

Boeing, Marines, Navy Celebrate \$115 Million V-22 Facility



MV-22B Osprey take off from the amphibious assault ship USS Bataan. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Levi Decker

PHILADELPHIA

– Boeing, the U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy celebrated the transformation of a 350,000-square-foot facility outside Philadelphia into a modern factory where company employees will build fuselages for the V-22 tilt-rotor aircraft and modernize the MV-22 fleet for the Marines.

“Boeing’s \$115 million investment supports U.S. and international demand for the unrivaled capabilities of the V-22,” said David Koopersmith, vice president and general manager of Boeing Vertical Lift. “We started this project two years ago in a mothballed building. Now, it is a state-of-the-art manufacturing center for the only in-service tilt-rotor aircraft in the world.”

The new factory will improve safety and productivity, lower operating costs and reduce Boeing’s environmental impact. It will be home to the Common Configuration-Readiness and Modernization (CC-RAM) program that standardizes the Marine Corps Osprey

fleet by upgrading previously built aircraft to the new Block C configuration.

The factory will also house fuselage production for Navy, Air Force, Marines, and international Osprey customers.

“The V-22 readiness program is our No. 1 priority,” said Marine Corps Col. Matthew Kelly, the V-22 joint program manager. “The CC-RAM program is key in meeting our readiness goals and returning capable and reliable aircraft to Marine units around the world.”

Boeing employs about 4,600 people in Pennsylvania and supports 16,000 direct and indirect jobs in the commonwealth.

Coast Guard Interdicts 4 Migrants, 2 Suspected Smugglers



A Coast Guard Cutter Paul Clark (WPC-1101) small-boat crew interdicts the 37-foot pleasure craft Bada Bing with three Brazilian migrants, one Jamaican migrant and two suspected smugglers on July 30. U.S. Coast Guard

MIAMI – The U.S.

Coast Guard interdicted the 37-foot pleasure craft, Bada Bing, with three

Brazilian migrants, one Jamaican migrant and two suspected smugglers on July 30 about 30 miles east of Hollywood, Florida, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

The Coast

Guard Cutter Paul Clark (WPC-1101) crew located the pleasure craft with six people aboard during a patrol and safely embarked two Brazilian adult males, one Brazilian adult female, one Jamaican adult male and two potential smugglers.

All six

people were transferred to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

“People should never trust these criminal organizations with their lives,” said Petty Officer 1st Class Nicolas Rodriguez, Coast Guard 7th District operations branch.

“Attempting to smuggle yourself into the country via the maritime environment is both extremely dangerous and illegal. With the consistent danger these smuggling ventures present, our crews and partner agencies remain persistently vigilant to protect lives and enforce federal laws.”

USS Michael Murphy Conducts Maritime Interdiction Operation



Senior Chief Fire Controlman Ryan Patricio, part of the USS Michael Murphy's interceptor team, boards the ship's rigid-hull inflatable boat for a mission to help interdict a drug-smuggling craft on July 25. (U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Justin R. Pacheco

PACIFIC

OCEAN – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Michael Murphy aided

the U.S. Coast Guard in the interdiction of a drug-smuggling craft, the U.S.

4th Fleet said in a release.

While

conducting routine operations in the U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations, an

MH-60R Sea Hawk, assigned to the "Easyriders" of Helicopter Maritime

Strike Squadron 37, embarked aboard the Michael Murphy, sighted a low-profile vessel on July 25.

As the

helicopter approached the craft, a hatch opened on the top of the vessel and

three passengers were seen jettisoning objects from the boat. Assisted by

vectoring from helicopter, Michael Murphy's interceptor boat collected the

jettisoned items and approached alongside the low-profile vessel.

Michael

Murphy was able to communicate with the vessel, informing them to remain in sight, and remained alongside the suspicious vessel until Coast Guard Cutter Midgett arrived.

The Coast Guard boarding team determined the jettisoned material was cocaine. About 2,100 pounds of the drug – some that was jettisoned and retrieved by Michael Murphy's crew and some found aboard by the Coast Guard – was seized. The Coast Guard took the three suspected smugglers into custody.

“From our air detachment and interceptor boat team to the men and women aboard the ship, everything came together to conduct the identification, interception and approach,” said Cmdr. Christopher Forch, commanding officer aboard USS Michael Murphy. “The handoff to USCGC Midgett was smooth and successful – a true team effort by two agencies.”

Navy to Commission Littoral Combat Ship USS Billings on Aug. 3



The future USS Billings conducts acceptance trials on Lake Michigan last December. U.S. Navy/Marinette Marine
WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy will commission its newest Freedom-variant littoral combat ship, the future USS Billings (LCS 15), during an Aug. 3 ceremony in Key West, Florida, the Navy's information office said in a release.

U.S. Sen. Jon Tester, ranking member of

the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs, will deliver the commissioning ceremony's principal address. Tester's wife, Sharla, is the ship's sponsor. The ceremony will be highlighted by a time-honored Navy tradition when she gives the first order to "man our ship and bring her to life!"

"The future USS Billings and her crew will play an important role in the defense of our nation and maritime freedom," said Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer, who is also performing the duties of deputy secretary of defense. "She stands as proof of what teamwork – from civilian to contractor to military – can accomplish. This fast, agile platform will deliver her motto, 'Big Sky Over Troubled Waters' worldwide thanks to their efforts."

USS Billings is launched after her christening in 2017. The ship is named in honor of Billings, the largest city in Montana, as well as the people and military veterans of the state. The future USS Billings will be the first ship of its name in naval service.

Montana has a heritage of naval service, with 30 ships named over the years in honor of state places and people, including the Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Helena (SSN 725) and the Virginia-class fast attack submarine USS Montana (SSN 794), which is under construction. The state of Montana also has one of the highest per capita populations of veterans, according to the U.S. Veterans

Administration.

The future USS Billings is a platform designed for operation in near-shore environments yet capable of open-ocean operation. It is designed to defeat asymmetric “anti-access” threats such as mines, quiet diesel submarines and fast surface craft. The ship will be homeported in Mayport, Florida.

The LCS class consists of two variants, the Freedom variant and the Independence variant, designed and built by two industry teams. The Freedom-variant team is led by Lockheed Martin of Marinette, Wisconsin (the odd-numbered hulls) while the Independence-variant team is led by Austal USA of Mobile, Alabama (for LCS 6 and the subsequent even-numbered hulls).

The ceremony, using hashtag #USSBillings, can be viewed [here](#) on the Navy live blog starting at 10 a.m. on Aug. 3.

CNO Nominee Gilday: Ford Weapons Elevator Problems a ‘Navy Failure’



Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Sen. James Inhofe (R-Neb.) questions Vice Adm. Michael M. Gilday during Gilday’s confirmation hearing to become the next CNO. C-SPAN3

WASHINGTON –

The nominee for the next chief of naval operations said the U.S. Navy is

ultimately to blame for the ongoing problems with the weapons elevators on the aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford.

“Ultimately, sir, that’s a Navy responsibility,” Vice Adm. Michael M. Gilday said, testifying July 31 at his confirmation before the Senate Armed Services Committee in response to a question from Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.), about which entity made the decision not to test the weapons elevator ashore.

“We own the risk and the risk-mitigation strategy to keep that ship on time. So ultimately I would consider that a failure of the Navy.”

“Of the 23 new technologies that we introduced to Ford, [the staff of the secretary of the Navy] did not consider the [weapons] elevator system to be high-risk, and so it wasn’t prototyped ashore,” Gilday said.

“I think money was a factor ... but I don’t think it was the overriding factor,” he added.

“I think that as the engineers took a look at the existing design, that they saw the risk as lower, they saw the risk as acceptable.”

Gilday said that three of the major new systems introduced on the new carrier – the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS), the Advanced Arresting Gear and the Dual-Band Radar – are demonstrating “significant

improvements in the reliability of the systems” and that the remaining major issue with the ship’s systems is the continuing problem with the weapons elevators.

He said the reliability of the Dual-Band Radar is now close to 99 percent.

Regarding the EMALS, “We’ve had almost 800 launches, and for [each of] three successive days, it’s right at the level we see in the existing Nimitz class,” Gilday said. “We think we are on a good path with respect to the reliability in sortie-generation rate.”

However, Senate Armed Services Chairman Sen. James Inhofe (R-Neb.) cited a report from the Operational Test and Evaluation Force saying that about every 75 launch cycles there was a critical failure, noting that the Navy’s own requirement on the EMALS is for a failure of once for every 4,000 launches and for the AAG of once every 10,000 recoveries.

“I want to make sure that we [do not] continue to operate where we have the failures, the premature deployment [of immature systems],” Inhofe said. “I want to make sure that the record is going to reflect beyond just the elevator, and those problems having to do with the arresting gear, having to do with the catapult, and the radar.”

CNO Nominee Gilday Names AI as Top Tech Priority



Vice Adm. Michael M. Gilday, the nominee to become the next CNO, testifies July 31 before the Senate Armed Services Committee. C-SPAN3

WASHINGTON –

The newest nominee for chief of naval operations listed his top three technology priorities to the Senate Armed Services Committee during his July 31 confirmation hearing, with artificial intelligence coming in as No. 1.

“On the top of the list I would put artificial intelligence,” Vice Adm. Michael M. Gilday said in response to a question from Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa).

[MORE FROM THE CNO NOMINEE](#): Gilday says weapons elevator problems aboard the USS Gerald R. Ford are a “Navy failure.”

“I think that that there are capabilities resident in industry that we can harness to our advantage. What I am particularly interested in is how we use data in a more innovative way to give us a quicker flash to bang, from decision-making to action. There is a lot of information at our fingertips every single day; it’s getting the right information to the right people at the right time so you can make the right decisions faster than your opponent.”

“I think

there is great promise there,” Gilday added. “We are doing some experimenting now that I’m very excited about.”

Gilday said that hypersonics – his second technology priority – “is a must that we have to get after quickly. Industry is our best partner as we work through this.”

His third technology priority is unmanned systems.

“That is the future,” he said. “We have to look more deeply at how we would operate with unmanned vessels, whether they are on the sea, or under the sea, or in the air.”

Gilday said he “would take a look at wargaming, concept development and with experimentation. We’ve almost doubled the number of exercises we’re doing in the next year from 97 to 171. We’re going to look at these new technologies. If they’re going to fail, they can fail fast. If it’s something we want to invest in, then we put heat on it and field it quickly.”

Oregon-Based Cutter Back Home After \$311 Million Cocaine Seizure



A crew member of the Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast oversees the offload of narcotics in San Diego on July 26. The crew seized more than 26,000 pounds of cocaine while patrolling the eastern Pacific Ocean. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 2nd

Class Jordan Akiyama

ASTORIA, Ore.

– The crew of the Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast (WMEC-632) returned home July 30 following a 56-day counternarcotic patrol to the eastern Pacific Ocean, the Coast Guard Pacific Area said in a release.

The crew interdicted five suspected smuggling vessels, including three pangas, a fishing vessel and a sailboat, and the crew recovered floating bales of contraband yielding more than 23,000 pounds of cocaine.

The Steadfast crew offloaded more than 26,000 pounds of seized cocaine in San Diego on July 26, which was a result of the cutter's five interdictions, bale recovery and an interdiction case by the Coast Guard Cutter Robert Ward (WPC-1130).

The cocaine, worth an estimated \$350 million, was seized by the crews while the cutters were patrolling international waters off the coasts of Mexico and Central and South America from late June to mid-July.

"This was 26,000 pounds of cocaine that will not make it to the main streets of the USA, and it also gives us the opportunity to make sure we can continue to combat transnational criminal organizations who transport this cocaine deep in the Pacific every single day," said Rear Adm. Peter Gautier, the

11th Coast Guard

District's commander. "Because we know that with a supply chain of illegal narcotics, at every single step there's violence, instability and despair."

Steadfast's

seizure of more than 23,000 pounds of cocaine marks the largest amount of cocaine seized by crews aboard a 210-foot Reliance-class medium-endurance cutter during a single counternarcotic deployment in Coast Guard history.

Many of the

medium-endurance cutters in service today are more than 50 years old. The Coast Guard's medium-endurance cutters represent 70% of the service's counter-drug interdiction fleet. These cutters are approaching the end of their service life.

Replacing this aging fleet with the offshore patrol cutter is one of the Coast Guard's top priorities. Even though medium-endurance cutters are still highly effective, as shown by the narcotics interdictions, the ships can be difficult and expensive to maintain and operate.

As these

cartels become more advanced in their methods at sea, the Coast Guard is recapitalizing the fleet with modern assets equipped to detect, interdict and disrupt the growing flow of illegal drugs, weapons and people

in the eastern
Pacific.

The offshore patrol cutter will provide a critical capability bridge between national security cutters like the Coast Guard Cutter Munro (WMSL-755), which offloaded 39,000 pounds of cocaine earlier this month, and fast response cutters like the Robert Ward, which seized more than 3,000 pounds of the cocaine offloaded July 26. The Robert Ward's interdiction was the first cocaine seizure made by a fast response cutter in the Eastern Pacific.

"There are few closer relationships than those among the members of a ship's crew performing a dangerous, important mission," said Cmdr. Dan Ursino, the Steadfast's commanding officer. "Steadfast's crew has worked as a remarkable, dedicated team with a strong common goal – protecting their nation from the deadly, destructive effects of illegal drugs."

State Department Approves Possible Tech Support to Egyptian Navy

WASHINGTON

– The State Department has approved a possible Foreign Military Sale (FMS) to Egypt of technical support for various Egyptian navy ships for an estimated cost of \$554 million, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) said in a release.

Egypt's government

has requested a possible sale of technical support that provides for material and labor services in support of Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigates (FFG 7 class ships), fast missile craft, mine hunter coastal ships, coastal mine hunter ships and 25-meter and 28-meter fast patrol craft.

Egypt

intends to use this technical maintenance and service support to ensure that its navy is operationally capable of providing coastal defense and security. The proposed sale will increase the Egyptian navy's material and operational readiness.

The prime contractor for engineering services support will be VSE Corp., and U.S. Government activities will provide the technical support to Egypt.

Fleet Enterprise Support Team Services Contract Awarded to Falconwood

ARLINGTON,

Va. – Falconwood Inc. recently won a contract from the U.S. Navy to support the commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command's Fleet Enterprise Support Team (FEST), the company announced in a release.

The FEST

performs all analytical, technical and customer service functions in support of

USFF commands with about 60,000 seats and more than 100,000 users in the Navy

Marine Corps Intranet (NMCI) Enterprise Network. The contract is valued at \$19

million and consists of one base year contract with four one-year option

periods. The contract effective date is Sept. 30.

“Falconwood

has a long-standing commitment to the Department of Defense to provide superior

support, with integrity and agility, to the warfighter,” said Allie Lawaetz, president

of Falconwood. “We are pleased to continue our efforts with the Fleet

Enterprise Support Team.”

Falconwood

is also the prime contract holder for the \$175 million contract supporting the Navy

Program Executive Office for Enterprise Information Systems (PEO-EIS) and its

associated Program Management Offices (PMOs) This contract provides

professional and technical Engineering and Logistics support services. Through

this contract, Falconwood is providing support in areas such as logistics,

asset management, training, cyber, information assurance, engineering and

acquisition.

In

addition, the Falconwood Cloud Integrated Product Team (IPT) provides DoD

customers with a support model consistent with today's cloud service providers, allowing the customers with plug and pay access to Cleared Subject Matter Expertise across IaaS, PaaS and SaaS service models in government, hybrid and commercial cloud environments. This model helps streamline resources required to support agile design, deploy, accreditation and support with the right skill as needed without over staffing.

Coast Guard, FURA Interdict 11 Dominican Migrants

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico – The Coast Guard and Puerto Rico United Forces of Rapid Action (FURA) interdicted 11 Dominican migrants July 24 about 2 miles west of Puerto Rico, the Coast Guard 7th District said in a release.

Coast Guard Sector San Juan watchstanders received a report from FURA stating they interdicted a 20-foot yola with 11 people aboard about 2 miles west of Puerto Rico. The Coast Guard Cutter Resolute (WMEC-620) crew safely embarked the migrants from the Coast Guard Cutter Joseph Doyle (WPC-1133), transferred four of them to U.S. Customs and Border Protection custody and

repatriated the other seven to their home of origin.

“Attempting these at-sea migrant voyages is illegal, dangerous and unsafe, putting migrants at serious risk of potentially losing their lives, and we highly discourage these voyages from taking place,” said Lt. C. Chaffer, Sector San Juan command duty officer. “Those who are interdicted at sea attempting to illegally immigrate will be repatriated to their country in accordance with existing U.S. immigration policy. We want reinforce that taking to the sea in these ill-equipped crafts, which are often used for these types of voyages, can end in disaster, because the maritime domain can be unforgiving with changing weather and sea conditions.”

A total of 1,531 Dominican migrants have attempted to illegally enter the U.S. via the maritime environment in fiscal year 2019 compared to 829 Dominican migrants in fiscal 2018. These numbers represent the total number of at-sea interdictions, landings and disruptions in the Florida Straits, the Caribbean and Atlantic.

Once aboard a Coast Guard cutter, all migrants receive food, water, shelter, and basic medical attention.