

HII AWARDED \$244 MILLION CONTRACT TO INTEGRATE MINOTAUR SOFTWARE PRODUCTS INTO MARITIME PLATFORMS



[Release from HII](#)

Contract Extends HII's ISR Mission Support Across Domains

MCLEAN, Va., (Oct. 17, 2023) – HII (NYSE: HII) announced today that its Mission Technologies division was awarded a \$244 million task order to integrate Minotaur software products into maritime platforms for the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Coast Guard.

HII was awarded this contract under the Department of Defense (DoD) Information Analysis Center's (IAC) multiple-award contract (MAC) vehicle. IAC MAC task orders are awarded by the U.S. Air Force's 774th Enterprise Sourcing Squadron to

develop and create new knowledge for the enhancement of the Defense Technical Information Center repository and the research and development and science and technology community.

Under the Naval Air Systems Command task order, HII will perform research, development, test and evaluation to facilitate the integration of Minotaur Family of Services products into the services' maritime platforms to meet intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance warfighting requirements.

Minotaur products support the warfighter by enhancing sensor performance and presenting data from multiple types of sensors, including radar and C5ISR equipment, into a single common operating picture and transmitting that data to other platforms and units during operations.

HII has been the first and only industry prime developer of Minotaur since the program was first awarded to industry in 2020.

The contract has a five-year period of performance, with work conducted at contractor facilities in various U.S. locations.

"HII has been at the forefront of Minotaur software development for nearly a decade," said Andy Green, executive vice president of HII and president of Mission Technologies. "It's a privilege to continue this mission-critical work and to concurrently deliver the advantage to three branches of the Armed Forces."

"We are pleased that the Navy has selected this proven technology to meet the combined requirements of next-generation Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard ISR platforms," said Todd Gentry, president of Mission Technologies' C5ISR business group. "We have assembled an outstanding team and look forward to expanding our longstanding partnership with the Navy and supporting the tri-service maritime strategy."

24th Marine Expeditionary Unit Composites for Deployment



U.S. Marine Corps Col. Todd Mahar, commanding officer, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), speaks during the 24th MEU's composite ceremony on Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, Oct. 12, 2023. The 24th MEU Command Element gained the subordinate elements of Battalion Landing Team 1/8, serving as the ground combat element; Combat Logistics Battalion 24, serving as the logistics combat element; and Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 365 (reinforced), serving as the aviation combat element. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. John Allen)

By [Sgt. Jacqueline Peguero-Montes](#), [24th Marine Expeditionary Unit](#) , 12 Oct 2023

MARINE CORPS BASE CAMP LEJEUNE, N.C. – The 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit formed as a Marine Air-Ground Task Force, signified with a composite ceremony, Oct. 12, 2023 at Camp Lejeune.

The 24th MEU Command Element gained the major subordinate elements of: Battalion Landing Team 1/8, serving as the Ground Combat Element; Combat Logistics Battalion 24, serving as the Logistics Combat Element; and Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 365 (Reinforced), serving as the Aviation Combat Element.

“This composite ceremony signifies that we are a MAGTF,” said Col. Todd Mahar, commanding officer of the 24th MEU. “We are the team of teams coming together to enter our pre-deployment training program alongside our Navy brothers and sisters. Together, we will train and prepare for a worldwide deployment at a moment’s notice.”

The composite ceremony marks the official start of the 24th MEU’s pre-deployment training program. The training cycle will soon transition from Marine Corps mission-specific training to Navy/Marine Corps joint training evolutions alongside Amphibious Squadron 4 prior to its deployment. For its sea-based training, the 24th MEU will embark aboard the Wasp Amphibious Ready Group, providing the nation with a flexible, maneuverable, and adaptable option for deterrence, sea denial, and crisis response.

“We are ready to begin the pre-deployment training program, with our amphibious ready group partners, as we train and prepare for worldwide deployment at a moment’s notice,” said Col. Mahar in his remarks to the formation. “The next six months of the PTP will prepare us for anything that comes our way; however, we have the watch now, and are prepared to respond to a crisis requiring the MEU.”

First activated in 1971 as the 34th Marine Amphibious Unit, the unit was later redesignated as the 24th MEU in 1988. The 24th MEU has participated in humanitarian operations and conflicts including Operation Southern Watch, Resolve Resolute, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Unified Response. The 24th MEU most recently deployed in 2021 and supported the evacuation at Hamid Karzai International Airport, Afghanistan.

The 24th MEU bears a profound honor and solemn duty as a crisis response force, dedicated to upholding timeless traditions and being ever-prepared to answer the nation's call, even in the most unforeseen and challenging circumstances.

12th Marine Regiment to be Re-Designated 12th Marine Littoral Regiment



Release from Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps

WASHINGTON, D.C. – To support the United States and Japan's commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, 12th Marine Regiment will redesignate to 12th Marine Littoral Regiment (MLR) on November 15, 2023. The redesignation will mark the next historic chapter in the Marine Corps' commitment to designing a force that is prepared to effectively respond to the challenges of the contemporary global security environment and serves as a testament to the regiment's role in the Marine Corps' global employment.

This redesignation follows the Joint Statement of the Security Consultative Committee ("2+2") which announced that 12th Marines would remain in Okinawa and redesignate to 12th MLR by 2025. The statement affirmed the MLR's purpose to "bolster deterrence and provide a stand-in force that is able to defend Japan and quickly respond to contingencies."

The Marine Corps remains committed to the basic tenets of the 2012 Defense Policy Review Initiative Realignment Plan. No new

units will be added to Okinawa under the agreement. This is strictly a redesignation of an existing unit on Okinawa in accordance with Marine Corps modernization efforts.

12th Marine Regiment is currently participating in exercise Resolute Dragon 23.2, which takes place from October 14-31 across multiple locations in Japan. During Resolute Dragon, 12th Marines will distribute in a similar manner to what is designed for the MLR: They will deploy to Japan's Southwest Islands, Kyushu, and Hokkaido, provide sensing capabilities in a simulated battlespace, and integrate joint force firepower with our Japanese ally's capabilities.

Marine Corps XQ-58A Valkyrie completes first flight



Release from Headquarters Marine Corps

HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS, Va. – The Marine Corps XQ-58A Valkyrie, a highly autonomous, low-cost tactical unmanned air vehicle successfully completed its first test flight October 3, 2023, at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. The Marine Corps partnered with the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OUSD(R&E)), the Naval Air Systems Command and Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD) to facilitate the ongoing research, development, test and evaluation of the Marine Corps XQ-58A Valkyrie.

This joint collaboration was supported by the 40th Flight Test Squadron, 96th Test Wing and the NAWCAD. This flight marks a key milestone in the Marine Corps' Penetrating Affordable Autonomous Collaborative Killer – Portfolio (PAACK-P) program. Future test flights inform Marine Corps XQ-58A Valkyrie requirements for the Marine Air-Ground Task Force Unmanned Aerial System Expeditionary (MUX) Tactical Aircraft (TACAIR).

"This XQ-58A test flight and the data collected today not only help to inform future requirements for the Marine Corps," said Scott Bey, a prototyping and experimentation portfolio manager at OUSD(R&E). "It fuels continued joint innovation and experimentation opportunities and demonstrates the agility that can be achieved through partnership."

The aircraft performed as expected. The XQ-58A has a total of six planned test flights with objectives that include evaluating the platform's ability to support a variety of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) missions; the effectiveness of autonomous electronic support to crewed platforms; the potential for AI-enabled platforms to augment combat air patrols; and continuing to mature other manned-unmanned teaming (MUM-T) capability objectives.

The Marine Corps received the first of two XQ-58A unmanned aerial systems (UAS) on March 14, 2023, to support platform prototyping and integration efforts for the PAACK-P program.

“The Marine Corps constantly seeks to modernize and enhance its capabilities in a rapidly evolving security environment,” said Lt. Col. Donald Kelly, Headquarters Marine Corps Aviation Cunningham Group and Advanced Development Team. “Testing the XQ-58 Valkyrie determines requirements for a highly autonomous, low-cost tactical UAS that compliments the need for agile, expeditionary and lethal capabilities in support of both the Marine Corps’ stand-in force operations in austere environments and the Joint Force.”

VMM-364 transfers Horn of Africa mission to VMM-261



10.03.2023

Story by Petty Officer 2nd Class Rion Codrington

Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti

AMP LEMONNIER, Djibouti (October 1, 2023) – Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 364 reinforced (VMM-364) handed off their mission as the Aviation Combat Element in the Horn of Africa to VMM-261 (REIN) following a transfer of authority ceremony at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, Oct. 1.

Both squadrons are forward deployed to Camp Lemonnier to provide 24/7 crisis response in support of Combine Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa in order to enhance partner nation capacity, promote regional stability, deter conflict, and protect U.S. and partner force interests.

“Every one of you play an integral role in the success of our

mission here,” said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Jami Shawley, commanding general of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa. “It is your collective efforts, determination, and unwavering commitment to one another that we can overcome all obstacles.”

During their deployment, VMM-364 executed 2,300 flight hours, supporting the transportation of over 2 million pounds of cargo, and thousands of passengers in multiple named operations.

“Not only have the Purple Foxes made a difference here in theater, but helped provide an important layer of defense and deterrence for freedom and democracy around the world,” said U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. John Miller, commander of VMM-364.

VMM-261 has a history in providing humanitarian aid, and assault support for amphibious and shore operations such as Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada.

“Since our inception in 1951, the Raging Bulls have an impressive metric of success, giving our superiors what they need, when they need it,” said U.S. Marine Corps Maj. Benjamin Weiss, executive officer of VMM-261.

With the turnover finalized, VMM-261 hopes expand of the successes of VMM-364, said Weiss.

“As the successors to VMM-364, we aim to improve upon their foundation and maintain or exceed their capacity to support the joint force.” said Weiss. “It is our intent to set the standard and support CLDJ, it’s tenants commands and the region.”

CLDJ is an operational installation that enables U.S., allied, and partner nation forces to be where and when they are needed to ensure security in Europe, Africa, and Southwest Asi

Marine Corps deactivates historic F/A-18 training squadron



MIRAMAR, CA, UNITED STATES

09.29.2023

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif. – The 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing deactivated VMFAT-101, an historic F/A-18 Hornet training squadron, here on September 29, 2023.

Since 1969, instructor pilots of the VMFAT-101 “Sharpshooters” have qualified combat aviators and sent them to operational

squadrons worldwide.

The squadron commemorated the event by “flying the barn” – launching 18 aircraft in a single flight. More than 300 Marines, Sailors, veterans, family members, and community supporters then gathered for a sundown ceremony to commemorate the squadron’s history and contributions to Marine Corps readiness.

“Pilots come to VMFAT-101, cut their teeth, and are transformed into aviation warriors,” said Col. William J. Mitchell, commanding officer of MAG-11.

Since October 2019, VMFAT-101 has trained Navy and Marine Corps aviators as the only remaining F/A-18 Hornet Fleet Replacement Squadron in the Department of the Navy.

“Thousands of aircrew have passed through the halls of VMFAT-101 – fighter pilots, fighter radar intercept officers, fighter weapon systems officers, and it’s bigger than that,” said Brig. Gen. Robert B. Brodie, Assistant Wing Commander of 3rd MAW. “This squadron has trained more maintenance Marines than any other in the Marine Corps. It’s a holistic approach to ensure we are ready to fight and win.”

The training mission of VMFAT-101 will transfer to the “Death Rattlers” of VMFA-323, a 3rd MAW operational squadron at MCAS Miramar. As outlined in the 2022 Marine Corps Aviation Plan, the Hornet will continue to operate and provide combat capability until its complete transition to the F-35 Lighting II in 2030.

Brodie is an F/A-18 pilot and served as commanding officer of VMFAT-101 from 2011 to 2013. He and Lt. Col. Ryan J. Franzen, the final commanding officer of VMFAT-101, were joined by ten former VMFAT-101 commanding officers and two spouses representing their late husbands.

“We’re standing on the shoulders of giants,” said Franzen. “You helped shape the ‘Sharpshooter’ legacy.”

GDEB, HII, Partners to Advance Additive Manufacturing on a Virginia-Class Submarine



Composite of releases from General Dynamics Electric Boat and [HII](#)

GROTON, Conn., and NEWPORT NEWS, Va. (September 25, 2023) –

General Dynamics Electric Boat, a business unit of General Dynamics, and HII's Newport News Shipbuilding division announced Sept. 25 that the companies have advanced efforts to integrate additive manufacturing technology, also known as 3-D printing, into the shipbuilding process for nuclear-powered submarines. The use of certified 3D-printed parts has the potential to accelerate construction and delivery of submarines to the U.S. Navy by cutting lead times for critical components.

The companies have focused on the availability and deployment of marine-based alloys, such as copper-nickel, to provide an alternative to traditional copper-nickel castings. Recently, a copper-nickel deck drain assembly was identified as a candidate for the 3-D printing solution. Working with shipbuilding partner Electric Boat, and supplier AMMCON on the model and proof of concept, NNS successfully created a copper-nickel deck drain part using additive manufacturing. AMMCON is providing final machining and assembly of the part, before it is installed on Virginia-class submarine Oklahoma (SSN 802), to be delivered by NNS.

"As a leader in additive manufacturing for shipbuilding, we are aggressively looking for opportunities to find ways to incorporate this technology into mainstream shipbuilding," said Dave Bolcar, NNS vice president of engineering and design. "This collaborative project leverages authorizations made by the Navy that streamline requirements for low-risk additive manufacturing parts. It is possible due to the foresight and longer-term development efforts by our engineers to deploy additive manufacturing marine alloys for shipbuilding."

"Our submarine design and engineering teams are focused on working with our supply and construction partners to speed the adoption of innovative technologies," said Megan Roberts, vice president of quality, waterfront engineering, radiological controls and fleet support for Electric Boat. "These first

efforts to install additive-manufactured parts on submarines demonstrate the technology's potential to dramatically reduce lead times for critical components, which will enable us to deliver more submarines faster, supporting the Navy's fleet demands."

"We are honored to contribute to the ongoing success of the Virginia-class submarine program in this innovative way," said AMMCON President Darrell Grow. "As a longtime supplier for nuclear-powered submarines, our team understands the importance of these national security assets and remains committed to delivering the critical parts needed for their delivery."

As the lead design yard for the Virginia class, Electric Boat will continue work to incorporate additive-manufactured components into the construction stream. The highly digitized process could lead to cost savings and reduced construction schedules for Navy submarines.

This latest advancement in 3D printing follows [HII's announcement in March](#) that NNS received certification and approval as a vendor for additive manufacturing components on Naval Sea Systems (NAVSEA) platforms. The highly digitized process could lead to cost savings and reduced production schedules for naval ships.

Smith Sworn in as Commandant of the Marine Corps



WASHINGTON, D.C. – General Eric M. Smith was sworn-in as the 39th Commandant of the Marine Corps by the Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Carlos Del Toro, Sept 22, 2023, at the Pentagon, Headquarters Marine Corps said in a release.

General Smith, who was also the 36th Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, had been performing the duties of the Commandant since July 10, 2023.

“I am grateful the Senate took action to allow the Marine Corps to have a confirmed Commandant, and I am humbled to have the opportunity to continue to serve Marines,” Gen. Smith said. “I remain mindful that dozens of junior Marine officers, families, and their units remain in an unstable position as they wait for confirmation. I look forward to the day when all Marines and their families enjoy the stability they deserve.”

Unmanned Surface Vessel Division One Makes Its First Port Visit in Yokosuka, Japan



The unmanned surface vessel Ranger transits the Pacific Ocean during Integrated Battle Problem (IBP) 23.2, Sep. 7, 2023. IBP 23.2 is a Pacific Fleet exercise to test, develop and evaluate the integration of unmanned platforms into fleet operations to create warfighting advantages. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jesse Monford)

[From By U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs](#)

21 September 2023

YOKOSUKA, Japan – The unmanned surface vessels (USVs) Ranger and Mariner from Unmanned Surface Vessel Division ONE (USVDIV-1) arrived at Fleet Activities Yokosuka on Sept. 18 as part of a scheduled port visit during Integrated Battle Problem (IBP) 23.2.

IBP 23.2 launched this August and is the third multi-domain unmanned capabilities exercise under U.S. Pacific Fleet's Experimentation Plan following IBP 23.1 earlier this year. The event will focus on testing and developing capabilities and concepts for medium and large USVs to advanced manned-unmanned teaming in the Indo-Pacific.

"Unmanned and autonomous technologies are key to growing our distributed maritime operations framework," said Rear Adm. Blake L. Converse, deputy commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet, who visited the USVs last month on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. "By proliferating our presence in the Pacific and increasing the fleet's situational awareness and lethality, we give ourselves more options to make better decisions at all levels of leadership."

Before arriving in Yokosuka, USVDIV-1 also participated in the Navy and Marine Corps' [Large Scale Exercise 2023](#). During the exercise, USVs have integrated with Carrier Strike Group One to expand its maritime domain awareness in support of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN-70).

"Through the integration of unmanned platforms in our operations, we continue to forge a culture of learning and innovation within our Navy and with joint partners to deliver warfighting advantage," said Rear Adm. Carlos Sardiello, commander, Carrier Strike Group 1. "Testing and integrating emerging technologies in a demanding, real-world operational

environment is vital to providing feedback that informs our progress in this domain.”

The exercise allows USVDIV-1, the command in tactical control of the exercise, to work closely with type commanders to develop concepts of operations for unmanned platforms.

“Our approach is focused on integrating, exercising, and refining tactics, techniques, and procedures for immediate application into real world operations with the fleet.” said Cmdr. Jeremiah Daley, commanding officer of USVDIV-1.

“Since standing up USVDIV-1 as a pre-commissioning unit in 2021, we continue to turn fleet feedback from exercises into adapting technology and requirement generation in order to provide realistic and impactful capabilities that future USV programs of record will bring to the Navy.”

The port visit marks the first time any U.S. Navy USV has visited Japan as IBP 23.2 is the first exercise to employ USVs in the 7th Fleet area of responsibility. Following the visit, IBP 23.2 will continue to test, develop and evaluate the integration of unmanned platforms into fleet operations alongside partners and allies to create warfighting advantages and ensure regional security and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

Koa Moana Marines Host Puma

Training for Palau Maritime Law Enforcement



KOROR, PALAU

09.14.2023

Story by [Staff Sgt. Courtney White](#)

[1st Marine Logistics Group](#)

U.S. Marines with Task Force Koa Moana 23 concluded the Task Force Koa Moana RQ-20B Puma Training Course with a graduation ceremony at the Palau Joint Operations Center, Bureau of Maritime Security and Fish & Wildlife Protection, Koror, Palau, Sept. 14, 2023.

The three-week Marine-led course taught 11 Palauan Maritime Law Enforcement Officers how to use the RQ-20B Puma drone,

which is an unmanned aircraft system used for surveillance and intelligence gathering.

“Originally, we were going to just teach them how to fly the Puma,” said Staff Sgt. Alex Lane, a native of Rockford, Illinois and the course supervisor. “But, we turned it into a train-the-trainer; we train the Palauans and then they teach their fellow Palauans how to accurately operate the drone during their operations at sea and also here in their homeland of Palau.”

According to Lane, the students learned how to deal with maintenance issues as well as how to fly, launch and land the Puma.

“They were five-day instructional weeks, where we would be doing one to two days of classroom work,” said Lane. “The third day would be us flying it at the pier on land, and then the following two days would be us flying it off the boat. We would take it about a mile out and they are able to practice while the boats are moving, so they can get used to how they would normally use it in a maritime domain.”

The Palauan Maritime Law Enforcement Officers have had RQ-20B Pumas for approximately two years, but within the first year, they lost a majority of their operators to other job capacities and have not had anyone trained to fly them recently.

“We came out here and they had operators who had no knowledge and no experience,” said Lane. “Within just five days, they were full-fledged operators. The next week they were teaching us as the instructors to see where their knowledge was at. Then the next week, they were teaching their fellow Palauans. For individuals who had no knowledge of how to fly a drone, they picked it up so fast. I was extremely impressed with them.”

The goal of the course is to enable the officers to use the Puma system on every single operation that they will embark on.

“They will be using it for search and rescue operations and as a deterrent for suspicious vessels,” said Lane. “They can fly it near them and it will be like ‘hey, this is Palau, you can’t come into our water.’ It is also the same for illegal, unregulated or unreported fishing. It will be a better reconnaissance and surveillance asset for them. They will be able to see these wrong doings and be able to get a clear picture of it and more information to relay to the nation of Palau. It makes everyone’s job easier.”

According to the Marine instructors, the students picked up on the skills quickly and were able to proficiently conduct operations.

“I think it went extremely well; we learned so much about these new technologies that we didn’t have and I think it will be very useful for us to use and utilize during our trips and for surveillance,” said Monique Hideo, a Police Officer 2 at the Palau Division of Maritime Security. “The Marines have so much knowledge about drones. It was a great experience to learn under people who really know their stuff. The Marines were amazing at making us feel confident. I would say if they weren’t there to teach us, we would be less likely to be confident behind the controller.”

During the training, the students would be designated as a mission operator or as a vehicle operator and would have practical application exercises.

“I would say the best part was actually having the drones in the air,” said Hideo. “You could just imagine all the good things it could do when an emergency actually happens, because

all of these features would be so helpful.”