLEANS – The Navy accepted delivery of the next-generation landing craft, Ship-to-Shore Connector (SSC), Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) 101, Aug. 27. LCAC 101 is the second craft delivered by Textron Systems to the Navy this year, the Program Executive Office-Ships said in an Aug. 28 release.

The LCAC is a high-speed, over-the-beach, fully amphibious landing craft capable of carrying a 60-70 ton payload. The LCAC replaces the existing fleet of legacy LCAC vehicles, and will primarily transport weapon systems, equipment, cargo, and personnel of the assault elements through varied environmental conditions from amphibious ships to and over the beach.

The delivery follows the successful completion of Acceptance Trials with the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey. During these at sea trials, the craft underwent testing to demonstrate the capability of the platform and installed systems across all mission areas to effectively meet its requirements.

"Our next generation surface connectors are going to significantly enhance the Navy and Marine Corps team's capability to execute missions – from humanitarian assistance to amphibious assault," said Capt. Cedric McNeal, amphibious warfare program manager, Program Executive Office Ships. "We

have 12 additional craft in production with another 10 on contract, positioning us to steadily deliver increased capability to our fleet over the coming years.”

LCACs are constructed at Textron Systems in Slidell, Louisiana and are built with similar configurations, dimensions, and clearances to legacy LCAC, ensuring the compatibility of this next-generation air cushion vehicle with existing well deck equipped amphibious ships, as well as Expeditionary Transfer Dock and the Expeditionary Sea Base.

Surface Warfare Director: SPY-6 Radar Back-Fit to Flight II DDGs ‘A Few Years Out’

ARLINGTON, Va. – The surface warfare director in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV) said the back-fit of the new SPY-6 radar in the Flight II Arleigh Burke guided-missile destroyer (DDG) is a “few years out.”

Speaking Aug. 27 in the Surface Navy Association’s First Waterfront Symposium webinar ships, Rear Adm. Paul Schlise, director, Surface Warfare, said the new SPY-6 Air and Missile Defense Radar is on track to be installed on the first Flight III DDG, which he said is 36% complete.

The Flight III is designed to have the SPY-6 installed from the start, but the Navy also plans to back-fit some Flight II DDGs with the Raytheon-built radar.

Schlise said the SPY-6 back-fit will begin with the later Flight II DDG modernizations.

“[The back-fit] has some requirements process to go through here in the [Pentagon],” he said. “As with everything we do at the OPNAV staff, it gets stacked against all the other priorities across all the [warfare directors].”

“The great news is that the radar is continuing to perform well,” he said. “The elements are [being delivered] on time and the testing is tracking along. The back-fit has got a ways to go in terms of the point at which we cut them in, which is a few years out, into the DDG Mod program, but it’s on track.”

The admiral said he is “happy to say [that the SPY-6] has been a real success story in terms of development,” he said. “The capability is fantastic; the testing is tracking.”

Navy Announces 3 Flag Assignments

ARLINGTON, Va. – The secretary of the Navy and chief of naval operations announced the following assignments in an Aug. 28 Defense Department release:

Rear Adm. Collin P. Green will be assigned as chief of staff, U.S. Special Operations Command, Tampa, Florida. Green is currently serving as commander, Naval Special Warfare Command, San Diego, California.

Rear Adm. John F. Wade will be assigned as director of operations, J3, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, Camp H. M. Smith,

Hawaii. Wade is currently serving as director, maritime operations, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Norfolk, Virginia.

Rear Adm. Fred I. Pyle will be assigned as director, maritime operations, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Norfolk, Virginia. Pyle is currently serving as commander, Navy Warfare Development Command, Norfolk, Virginia.

Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton Returns Home after 60-Day Patrol



A Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton crew interdicts a go-fast vessel in the Eastern Pacific Ocean, August 19, 2020. U.S. COAST GUARD

CHARLESTON, S.C. – The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton (WMSL-753) returned home Friday to Charleston after completing a 60-day patrol throughout the Eastern Pacific Ocean, the Coast Guard 7th District said in an Aug. 28 release.

The crew offloaded \$228 million worth of cocaine and marijuana Thursday at Port Everglades.

Hamilton's crew interdicted nine drug-laden vessels while patrolling the Eastern Pacific Ocean. Described as "go-fast" vessels, they intentionally travel at high speeds trying to avoid interdiction. Hamilton's law enforcement team detained all 25 suspects, transferred six others and handed them all over to Federal authorities for potential prosecution.

During one of the interdictions, Hamilton's crew worked alongside the USS Nitze, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer

homeported in Norfolk, Virginia to interdict a go-fast vessel 76 miles South of Panama. The Nitze deployed with a Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment Team which enables Navy ships to conduct counter-drug operations and enforce U.S. laws. Nitze launched their MH-60 Seahawk helicopter to provide airborne support and disable the vessel while Hamilton's boarding team conducted the law enforcement boarding. The teamwork between Nitze and Hamilton led to the seizure of 1,500 kilograms of cocaine and apprehension of three suspected drug smugglers.

"We are proud to support the President's national security strategy by keeping illegal drugs off American streets. Our efforts also degrade transnational criminal organizations, bring stability to Central America, and increase interoperability with our partner nations," said Capt. Timothy Cronin, commanding officer of Hamilton. "I am extremely proud of this crew how they managed to sail short-handed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and still deliver tremendous results."

The Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton is one of two 418-foot National Security Cutters (NSC) homeported in Charleston. With its robust command, control, communication, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance equipment, the NSC is the most technologically advanced ship in the Coast Guard's fleet. NSCs are equipped with three state-of-the-art small boats and a stern boat launch system, dual aviation facilities, and serve as an afloat command and control platform for complex law enforcement and national security missions involving the Coast Guard and numerous partner agencies.

Hamilton's crew, along with an aviation detachment from the Coast Guard's Helicopter Interdiction Tactical Squadron, began her deployment in early July as part of a partnership falling under Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF) South, a component of U.S. Southern Command. JIATF South, located in Key West, oversees the detection and monitoring of illicit traffickers

and assists U.S. and multi-national law enforcement agencies with the interdiction of these activities.

Sidelined Ice Breaker Healy Means Loss of U.S. Presence in the Arctic, Coast Guard Official Says



The U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Healy returns to port Sept. 11, 2014. On Aug. 18, 2020, an electrical fire broke out in one of the ship's main propulsion motors, leading the icebreaker to return to port in Seattle for repairs. U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Jordan Akiyama

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Coast Guard's Pacific Area commander says she does not know yet how long it will take, or how much it will cost, to repair fire damage to the only U.S. ice breaker patrolling the Arctic.

The temporary loss of the Coast Guard Cutter Healy underscores the need for more ice breaking capability in the waters of the "high latitudes," where "presence equals influence," Vice Adm. Linda Fagan said Aug. 27 at the Surface Navy Association's First Virtual Waterfront Symposium.

The Healy was 60 nautical miles off Seward, Alaska, heading into the second half of its deployment to the Arctic, when an electrical fire broke out in one of the ship's main propulsion motors on Aug. 18. No injuries were reported, and the blaze was extinguished quickly. With the starboard propulsion motor and shaft no longer operational, the Healy returned to its

homeport in Seattle for repairs and the Coast Guard canceled further Arctic operations with no indication when they will resume. That leaves just one sea-going U.S. icebreaker, the 44-year-old Polar Star, to serve both the Arctic and Antarctic.

The Healy had completed 103 days in the Arctic, Fagan said, and was heading back to continue a combined mission of supporting scientific research and patrolling the maritime boundary with Russia in the Far North. The Healy's absence in the Arctic emphasized the Coast Guard's need for the polar security cutter (PSC) program.

The planned 460-foot PSCs will serve as heavy ice breakers as well as performing other Coast Guard missions in the Arctic such as maritime safety and search and rescue operations.

"The United States is an Arctic nation," Fagan said, "and polar capability is the cornerstone of a whole of government approach and strengthens our interoperability with [the Defense Department]." Construction is slated to begin on the first PSC early next year and "we hope to have the first one in the 2024 timeframe," Fagan said, adding "This is a critical investment for the nation."

In her live streamed appearance at the symposium, Fagan praised another Coast Guard investment: small unmanned aerial systems (sUAS). She said the Boeing Insitu ScanEagle drone, deployed with five of the National Security Cutters (NSCs), Stratton, James, Munro, Kimball and Waesche, has been a "key enabler" in the Western Pacific and the High Latitudes. In addition to adding ScanEagles to three more of the 418-foot NSCs, Bertholf, Hamilton and Midgett, Fagan said the Coast Guard is exploring the need for a land-based UAS, on the U.S. southwest border, possibly in partnership with Customs and Border Protection.

Expeditionary Warfare Director: Marines Will Be Sinking Ships in Future War

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Marine general assigned to the Navy as its director of expeditionary warfare says that Marine Corps forces will be more in support of the Navy than being the supported force.

“We’re going to have Marines out there sinking ships,” said Maj. Gen. Tracy W. King, director, Expeditionary Warfare, speaking Aug. 27 in the Surface Navy Association’s First Waterfront Symposium webinar.

King was referring to the Marine Corps’ plans to acquire anti-ship missiles such as the Naval Strike Missile to stage at expeditionary bases and engage enemy naval vessels with those precision weapons in what the Corps calls Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations.

“Per the commandant’s [Gen. David Berger’s] guidance, we need to be an extension of the fleet,” King said. “It’s not, ‘What can the Navy do for the Marine Corps?’ It’s the exact opposite. If you just think of some of the missions that the Navy is going to have to do when she gets in close: fast FIAC [fast inshore attack craft] comes to mind. The Marine Corps can really help with [countering] that. If you get a Cobra [attack helicopter] on you, you are not getting away.

“Our examination of the coming fight is that it is going to begin in a very distributed fashion,” King said. “If we do come to blows with China, it’s going to be very confused for the first 30 or 45 days, but we must fight in a distributed

fashion. ... It's simply harder."

King said that "one of the things the American joint force does much better than its potential adversaries is that we don't culminate ... because of our logistic tails. If we have to distribute across an archipelago or wherever, that's going to become increasingly difficult, as is command and control.

"The Marine Corps' ability to project power over the shore stems directly from its relationship with the Navy," he said. "That's our center of gravity. What the Navy and Marine Corps team provides the Joint Force is the ability to do it at a time and place of our choosing, to use the oceans as maneuver space."

King said that distributed maritime operations "have all the benefits of mass absent the risks of concentration. ... That is going to be extremely difficult for our adversary to counter. We have to mess up the calculus of our adversaries. Being able to distribute and maintain the lethality that comes with the U.S. Joint Force is something we have not done normally. We normally concentrate to do that, and we don't want to do that in the coming fight with China."

King pointed to the Light Amphibious Warship (LAW) being developed by the Navy as a key tool in achieving distributed maritime operations. He said the LAW is not meant to replace the large amphibious warfare ships currently in the fleet but is meant to enhance the ability of the fleet to conduct distributed operations.

"The LAW is going to be a lily pad that carries excess fuel, that can make water, that Marines can actually live on," he said. "I see them as part of the crew."

Regarding the larger amphibious warfare ships in the fleet, King said they need increased lethality, particularly the San Antonio-class amphibious platform dock ships.

“We owe that to our Sailors and to our Marines. We’re working on that as well.”

King said the Navy and Marine Corps will continue to deploy amphibious ready groups with Marine expeditionary units embarked as a “force of presence, not a force to take into high-end combat.”

CGC Hamilton Offloads More Than \$228 M in Cocaine, Marijuana



Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Jonathan Ayers guards approximately 11,500 pounds of interdicted cocaine and approximately 17,000 pounds of interdicted marijuana, Aug. 27, 2020, Port Everglades, Florida. U.S. COAST GUARD / Petty Officer 3rd Class Brandon Murray

MIAMI –The Coast Guard Cutter Hamilton (WMSL 753) crew offloaded approximately 11,500 pounds of cocaine and approximately 17,000 pounds of marijuana, worth more than \$228 million, on Aug. 27, in Port Everglades, Florida.

The drugs were interdicted in the international waters off the coasts of Mexico, Central, and South America and in the Caribbean Sea. Coast Guard cutters and U.S. Navy ships seized and recovered contraband during 13 interdictions of suspected drug smuggling vessels:

- The cutter Hamilton crew was responsible for nine interdictions, seizing approximately 9,700 pounds of cocaine and 9,000 pounds of marijuana.

- The cutter Resolute (WMEC 620) crew was responsible for one interdiction, seizing approximately 1,100 pounds of marijuana.
- The USS Nitze (DDG 94) crew with embarked Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment Team 406 was responsible for two interdictions seizing approximately 1,700 pounds of cocaine and approximately 6,100 pounds of marijuana.
- The USS Shamal crew with an embarked Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment Team 109 was responsible for one interdiction, seizing approximately 800 pounds of marijuana.

“We are proud to support the president’s national security strategy by keeping illegal drugs off American streets,” said Capt. Timothy Cronin, commanding officer of Coast Guard Cutter (CGC) Hamilton. “I am extremely proud of this crew as they sailed short-handed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and delivered tremendous results.”

On April 1, U.S. Southern Command began enhanced counter-narcotics operations in the Western Hemisphere to disrupt the flow of drugs in support of presidential national security objectives. Numerous U.S. agencies from the Departments of Defense, Justice and Homeland Security cooperated in the effort to combat transnational organized crime. The Coast Guard, Navy, Customs and Border Protection, FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, and Immigration and Customs Enforcement, along with allied and international partner agencies, play a role in counter-drug operations.

The Hamilton is a 418-foot national security cutter homeported in Charleston, South Carolina. The Resolute is a 210-foot medium-endurance cutter home-ported in St. Petersburg, Florida. The USS Nitze is a 510-foot Arleigh Burke-class destroyer homeported in Norfolk, Virginia. The USS Shamal is 179-foot coastal patrol ship homeported in Jacksonville, Florida.

COVID-19 Shows Importance of Ship Self-Sufficiency at Sea, Surface Force Chief Says



Sailors aboard the guided-missile cruiser USS San Jacinto handle line as the ship moors in Naval Station Norfolk after a regularly scheduled deployment. The ship was away from port for more than 200 days. U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Colbey Livingston

ARLINGTON, Va. – One lesson learned from the challenge of the novel coronavirus pandemic is that U.S. Navy ships and their crews need to be self-reliant and work with the equipment and skills on hand, the commander of Naval Surface Force Atlantic said, noting the unexpected 200-plus days the guided-missile cruiser USS San Jacinto spent at sea.

“From an equipment perspective, if there’s any silver lining to the COVID-19 pandemic, it’s Sailor self-sufficiency in our ability to maintain our equipment at a higher level,” Rear Adm. Brad Cooper told the Surface Navy Association’s 1st Virtual Waterfront Symposium.

He noted the 32-year-old San Jacinto, escort to the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower, was away from port for more than 200 days. “That’s an unimaginable number,” Cooper said during a live-streamed question-and-answer session on Aug. 25.

COVID-19 “has forced us to be a lot more self-sufficient,” he said, adding “and boy were they self-sufficient.”

Both ships left Norfolk Naval Station on Jan. 17 for the carrier strike group’s composite training unit exercise and follow-on deployment. They did not return to Norfolk until

Aug. 9, partly to escape the spread of COVID-19 – which sidelined the carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt for months – but also to maintain maritime stability and security, deter aggression and defend U.S. and allies’ interests in the 5th and 6th Fleets’ areas of operations.

“If there’s any silver lining to the COVID-19 pandemic, it’s Sailor self-sufficiency in our ability to maintain our equipment at a higher level.”

Rear Adm. Brad Cooper

Uncertainty posed by COVID-19 also showed the need to change from a Monday through Friday initial training schedule, Cooper said. Earlier this year, Surface Naval Force Atlantic shifted to a pilot program, Afloat Training Groups (ATG) Rodeo, where three ships stayed out at sea conducting drills, planning exercises, executing them and debriefing for three uninterrupted weeks, instead of coming back to on the weekends.

“As we look to the future, that’s the model we’re going to use in the Surface Force in both [Atlantic and Pacific] fleets,” Cooper said. Six ships coming out of maintenance and going into basic phase in the next few months are going to follow that training procedure, Cooper said.

He said leaders in the fleet must have “exquisite knowledge” of the condition of their equipment to meet Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday’s top priority: operational readiness. But they also need to know their crew members even better to meet their No. 1 priority: People. A key component to that is training, he said.

A day after the massive July fire that seriously damaged the assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard pier-side in San Diego, Cooper explained, he sent guidance to his commanders to do “a gut check” that their firefighting kill chain is “fully intact

and you know how to exercise it down to the weakest link.”

When something happens, Cooper said, every single member of a ship’s fire party “has to know, where do they go, what’s the status of the equipment and what’s their responsibility.”

Navy Taps FlightSafety Services Corp. for New Training Helicopters Instruction

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy has selected a Denver-based aviation training company to provide ground instruction for the Navy’s new TH-73A training helicopter.

The Naval Air Warfare Center Training Systems Division in Orlando, Florida, awarded FlightSafety Services Corp. a \$221 million firm, fixed-price, indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract for “aircrew training services for the TH-73A Advanced Helicopter Training System to include flight training devices (FTDs) and classroom instruction to train student naval aviators (SNAs) to the standards necessary to meet an annual pilot production rate of over 600 advanced rotary wing and intermediate tilt-rotor SNAs,” the Aug. 25 Defense Department contract said.

The contract also provides for the operation and maintenance of the flight training devices for the TH-73A.

In January, the Navy selected the Leonardo TH-73A helicopter to replace its TH-57B/C Sea Ranger training helicopters. The

TH-73A is based on the company's TH-119 design. Leonardo has been awarded a \$176.5 million contract to build 32 TH-73As for the initial batch and also to provide initial spares, support and dedicated equipment and specific pilot and maintenance training services, Leonardo said in a release.

FlightSafety's work will be performed in Milton, Florida, site of the Navy's helicopter training base. The work is expected to be completed in June 2026.

General Atomics Awarded Developmental Contract for Naval Propulsor Hardware

SAN DIEGO – General Atomics Electromagnetic Systems (GA-EMS) has been awarded a developmental contract by Naval Surface Warfare Center Carderock Division (NSWCCD) to provide manufacturing design drawings, engineering, fabrication, inspection, and assembly of prototype propulsor, shafting and bearing components as well as the equipment needed to support propulsor research and development, testing and evaluation, the company announced in a release.

“This is another exciting opportunity for GA-EMS to demonstrate our capability to support significant Naval engineering and developmental programs,” stated Scott Forney, president of GA-EMS.

“Because of our proven track record in technical design, manufacturing expertise, and superb facilities, we are becoming the principal source for taking new technologies from concept, to prototype, and through to full production. We are

proud to continue to support critical Navy programs that deliver the most advanced, safe, and reliable technologies to our warfighters.”

GA-EMS will work with NSWCCD to develop new propulsor components for both surface ships and submarines. Design and analysis work will be done primarily at GA-EMS’ facilities in San Diego and manufacturing engineering and fabrication will be done at the company’s manufacturing facility in Tupelo, Mississippi.

This effort supports the NSWCCD Advanced Propulsor Management Office requirement for the design and development for prototype propulsors, shafting and bearing components, mechanical design specification, and manufacturing plans to support the Columbia-class Submarine Program Office, the Virginia-class Submarine Program Office, and future R&D activities towards the next generation of propulsor and shafting systems.