

Elbit Doubles Production Rates of Semi-Active Laser Seeker for JDAM

FORT WORTH, Texas – Elbit Systems of America is doubling its Semi-Active Laser seeker production rates to keep up with demand for the Laser Joint Direct Attack Munition (GBU-54/56), the company said in a release. The increase in production rates is under an existing five-year indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contract with Boeing, supporting both domestic and foreign customers.

The Laser JDAM can target static and fast-moving objects. The system does not rely on satellite signals, but instead seeks a laser target that is placed by ground forces or an aircraft. The precision-guided munition (PGM) locks on and tracks the target.

“Elbit Systems of America invested in doubling its production capacity for the Laser Joint Direct Attack Munition seekers because we recognize how important this solution is to our warfighters,” said Raanan Horowitz, Elbit’s president and CEO. “We’re working closely with our Boeing customer to ensure this significant capability is supplied as quickly as possible.”

The Laser JDAM program was recognized by the Aviation Week Network and won a Program Excellence Award in October 2018 for Supply Chain Production. The Laser JDAM is operational on nearly all U.S. air combat platforms as well as many of the aircraft of U.S. allies.

Production of the Laser JDAM seeker is performed at Elbit’s manufacturing facility in Fort Worth, Texas.

Coast Guard's Schultz Keynotes Congressional Shipbuilding Breakfast



Retired Navy Rear Adm. Sinclair Harris (second from left), a former commander of the U.S. 4th Fleet and the civilian director of business development at the Department of the Navy, leads a table in discussion at the shipbuilding caucus breakfast. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 1st Class Jetta Disco

Commandant Adm. Karl Schultz of the Coast Guard headlined a Navy League and Shipbuilders Council of America shipbuilding caucus breakfast on Nov. 21 in cooperation with two members of Congress, Reps. Joe Courtney (D-Conn.) and Rob Wittman (R-Va.).

The shipbuilding caucus provided a forum for members of Congress and U.S. Coast Guard, Navy, Marine Corps and industry leaders to improve awareness of the current and future state of shipbuilding.

A topic of prominence at the breakfast at the Rayburn House Office Building in Washington, D.C., was how well the Coast Guard is resourced and how the sea service – as well as the Navy, Marine Corps and U.S. Merchant Marine – is managing budgetarily in the era of uncertainty under continuing resolutions (CR) from Congress.

At the caucus breakfast, “I reiterated the theme from the [Navy League Anchors Aweigh Congressional Fly-In on Nov. 14]

regarding the damage done by continuously running CRs and that this process stymies the ability for the forces to stay ahead or keep pace with our competitors,” said retired Navy Rear Adm. Sinclair Harris, a former commander of the U.S. 4th Fleet and now the civilian director of business development at the Department of the Navy. “DoD and DHS need stable budgets now and the flexibility to move resources in the direction of addressing challenges and changes in technology.”

Brig. Gen. Robert C. Fulford, Marine Commandant Gen. David H. Berger’s legislative assistant, also carried the message of the damage done to the services by CRs to [another Navy League event, a “Special Topics Breakfast” the same morning as the shipbuilding caucus event](#). Fulford told defense industry attendees that CRs had helped to “normalize life under budget uncertainty.”

Navy Leaders Meet to Chart Course Following Spencer’s Departure



Former Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer speaks at a commencement ceremony at U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, in June. Spencer exited Nov. 24 following upheaval over handling of the trial and disciplinary action against Navy SEAL Eddie Gallagher. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Tyler D. John

ARLINGTON, Va. – Defense Secretary Mark T. Esper is set to meet Nov. 25 with top U.S. Navy officials to discuss the way ahead in the wake of Secretary Richard V. Spencer’s sudden departure, a Pentagon spokesman said in a statement. Esper has

proposed a retired Navy admiral to replace Spencer.

Esper is meeting with Navy Undersecretary Thomas Modly, who is the acting civilian chief of the sea service, and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael M. Gilday, Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman said in the release.

Esper “has asked for the resignation of [Spencer] after losing trust and confidence in him regarding his lack of candor over conversations with the White House involving the handling of Navy SEAL Eddie Gallagher,” Hoffman said.

“I am deeply troubled by this conduct shown by a senior DOD official. Unfortunately, as a result, I have determined that Secretary Spencer no longer has my confidence to continue in his position. I wish Richard well.”

Defense Secretary Mark T. Esper

Chief Special Warfare Operator Edward Gallagher was tried by court martial for 10 crimes, including murder, allegedly committed during operations in Iraq, but was acquitted of the charges in July except for one count of posing for an unofficial picture with a human casualty, for which he was reduced in rank to petty officer first class.

In a Nov. 24 tweet, President Trump said he “was not pleased with the way that Navy Seal Eddie Gallagher’s trial was handled by the Navy. He was treated very badly but, despite this, was completely exonerated on all major charges. I then restored Eddie’s rank.”

“After Secretary Esper and Chairman [of the Joint Chiefs Gen. Mark A. Milley] spoke with the commander in chief on [Nov. 22] regarding the case of Gallagher, Secretary Esper learned that Secretary Spencer had previously and privately proposed to the White House – contrary to Spencer’s public position – to restore Gallagher’s rank and allow him to retire with his

Trident pin," the Defense Department release said.

"When recently asked by Secretary Esper, Secretary Spencer confirmed that despite multiple conversations on the Gallagher matter, Secretary Esper was never informed by Secretary Spencer of his private proposal," the release said.

"Secretary Esper's position with regard to [Uniform Code of Military Justice], disciplinary and fitness-for-duty actions has always been that the process should be allowed to play itself out objectively and deliberately, in fairness to all parties. However, at this point, given the events of the last few days, Secretary Esper has directed that Gallagher retain his Trident pin."

"I am deeply troubled by this conduct shown by a senior DOD official," Esper said. "Unfortunately, as a result, I have determined that Secretary Spencer no longer has my confidence to continue in his position. I wish Richard well."

Spencer, who assumed office in July 2017, is a former Marine Corps helicopter pilot and business leader who worked to change the culture of the Navy and its business practices and warfighting readiness. He became frustrated with ongoing delays with the aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford and its progress toward fleet service. Spencer openly criticized the Navy, congressionally imposed cost caps and the builder of the carrier, Huntington Ingalls, for the problems with the ship's advanced weapons elevators.

Trump said in the Nov. 24 tweet that he was disappointed with Spencer's failure to address cost overruns from the contracting procedures of previous administrations.

In his Nov. 24 resignation letter, Spencer said, "The rule of law is what sets us apart from our adversaries. Good order and discipline is what has enabled our victory against foreign tyranny time and again, from Capt. Lawrence's famous order, "Don't Give up the Ship," to the discipline and

determination that propelled our flag to the highest point on Iwo Jima. The Constitution and the Uniform Code of Military Justice are the shields that set us apart and the beacons that protect us all. Through my Title 10 authority, I have strived to ensure our proceedings are fair, transparent and consistent, from the newest recruit to the flag and general officer level.

“Unfortunately, it has become apparent that in this respect I no longer share the same understanding with the commander in chief who appointed me. In regards to the key principle of good order and discipline, I cannot in good conscience obey an order that I believe violates the sacred oath I took in the presence of my family, my flag and my faith to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.”

In his resignation letter, Spencer continued: “The president deserves and should expect a secretary of the Navy who is aligned with his vision for the future of our force generation and sustainment. Therefore, with pride in the achievements we’ve shared and everlasting faith in the continued service and fidelity of the finest Sailors, Marines and civilian teammates on earth, I hereby acknowledge my termination as United States secretary of the Navy, to be effective immediately.”

Esper proposed to Trump that Ambassador Kenneth J. Braithwaite II, current ambassador to Norway and a retired Navy Reserve rear admiral, be considered as the next Navy secretary. Braithwaite is a former naval aviator who flew P-3 maritime patrol aircraft and who later became a Navy public affairs officer.

Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane Returns to Homeport After 78-Day Patrol



Two Belize coast guard members watch U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane crew members drive their cutter's over-the-horizon boat during training within Belize's territorial seas on Sept. 18. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 2nd Class Matthew Simpson

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Harriet Lane returned to homeport in Portsmouth on Nov. 21 following a 78-day patrol in the eastern Pacific Ocean, the Coast Guard 5th District said.

The crew of the Harriet Lane started their patrol by transiting to the northern Chesapeake Bay to evade Hurricane Dorian's path. After the storm passed, the crew headed south to conduct a joint law enforcement patrol with the Belize coast guard within Belize's territorial seas. The result of the joint effort provided for a greater maritime security in the region, in support of the Coast Guard's Western Hemisphere Strategy.

The crew of the Harriet Lane also worked with a Coast Guard tactical law enforcement team to conduct numerous boardings, including a go-fast vessel and a self-propelled semi-submersible vessel, resulting in the interdiction of more than 5,800 pounds of cocaine and 5,400 pounds of marijuana, which has a combined street value of over \$109 million.

"Our crew's professionalism and adaptability were vital to the success of this patrol," said Lt. Zachary Dietz, the operations officer aboard the Harriet Lane. "They proudly demonstrated the importance of remaining ready, relevant and

responsive in order to address the maritime security challenges our country is facing today.”

The crew of the Harriet Lane conducted the patrol in support of the Coast Guard’s 11th District and the U.S. Southern Command’s Joint Interagency Task Force South and routinely deploys in support of counter-drug, alien migrant interdiction, fisheries and search-and-rescue missions.

MARAD Announces \$20 Million for Jacksonville Terminal Modernization



Maritime Administrator Adm. Mark Buzby formally presents a check for \$20 million to Jacksonville for its International Cargo Terminal modernization project. U.S. Department of Transportation

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration Administrator Adm. Mark Buzby formally presented a check for \$20 million to Jacksonville for the International Cargo Terminal modernization project, the Maritime Administration announced in a release.

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao said Nov. 22 that the Trump administration will invest \$900 million in American infrastructure through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) transportation grants program.

“The administration is targeting BUILD transportation grants to repair, rebuild and revitalize significant infrastructure

projects across the country,” Chao said.

Fiscal year 2019 BUILD grants are for investments in surface transportation infrastructure and have been awarded on a competitive basis to projects with a significant impact in their local or regional communities. BUILD funding supports roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports or intermodal transportation.

“An investment in the Port of Jacksonville delivers benefits for the local economy and for American workers. It is a central part of President Trump and Secretary Chao’s belief of investing in infrastructure to grow our economy and create jobs. This grant will also indirectly help support the jobs of the American civilian mariners who crew military sealift vessels that help us carry the fight wherever we must go,” Buzby said.

The International Cargo Terminal Modernization Project will reconstruct and modernize about 100 acres of the SSA Marine cargo terminal on Blount Island across six phases. In addition to repaving, the project will improve stormwater management, install new lighting, signage, and other utilities, and will be designed in a manner to enhance future operations.

Repaving the container yard will restore the terminal to a state of good repair, with long-term maintenance supported by port-generated revenues. The project benefits from a strong public-private partnership, with a broad array of stakeholders collaborating to support and deliver the improvements.

During construction, the terminal will continue to handle container, roll-on/roll-off, breakbulk, and general cargoes, with a significant increase in capacity once the project is completed. The project will also result in operating efficiencies which enhance economic competitiveness.

The program selection criteria encompassed safety, economic competitiveness, quality of life, state of good repair,

environmental sustainability, innovation, and partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders. For this round of BUILD grants, the maximum grant award is \$25 million, and no more than \$90 million can be awarded to a single state.

Deputy Carries Commandant's Force Transformation Message to Navy League Event



Brig. Gen. Robert C. Fulford, Commandant Gen. David H. Berger's legislative assistant, speaks to defense industry representatives at the monthly "Special Topics Breakfast" on Nov. 21 at Navy League headquarters. Navy League/Scott Achelpohl

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Marine Corps must change course. Peer competition from Russia is resurgent and China is rapidly expanding its

influence. A return to a Fleet Marine Force is the new reality – and the sea

service must do all this in the face of budgetary uncertainty from Capitol

Hill, a top deputy of Commandant Gen. David H. Berger told a gathering at Navy

League headquarters on Nov. 21.

Brig. Gen. Robert C. Fulford, Berger's legislative assistant, told defense industry representatives at the Navy League's monthly "Special

Topics Breakfast" that Berger is determined to carry through with the striking

directives he set forth this year in his "Commandant's

Planning Guidance” soon after rising to become the 38th commandant of the Marine Corps. This includes the notion that the Corps must restructure and, in Fulford’s words, “divest in order to reinvest.”

“The recognition that there is a need to change is resonating across the force,” Fulford said.

“I know that the world ahead of us is going to be profoundly different than the world behind us.”

Brig. Gen. Robert C. Fulford

To do this, he said, the Marine Corps is taking a “force-design approach.” He told a questioner later during the breakfast program that this restructure didn’t necessarily mean doing away outright with certain programs – just that some would need to be scaled back to better integrate Marine missions with those of the U.S. Navy.

Fulford, who said he was “in the amphib business” and up until June was director of the Expeditionary Warfare School at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Virginia, delivered a history lesson of sorts, saying the Corps was a “threat-based force” in a “bipolar world” from 1947 to 1991 when the single “peer competitor” to the U.S. was the Soviet Union. Now, he said, after years of fighting terrorism, the world the U.S. faces is “multipolar” with the Russian and Chinese surges, Iran and North Korea’s aggression and the continuing threats from nonstate actors.

“I know that the world ahead of us is going to be profoundly different than the world behind us,” he said. He also mentioned that Navy

Secretary Richard V. Spencer is “intimately involved” in Berger’s proposed force restructure and that the reception to it had been warm from leaders in Congress.



Fulford during his talk at Navy League headquarters. Navy League/Scott Achelpohl
But Fulford, who noted that he didn’t have a legislative affairs background, also spoke at length about the cycle of continuing budget resolutions in Congress that hampers Marine and Navy efforts to carry out any force restructuring.

He said the sea services face the prospect of having to operate under a full-year continuing resolution (CR), which freezes spending at prior-year levels, rather than the regular appropriations process that allows for budget expansion – or at least flexibility – and proper defense program planning in conjunction with the defense industry.

The U.S. Senate is set to vote on a short-term, House-passed CR that would avert a government shutdown but only extend funding through Dec.

20. In an atmosphere filled with impeachment hearings and resistance to funding for President Trump’s border wall on the southern border with Mexico, Congress may need another CR and may not be able to return to regular order anytime soon.

“We all recognize the tyranny of the congressional calendar,” Fulford said, adding that military services – the Corps included – had “normalized life under budget uncertainty.” He mentioned that projects such

as the restoration of housing at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, were still slowed by budgetary uncertainty more than a year after Hurricane Florence struck the base.

The commandant also “appreciates the impact of the CR on the industrial base,” Fulford added, recognizing that industry representatives were in the audience at Navy League HQ.

“We understand what it means to the small-business owner,” he said.

Key House Subcommittee Chairman Rejects Modernization Plans as ‘Happy Talk’

Senior leaders from the four armed services said they have multibillion-dollar, long-term plans to modernize their aged maintenance facilities, but the chairman of a key House subcommittee rejected their “happy talk” and demanded evidence that the services are committed to funding the expensive programs to update their depots, shipyards and arsenals.

The need to modernize and improve badly outdated major maintenance facilities dominated the Nov. 21 hearing before the House Armed

Services Committee's readiness subcommittee on the status of the Defense Department organic industrial base.

Subcommittee Chairman John Garamendi (D-Calif.) was joined by ranking member Doug Lamborn (R-Colo.) in demanding that the services commit to funding their plans to upgrade those facilities. The need for major improvements to the rework and repair facilities is elevated by the historically high average age of the services' legacy aircraft, ships, tanks and other weapon systems – many of which have obsolete parts that are no longer being produced.

“This situation does not help maintainers if they are required to work in dilapidated buildings with equipment made decades ago.”

John Garamendi (D-Calif.), chairman, House Armed Services readiness subcommittee

“It is widely known that the facilities and equipment in our organic industrial base [are] aging and, in certain locations, [are] in poor or failing condition,” Garamendi said in opening the hearing.

“This situation does not help maintainers if they are required to work in dilapidated buildings with equipment made decades ago. We must have a plan to modernize the facilities [and] sustainment, restoration and modernization accounts that support” them. He urged the witnesses to explain their plans to modernize their infrastructure and capital equipment.

In his opening statement, Lamborn, citing a Government Accountability Office report rating the condition of most of the depots as “poor,” said: “It is not enough for our depots to meet today’s requirements. We must also posture them to remain relevant for future demand. This raises a major concern about the state of our aging infrastructure.”

The leaders of the services’ construction and repair organizations acknowledge the deteriorated condition of their facilities and said they are executing long-range plans to update them.

Navy Vice Adm. Thomas Moore, commander of Naval Sea Systems Command, cited NAVSEA’s \$21 billion, 20-year program to dramatically modernize public shipyards. Vice Adm. G. Dean Peters, commander of Naval Air Systems Command, mentioned a \$1.9 billion, multiyear plan to update his plants. And Maj. Gen. Joseph Shrader, chief of Marine Corps Logistics Command, said he was following a \$1.9 billion, 25-year updating plan. Lt. Gen. Duane Gamble, deputy Army chief of staff for logistics, and Lt. Gen. Donald Kirkland, commander of the Air Force Sustainment Center, cited similar multibillion-dollar extended plans to modernize their facilities.

Garamendi said the committee had seen their plans, which he denounced as “happy talk,” and demanded that the leaders state their commitment to fully fund those plans. For their part, the uniformed leaders said their services were committed to the modernization programs, but that withheld assurance, citing the need for Congress to fund their long-term plans.

‘Faster and Cheaper’: Two Navy Officials Share Vision of All-Digital Development, Testing and Acquisition of Weapons and Systems

Greater use of digital technology in developing, testing and acquiring new weapons and systems can produce the new capabilities the sea services need to match emerging peer competitors and do so “faster and cheaper,” two senior U.S. Navy officials said Nov. 20.

Digital modeling and simulation, virtual testing and combined live tests at sea or in the field can more quickly evaluate the capabilities of proposed systems while gaining valuable feedback from the warfighters, said William Bray, deputy assistant Navy secretary for research, development, test and evaluation.

A “digital transformation” to substitute computers for stacks of paper documents could reduce the time needed to take a proposed new capability from conception to full operational capability by at least half, added Garry Newton, the civilian deputy commander at Naval Air System Command.

The two officials were among a host of program officials, engineers and other procurement experts who attended a conference on model-based systems engineering staged by the American Society of Naval Engineers and described the increasing use of digitized information and processes in weapons development and sustainment.

Bray said the new National Security Strategy made it clear that “we are facing peer competitors and we have to focus on technology ... and how to deliver that capability,” he said.

Part of the drive to field weapons “faster and cheaper” involves “digitizing all facets of the work” and developing a “digital blueprint” for proposed systems that can be shared among defense acquisition officials and industry, Bray said. Greater use of modeling and simulation and virtual testing, combined with live testing of prototypes, also “will drive down [the] cost” of new weapons, he said.

Newton showed a video contrasting engineers and acquisition officials struggling through huge stacks of paper documents to process a proposed system with a similar group using only computer-generated information. The old system takes 15 to 20 years to produce a new weapon system, while “our competitors are doing it in five,” he said. Doing more of the system engineering digitally could cut the developmental process by 50% and, possibly, by 75%, “if we go at it really hard,” Newton said.

He cited a recent program to update F/A-18 Super Hornets in which NAVAIR put the proposal to a contractor digitally, told the contractor what the Navy was willing to pay and signed the contract – all without using a single piece of paper.

Efforts to adapt digitally are “past the technology problems” but now must overcome the “cultural problems, helping our people use the new tools,” Newton said.

Coast Guard Repatriates 13 Dominican Migrants, Ends Search for 3 Others Who Are Missing



A Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier crew member inspects a migrant vessel just off Desecheo Island, Puerto Rico, that was adrift and without engines with 13 migrants aboard on Nov. 18. U.S. Coast Guard

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The U.S. Coast Guard repatriated 13 migrants to the Dominican Republic and ended a two-day search on Nov. 20 for three others who remain missing as part of an illegal migrant voyage on Nov. 18 off Desecheo Island, Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

The operator of a good Samaritan fishing vessel Yamilette reported finding the migrant vessel adrift Nov. 19 and taking it in tow. The Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier sighted and responded to a red flare that had been shot off by the operator of the Yamilette to alert nearby vessel traffic of the distress.

Once on scene, the Joseph Napier's crew embarked four women and nine men from the 25-foot makeshift vessel that was taking on water. The interdicted migrants reported that three men who were traveling with the group had jumped into the water when they sighted land five days earlier and attempted to swim to shore.

"Thanks to the decisive actions of the good Samaritan and the Joseph Napier crew for quickly and safely removing these persons from a life-threatening situation," said Lt. Matt Miller, commanding officer of the Joseph Napier.

“Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family of those who remain missing,” said Cmdr. Beau Powers, Sector San Juan chief of response. “This case highlights the inherent danger of operating in the maritime domain, where migrants too often risk losing their lives far when they embark grossly overloaded and unseaworthy vessels to cross the Mona Passage.”

The crew of the Joseph Napier transferred the 13 migrants to the cutter Donald Horsley for their repatriation.

Following the report of the three missing migrants, Coast Guard watchstanders directed the launch of a Coast Guard MH-65 Dolphin rescue helicopter to search for them. Coast Guard rescue crews completed eight air and three surface searches covering 1,334 square nautical miles with no signs of the missing men.

Coast Guard rescue assets involved in the search were:

- MH-65 Dolphin helicopters from Coast Guard Air Station Borinquen
- HC-144 Ocean Sentry fixed-wing aircraft from Guard Air Station Miami
- Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Napier
- Coast Guard Cutter Donald Horsley

Pentagon Missile Defense Chief Cites Threats From

Maneuverable Missiles, Hypersonic Weapons

ARLINGTON, Va. – With the emergence of peer military competitors, the missile threat is evolving toward the use of maneuverable ballistic and cruise missiles and hypersonic weapons – all of which “drives you into the world of high speed,” Vice Adm. Jon A. Hill, director of the Defense Department’s Missile Defense Agency (MDA), told a gathering of naval engineers on Nov. 20.

“Speed is a big deal. We are driven by the threat, and it is amazing what we’re up against. ... It is stunning. What also is stunning is how the threat is changing,” Hill added during the American Society of Naval Engineers symposium here in Arlington.

Hill noted that, when he took over MDA, the agency was focused on ballistic missiles. But new threats are emerging from air-launched ballistic and cruise missiles that can maneuver in different phases of their flight and “are capable of higher and higher speeds,” he said. “It’s a different world, and the agency will have to adjust.”

And regarding another emerging threat from hypersonic weapons, he added: “We’re working very diligently to understand everything” needed to counter these weapons.

Although MDA is responsible for defending the nation from missile threats, Hill emphasized that “everything we’re doing for the fleet today is incredibly important. ... Our mission is providing a defensive

capability, taking care of our forward deployed forces, our friends and allies.”

And, he added, “defense itself is deterrence ... as a cost-imposing measure on the adversary.” He said adversaries are spending so much on developing cruise missiles “because we have incredible capability” against ballistic missiles. Hill emphasized that missile defense is a joint effort across multiple U.S. military branches, citing the extensive work to integrate U.S. Air Force land and space sensors and the Army’s THAAD and Patriot missile defense programs with the Navy’s Aegis-based defenses.

Hill said his top priority is “sustainment, taking care of what we have now,” and maintaining readiness, which consumes 60% of MDA’s budget. The second priority is building missile defense capacity, citing the expansion of the ground-based interceptors in California and Alaska, new space-based and land-based sensors, including those in Japan and Korea, and future Flight III Arleigh Burke-class destroyers.

With the new missile threats, including hypersonics, Hill emphasized the need for designing and engineering space capabilities for missile defense. “There are things you can only see from space.”