HII Unveils AI-Enabled ROMULUS Family of USVs Powered by Odyssey to Strengthen the Fleet

Release From HII

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., Sept. 09, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII (NYSE: HII), America's largest military shipbuilder and a global leader in autonomous maritime systems, today introduced ROMULUS, a modular, AI-enabled family of unmanned surface vessels (USVs) powered by HII's Odyssey Autonomous Control System (ACS) software suite.

ROMULUS 190, the flagship of the ROMULUS family, is currently under construction. Built on a commercial-standard hull, it is engineered for rapid, repeatable production and immediate mission readiness. Designed for speeds exceeding 25 knots, the 190-foot vessel is capable of a minimum range of 2,500

nautical miles (nmi) carrying 4 x 40 foot ISO intermodal containers on the payload deck. ROMULUS 190 is being developed in partnership with Breaux Brothers, Beier Integrated Systems, and Incat Crowther.

ROMULUS is designed to meet the current and emerging requirements of the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, joint forces, and allies. It delivers high-endurance, sustained open-ocean autonomy with a focus on lethality, cost efficiency, and scalability.

“The future fight demands speed, agility, and resilience, all embedded in the Odyssey-powered ROMULUS family,” said Chris Kastner, HII president and CEO. “By matching world-class shipbuilding with decades of unmanned systems expertise, we are delivering a mission-ready, swarm USV capability built for the next generation of operations.”

An image accompanying this release is available at: https://hii.com/news/hii-unveils-ai-enabled-romulus-family-of-unmanned-surface-vessels-powered-by-odyssey-to-strengthen-the-fleet/.

Odyssey: Proven, Open, and Evolving
Odyssey ACS software suite has demonstrated performance on more than 35 USV platforms with over 6,000 operational hours in U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, and international allied programs. Odyssey’s intuitive interface and enhanced, customizable features generate the required mission behaviors for greater lethality and survivability with simplified control of unmanned swarms across domains, making it a force multiplier for the modern fleet.

The software suite’s open-access, government-aligned architecture enables rapid integration of new sensors, payloads, and third-party autonomy technologies. It allows industry, government, and academia to test and refine capabilities, ensuring ROMULUS evolves in step with emerging

naval concepts of operations.

ROMULUS integrates technologies from Shield AI, Applied Intuition, and C3 AI with HII's Odyssey for enhanced autonomy, object classification, and lifecycle sustainment.

Multi-Mission, Multi-Domain Flexibility
ROMULUS's reconfigurable design supports teaming across surface, subsurface, and air domains for missions including counter-unmanned air systems (C-UAS), intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), strike operations, and the launch and recover of unmanned undersea vehicles (UUV) and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV).

Enhanced-Domain Advantage with HII's REMUS UUV
Paired with HII's proven REMUS UUVs, ROMULUS significantly extends undersea reach, closing anti-submarine warfare sensing gaps and keeping manned platforms at a safer standoff distance. REMUS's decades-long track record in mine counter-measures (MCM) missions accelerates clearance operations and reduces fleet risk. Together, ROMULUS and REMUS deliver a scalable dual-domain solution across surface and subsurface missions.

Reinforcing HII's Leadership
With ROMULUS, HII reinforces its position as the global leader in durable, autonomous unmanned systems. Developed with support from HII's Dark Sea Labs Advanced Technology Group, ROMULUS takes its place alongside the proven REMUS UUV line, of which more than 700 have been delivered to over 30 nations and more than 90% are still operational after more than two decades. Together, ROMULUS and REMUS, powered by HII's Odyssey autonomy, form a dual-domain family of unmanned platforms that expands operational reach, maximizes mission flexibility, and ensures dependable performance across the full maritime spectrum.

Key ROMULUS Capabilities:

Modular, Open Architecture: Built on open standards, including Unmanned Maritime Autonomy Architecture (UMAA), Robot Operating System (ROS), and Data Distribution Service (DDS), Odyssey ensures compatibility with U.S. Navy autonomy requirements and control stations now and into the future. Odyssey's modular architecture also allows for rapid reconfiguration and integration with modular payloads, new sensors and systems.

Multi-Agent Autonomy: Odyssey enables control of either individual assets or swarms, a key capability for enabling the future fight. Odyssey's mission library delivers high-level autonomy with ease in executing rapid single-agent tasks or complex, multi-agent scenarios in coordination with crewed and unmanned platforms. Secure data management enables instant analytics or detailed post-mission review, while its modular design supports seamless integration of customer or third-party sensors, payloads, algorithms, and interfaces.

Intelligent Operations: Autonomous health monitoring, sensor fusion, and perception deliver intuitive mission planning, real-time situational awareness, and diagnostics. Navigation is compliant with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS), ensuring operational reliability in all conditions.

Fleet Integration: Designed to align with future fleet Concepts of Operations (CONOPS), supporting unmanned and optionally manned missions and integrated operations with aircraft carrier strike groups and surface action groups.

Fighter Jet Services Contract Provides Airborne Threat Training

Fighter Jet Services contract provides fleet support using contractor-owned and operated high subsonic and supersonic fighter aircraft for a variety of airborne threat simulations for both U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps aviators.

Release From Naval Air Systems Command

NAS PATUXENT RIVED, Md. – The U.S. Navy awarded a $554 million indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity contract to Airborne Tactical Advantage Company (ATAC) in late July to provide naval aviators with training support services under the Fleet Fighter Jet Services.

“The Fighter Jet Services contract represents a critical investment in the readiness and capability of our fleet air training and certification programs,” said Capt. Jason Pettitt, Adversary and Specialized Aircraft Program Office (PMA-226) and AV-8B Harrier Program Office (PMA-257) program manager. “By leveraging contracted air services (CAS), we are able to provide our aircraft squadrons and shipboard operators with advanced training to counter emerging airborne threats, including electronic warfare operations.”

The contract provides approximately 6,500-7,000 flight hours per year of fleet support using contractor-owned and operated high subsonic and supersonic fighter aircraft – Mirage F1, F-21 Kfir and Mk.58 Hawker Hunter – for flying a variety of airborne threat simulations for both U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps aviators. This includes simulating threat aircraft capabilities in an electronic combat environment, integrating as part of aggressor force in support of adversary air requirements.

Using the CAS approach enhances the effectiveness of aircrew and operators while preserving the fatigue life of operational F/A-18 and EA-18 aircraft.

“The FJS contract underscores our commitment to maintaining a highly trained and mission-ready force while achieving significant cost savings for the Navy and the nation,” Pettitt said.

Through the CAS, ATAC is responsible for operating and maintaining tactically relevant aircraft along with associated systems required to interface with other supporting platforms and ground force personnel.

The contract runs through 2030.

SECDEF Announces General and Flag Officer Nominations

Release From the U.S. Department of Defense

Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth announced today that the President has made the following nominations of Navy flag and Marine Corps general officers:

Navy Vice Adm. Richard A. Correll for appointment to the grade of admiral, with assignment as commander, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska. Correll is currently serving as deputy commander, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska.

Navy Vice Adm. George M. Wikoff for appointment to the grade of admiral, with assignment as commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe/commander, U.S. Naval Forces Africa/commander, Allied Joint Forces Command Naples, Naples, Italy. Wikoff is currently serving as commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Central Command/Commander, Fifth Fleet and Commander, Combined Maritime Forces, Manama, Bahrain.

Navy Rear Adm. Heidi K. Berg for appointment to the grade of vice admiral, with assignment as commander, Fleet Cyber Command/commander, Tenth Fleet/commander, Navy Space Command, Fort Meade, Maryland. Berg is currently serving as deputy commander, Fleet Cyber Command/deputy commander, Tenth Fleet/deputy commander, Navy Space Command, Fort Meade, Maryland.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Brad J. Collins for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Collins is currently serving as commander, Navy Region Hawaii, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Bradford J. Gering for appointment to the grade of general, with assignment as assistant commandant of the Marine Corps, Pentagon, Washington, D.C. Gering is currently serving as deputy commandant for Aviation, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Joseph R. Clearfield for appointment to the grade of lieutenant general, with assignment as commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Central Command, Tampa, Florida. Clearfield is currently serving as the deputy commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Central Command, Tampa, Florida.

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. William H. Swan for appointment to the grade of lieutenant general, with assignment as deputy commandant, Aviation, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Pentagon, Washington, D.C. Swan is currently serving as the inspector general, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

National Security Leaders Underscore Need to Move at the Speed of Technology

For 11th Year, Defense Innovation Days Fosters Increased Collaboration in the Defense Industry

Release From SENEDIA, Aug. 28, 2025

NEWPORT, R.I. – SENEDIA, the Alliance for Defense Tech, Talent, and Innovation, yesterday concluded Defense Innovation Days, a signature national event that attracted nearly 400 of the most important decisionmakers and innovators in the

defense industry.

“It is more important today than any time in our history that we have the capacity and skills to not only be competitive with other countries, but to far exceed them,” said Senator Jack Reed (RI), Ranking Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Reed called on the defense industry leaders in attendance to continue to advance American innovation and security. “What you do ultimately ensures the safety and security of our men and women in uniform across the world. This is a common purpose we share.”

Distinguished speakers at the 11th annual sold-out event represented decades of experience across Navy, Army, Marine Corps, and private sector service, including RDML Peter Small, Chief Engineer and Commander of NAVSEA Warfare Centers; Dr. Andrew Erickson, Naval War College China Maritime Studies Institute; Dr. Michael Winter, Chief Scientist, RTX; COL David Brown (ret.), Naval War College Center for Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups; LtGen Eric E. Austin, Deputy Commander, Combat Development and Integration, US Marine Corps Combat Development Command, and BG Chris Hackler, Deputy Commanding General, US Army Combat Capabilities Development Command.

Panels included “Future of the Surface Navy and Hybrid Fleet” and “Mastering the Depths: Navigating the Engineering Battlespace.”

Key takeaways from this year’s event are:

- The threat landscape is rapidly evolving, including the unprecedented acceleration of China’s military capabilities and a global rise in authoritarianism.

- Innovation in autonomous vehicles and undersea technology is essential to stay competitive and has redefined traditional warfare.

- The foundation for increased collaboration and innovation exists, and equally important must be the focus on scaling and speed to execution. The priority is a nimble and responsive defense ecosystem that can quickly get new and interoperable technologies into the hands of warfighters.

“More than a decade after we hosted the first Defense Innovation Days, SENEDIA continues to see the critical need to bring together industry and government, civilian and military leaders to connect, collaborate with one another, and ultimately innovate in service of our national security,” said Molly Donohue Magee, Chief Executive Officer of SENEDIA. “Investing in defense is an economic, workforce, and national security imperative.”

More from Defense Innovation Days

An Increasingly Challenging and Complex Environment

Rapid advancements in technology have made internal research and development processes more challenging and increased external and geopolitical pressures have likewise made the warfighting landscape more complex. A rise in authoritarianism around the globe represents a threat to American democracy – including from China.

Returning to Defense Innovation Days, Dr. Erickson provided a deep dive into changes in the Chinese military. He said that Chinese leader Xi Jinping has removed large numbers of military, defense, and political officials, but warned that it does not signal a slowdown. To the contrary, Erickson called it “the most dramatic military build-up since World War II.”

“China’s military capabilities development and operational readiness are clearly advancing rapidly across the board,” he said. “The speed and scope are breathtaking. That is what needs to inform our dedication, our sense of purpose, and the

missions to which we are directed."

Several speakers noted the importance of the workforce to maintain American dominance.

"The Navy faces an urgent imperative to increase our capabilities, and our people are our biggest asset," said RDML Small. "It's not just the trades we need to strengthen. We need to rebuild the national maritime engineering workforce. A tremendous national effort to rebuild this workforce is underway."

The Unmanned and Undersea Advantage

The United States submarine program is widely viewed as the greatest deterrent to American adversaries, and two panel discussions focused on undersea challenges and opportunities in an ever-changing maritime landscape. Several speakers used the ongoing conflict in the Black Sea as an illustration of how maritime strategy is changing, where Ukraine has used naval drones to stave off a strong Russian Navy.

The Mastering the Depths panel was moderated by Marie Bussiere, the Technical Director of the Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Division Newport. She was joined on the stage by NUWC colleagues Mark Vacarro, Director of the Subsea and Seabed Warfare SSTM; Steve Plunkett, Next Generation Weapons and Defensive Systems SSTM; Steve Lamb, Chief of the Contracting Office, and CDR Shawn Stelzel of the Undersea Warfighting Development Center.

Collectively, they urged industry leaders – especially those who have yet to engage with NUWC – to consider delivering their best-in-class tools and technology for defense applications.

"To maintain the undersea advantage, we need to get solutions into the hands of the fleet faster," Bussiere said.

On the Future of the Surface Navy and Hybrid Fleet panel, CAPT Colin Corridan (ret.), the former leader of Task Force 59, the Navy's first maritime robotics and AI task force, moderated a panel that included Commander David Brannighan, Royal Navy, British Defence Staff USA, and Austin Gray, Co-Founder and CSO, Blue Water Autonomy.

One takeaway of the panel included a charge to industry to apply their solutions to national security and help ensure a high-low procurement strategy that is diversified between advanced yet expensive high-end systems and cheaper, more flexible low-end systems.

Moving at the Speed of Technology

Across all three days, multiple speakers talked about the need to move faster – from harnessing AI and new technology to developing and quickly scaling new capabilities – to ensure our warfighters have the systems and tools they need when they need them.

Just as undersea technology has changed the maritime landscape, COL Brown (ret.) pointed to drones as a comparable example of how airpower has been democratized. Beyond weapons, he also warned about disinformation as a weapon of war and how increasingly convincing deepfakes are making it difficult for military leaders and civilians alike to distinguish the truth.

"We are entering an era of breathtaking technological advancement," he said. "The warning of history is clear: Unless we adapt, the upheavals of the last century may pale in comparison to what lies ahead."

LtGen Austin and BG Hackler agreed on the importance of government and industry collaboration.

Speed to execution must consider future changes in technology. Dr. Winter shared that RTX has introduced a new military

engine nearly every decade over the last century. Looking forward, RTX and other Primes – as well as the supply chain companies that support them – must bring together the digital thread, relying on model-based systems engineering that allows for greater efficiency and responsiveness.

"It is critical that we build these tools with enough longevity and enough forethought," he said.

Other speakers featured at Defense Innovation Days included Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (RI), Congressman Seth Magaziner (RI-02); and Congressman Gabe Amo (RI-01).

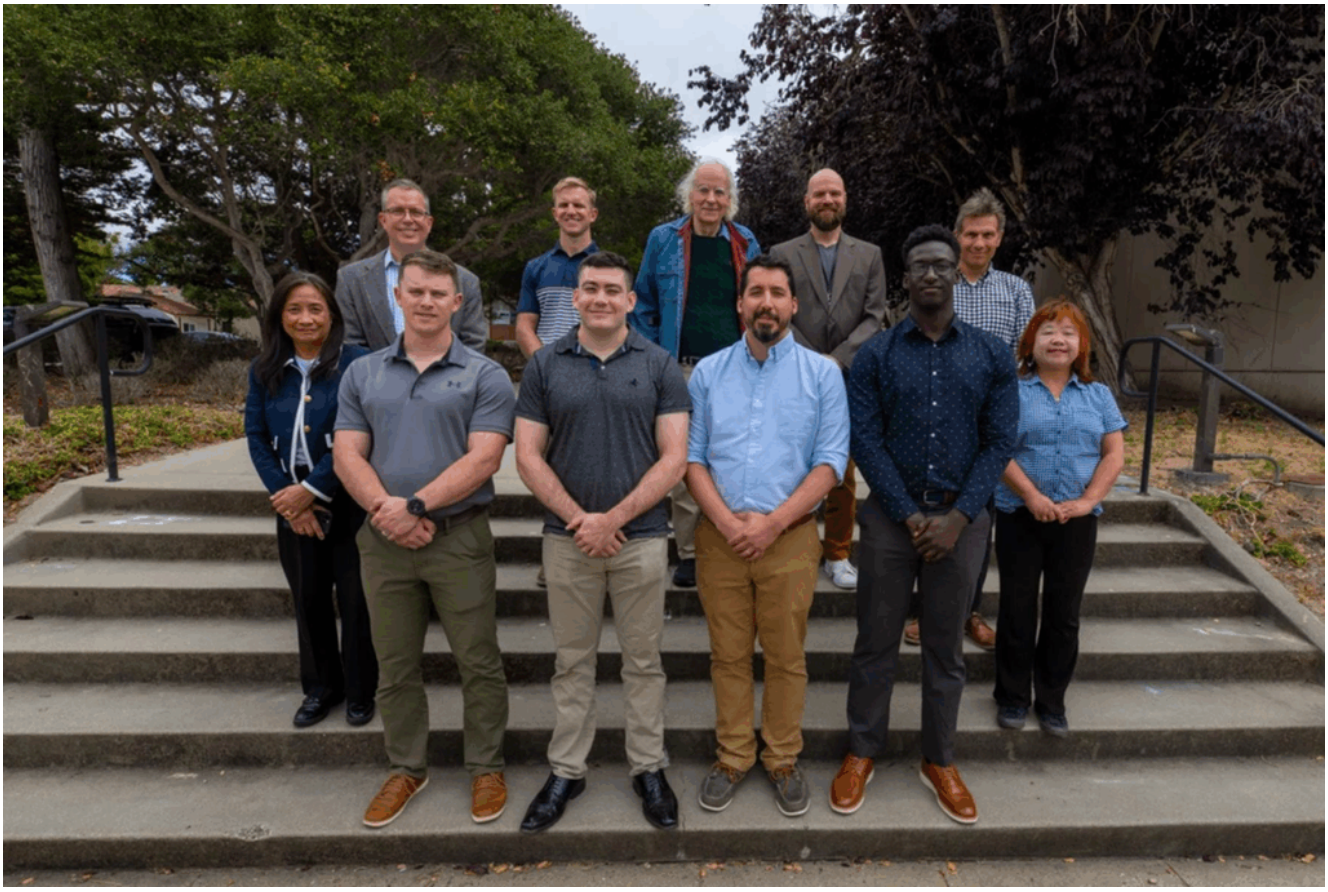
Thanks to Our Sponsors

Sponsors for Defense Innovation Days 2025 include Platinum Sponsors General Dynamics, RTX, and the Undersea Technology Innovation Consortium. Leidos served as Gold Sponsor and IM Technology, Quantic Electronics, Northrop Grumman, SAIC, and SEACORP as Silver Sponsors.

The sponsors for the two evening receptions were Adler Pollock & Sheehan and Anduril, and Bronze Sponsors included AstrodyneTDI, Comark – a Division of SourceCode, Exail Defense Systems, FORCYS, Globe Composite Solutions, Granite State Manufacturing, Guill Tool & Engineering Company, L3Harris Technologies, McLaughlin Research Corporation, NeQter Labs, PacMar Technologies, Preveil, Retlif Testing Laboratories, Rite Solutions, Serco, Teledyne Marine, and VATN Systems.

Marines Pilot Artificial

Intelligence Fellowship at Naval Postgraduate School



(Back row, left to right) Dr. Christopher Paul, Maj C. Teska, Dr. N. Rowe, Dr. M. Orescanin, Dr. M. Kolsch. (Front row, left to right) Ms. T. Nguyen, Capt S. Stekler, SSgt K. Harris, Mr. D. Zietz, Cpl J. Sadler, Dr. Y. Zhao.

HEADQUARTERS, MARINE CORPS – U.S. Marines gathered at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey, California, August 11–14, to launch a new initiative in military innovation and education: the inaugural U.S. Marine Corps–Naval Postgraduate School Artificial Intelligence (AI) Fellowship.

Part of the implementation of the 2024 Marine Corps Artificial Intelligence Strategy, the fellowship is designed to accelerate AI adoption and development across the force by building a cadre of AI-literate Marines empowered with technical knowledge, practical experience, and operational

insight.

“This fellowship leverages eager Marines knowledgeable about the Fleet’s modern and relevant issues, faculty experts, state-of-the-art facilities at Naval Postgraduate School, and the incomputable potential of artificial intelligence and machine learning,” said Dr. Christopher Paul, U.S. Marine Corps Chair for Information at NPS and lead organizer of the program.

The pilot cohort of Marines will spend five months immersed in AI education and applied research, splitting time between their home commands and the NPS campus. Through a mix of mentorship, coursework, and prototype development, each fellow will address a real-world challenge aligned to the needs of the Fleet Marine Force.

“Our goal is to optimize AI’s application across the force,” Paul said. “To do that, we need to grow the AI-proficient and literate population in the military, which this fellowship aims to do.”

The Marine Corps is committed to developing and deploying emerging technologies that give Marines the advantage in future conflicts. The USMC–NPS AI Fellowship is a concrete step toward equipping warfighters with tools and knowledge to operate in an increasingly digital battlespace.

While the pilot program is currently limited to Marines, future iterations aim to expand participation to include service members from other branches of the Joint Force.

The fellowship reflects the Marine Corps’ broader commitment to education, innovation, and preparing for the complex challenges of the modern operating environment.

Information on future fellowship opportunities will be announced via Marine Corps administrative message.

For inquiries regarding the pilot program, contact:

Capt. Stephanie Baer, Communication Strategy Officer, Deputy Commandant for Information, stephanie.baer@usmc.mil

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Task Force Forge Marines and Sailors Assume Southern Border Mission in Arizona

Aug. 18, 2025 | By Marine Corps 1st Lt. John Carter

Service members assigned to Combat Logistics Battalion 15, 1st Marine Logistics Group, I Marine Expeditionary Force, known as Task Force Forge, assumed operational responsibilities last month from 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division, known as Task Force Sapper, to support U.S. Northern Command's ongoing assistance to the Department of Homeland Security under Joint Task Force Southern Border.

Comprised of 500 Marines and sailors, Task Force Forge is conducting vital ground engineering and logistical operations within the U.S. Border Patrol's Yuma Sector located in Arizona. These missions include reinforcing the existing southern border barrier, emplacing national defense area signage and performing roadway surveys and maintenance — all part of the Defense Department's continued support to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Before starting barrier reinforcement tasks, the unit completed a series of barrier surveys along key segments to evaluate conditions, identify reinforcement needs and guide mission planning. These assessments form the foundation for

ongoing operations.

The barrier reinforcement mission, previously conducted by Task Force Sapper in the San Diego Sector, was an anticipated requirement that Task Force Forge had prepared for in advance. Marines and sailors are now welding prefabricated steel brackets onto the existing barrier infrastructure. Once installed in sufficient numbers, these brackets will support the placement of barbed and concertina wire, enhancing the overall security of the barrier.

“The Marines and sailors of Task Force Forge bring precision, professionalism and purpose to every mission,” said Marine Lt. Col. Colin Graham, CLB 15 battalion commander and Task Force Forge commanding officer. “Reinforcing the border barrier is a tangible way we assist our interagency partners to strengthen security and protect the territorial integrity of the United States.”

In parallel, following the recent establishment of the Yuma National Defense Area — located adjacent to the Barry M. Goldwater Range and now part of Marine Corps Air Station Yuma — Task Force Forge has been tasked with emplacing NDA signage throughout the NDA 4 East region. This land, previously owned by the Interior Department, was transferred to the Navy, with Marine Corps Air Station Yuma delegating operational authority to Northcom.

Additionally, the task force is conducting detailed surveys of unimproved roads essential for maintaining mobility for CBP and DOD personnel operating in rugged desert terrain. These surveys evaluate road geometry, surface conditions and drainage patterns.

Task Force Forge engineering experts are using these findings to plan targeted maintenance activities such as blading, reshaping and dust abatement. These efforts aim to preserve

the environmental integrity of each route while ensuring safe and reliable travel for mission-critical operations.

Iwo Jima ARG-22nd MEU (SOC) Deploys for Global Operations

NORFOLK, Va. (Aug. 14, 2025) – Sailors and Marines man the rails aboard the Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7) as it departs Naval Station Norfolk for a regularly scheduled deployment. (U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Clay Whaley)

From U.S. Second fleet, Aug. 15, 2025

NORFOLK, Va. – Sailors and Marines assigned to the Iwo Jima

(IWO) Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) – 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Special Operations Capable (SOC) departed for a regularly scheduled deployment, August 14.

The ARG's primary mission is to conduct presence operations and safely embark Marines ashore to conduct a wide variety of contingency missions worldwide. The IWO ARG – 22nd MEU (SOC) also provides a flexible, forward naval presence by operating close to shore which allows this specialized Navy-Marine Corps team to conduct missions, unique to the amphibious Navy, at a moment's notice.

"The IWO ARG – 22nd MEU (SOC) is an integral part of advancing our nations' interests abroad and is a dynamic representation of our Navy's 250 years of lethality and warfighting excellence," said Capt. Chris Farricker, commodore, Amphibious Squadron 8. "Our integrated Navy-Marine Corps warfighters are ready to execute the nation's business and deliver quick and decisive combat power no matter where we are tasked in today's complex global environment."

This deployment follows the ARG-MEU's final certification event, Composite Training Unit Exercise, the Navy's most demanding pre-deployment assessment, which concluded July 11. More than 4,500 Sailors and Marines from the 22nd MEU comprise the force aboard the ARG's three amphibious ships: flagship USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7), and the San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ships USS San Antonio (LPD 17) and USS Fort Lauderdale (LPD 28).

"The IWO ARG – 22nd MEU (SOC) is ready to serve as the nation's force of choice, prepared to decisively respond to any crisis in support of our national interests," said Col. Tom "Banshee" Trimble, commanding officer, 22nd MEU (SOC). "We are warfighters; manned, trained, and equipped to win – anywhere, anytime."

Iwo Jima serves as the flagship of the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) which is capable of conducting global missions to accomplish U.S. strategic goals, deter adversaries, and ensure unimpeded commerce by keeping the high seas open and free in accordance with international law. Embarked aboard ARG shipping is the 22nd MEU (SOC) which provides a forward-deployed, flexible sea-based Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) capable of conducting amphibious operations—to include enabling the introduction of follow-on forces and designated special operations to meet Combatant Commander's requirements.

U.S. 2nd Fleet develops and employs maritime forces ready to fight across multiple domains in the Atlantic and Arctic in order to ensure access, deter aggression and defend U.S., allied, and partner interests.

UNITAS 2025 To Be Held Across Multiple Locations Along the East Coast of United States

MAYPORT, Fl. (Dec 18, 2024) – Depicted is the U.S. Navy's UNITAS 2025 logo. (U.S. Navy graphic by Ens. Paul Archer)
From USNAVSOUTH/4TH Fleet Public Affairs, Aug. 14, 2025

MAYPORT, Fla. – U.S. Navy and Marine Corps, and participating nation forces are set to arrive at Naval Station Mayport, Fla., in support of UNITAS 2025 (66) the world's longest-running multinational maritime exercise, scheduled to start September 15, 2025.

The U.S. Navy will host this year's UNITAS featuring approximately 8,000 personnel from 25 allied and partner nations, including multiple ships, submarines, and aircraft (fixed wing and rotary). Forces will conduct operations off

the East Coast of the United States and ashore in the vicinity of Naval Station Mayport, Fla., Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, N.C., and Naval Station Norfolk, Va. through October 6.

UNITAS, which is Latin for unity, united, or oneness, was conceived in 1959 when representatives at the first Inter-American Naval Conference in Panama agreed to conduct an annual maritime exercise with one another. The first UNITAS took place in 1960 with forces from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, the United States, and Venezuela. This year marks the 66th iteration of the world's longest-running annual multinational maritime exercise.

Including the United States, UNITAS 2025 will bring together 26 nations from all over the world to train forces in joint maritime operations that enhance tactical proficiency and increase interoperability. Participating nations include Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Italy, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Jamaica, Japan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Singapore, Spain, and the United States

"In line with the Secretary's guidance, and to bolster defense of the homeland and build on over six decades of success, UNITAS 2025 is a vital opportunity to demonstrate how our partners in the region work together to defend against hemispheric threats," said Rear Adm. Carlos Sardiello, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet and commander, Task Force 138. "By bringing together 25 nations, we're not just enhancing tactical proficiency and interoperability, we are demonstrating a prime example of regional burden-sharing; we're reinforcing trust and unity crucial for ensuring we stand side by side against hemispheric threats."

Following the UNITAS 2025 Opening Ceremony on September 15, the in-port phase of the exercise will feature subject matter expert exchanges, professional symposiums, ship rider exchanges, and operations meetings. During this time, Marines and Sailors will conduct training events in Mayport to include medical, cyber defense, and diving and salvage operations.

During the UNITAS 2025 Underway Phase, forces will participate in events testing all warfare operations, to include live-fire exercises such as a SINKEX, an amphibious ship-to-shore landing and force withdrawal in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

Additionally, unmanned and hybrid fleet systems will return to UNITAS for a second year as part of the testing and development of the U.S. Navy’s future hybrid fleet.

U.S. forces participating in UNITAS 2025 include the U.S. Navy’s Carrier Strike Group 2, Carrier Strike Group 4, Commander, Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 11, Destroyer Squadron 40, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit 6, Expeditionary Strike Group 2, Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron 48, SEAL Team 8, Special Boat Team 20, Theater Support Vessel 1 Prevail, Theater Support Vessel 4 Narragansett, Theater Support Vessel 5 Vindicator, USNS Leroy Grumman (T-AO-195), USS Arlington (LPD 24), USS Cooperstown (LCS 23), USS Harry S Truman (CVN 75), USS Oregon (SSN 793), USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116), and Air Test and Evaluation Squadron 20. Marine Corps forces include the 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing; 2nd Marine Division; 2nd Marine Logistics Group, including Combat Logistics Battalion 22; the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit Command Element; 4th Marine Division; B Company, 4th Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion; Force Headquarters Group Augments; Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 269; II Marine Expeditionary Force; II Marine Expeditionary Force Information Group; K Company (-), 3rd Battalion 23rd Marine Regiment; Littoral Craft Company D, 4th Amphibian Assault Battalion; Marine Air Control Group

28; Marine Forces Reserve; Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 251; Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 542; and Marine Wing Communications Squadron 48. The U.S. Coast Guard is represented by the Tactical Law Enforcement Team and a U.S. Coast Guard Maritime Security Response Team. U.S. Air Force units involved include Air Force Special Operations Command and the 107th Fighter Squadron. Exercises like UNITAS play a critical role in enhancing the combat readiness of U.S. service members, as well as those of our Allies and partners, by providing a platform for joint training and cooperation in complex maritime environments.

Following the successful completion of UNITAS 2025, senior leaders from participating countries will join in a series of high-profile events along the East Coast, celebrating a historic milestone: the United States Navy 250th birthday. This commemoration honors a legacy of protecting American interests, deterring aggression, and promoting prosperity and security, while also showcasing the Navy's enduring commitment to defending the American way of life.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet is the trusted maritime partner for Caribbean, Central and South America maritime forces leading to improved unity, security and stability.

For more USNAVSOUTH/4th Fleet news and photos, visit facebook.com/NAVSOUS4THFLT, https://www.fourthfleet.navy.mil/, X – @ NAVSOUS4THFLT, and https://www.linkedin.com/company/u-s-naval-forces-southern-command-u-s-4th-fleet

31st MEU supports anti-submarine warfare operation in Indo-Pacific

U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Tristan Courtney, a crew chief with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 265 (Rein.), 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, deploys buoys during anti-submarine warfare training, in the Philippine Sea, Aug. 8, 2025. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Cpl. Alora Finigan)

From Capt. Robert DeRonda, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, Aug. 12, 2025

CAMP HANSEN, Japan – On Aug. 8, 2025, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 265 (Reinforced), 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, supported an operational anti-submarine warfare mission utilizing the MV-22B Osprey teamed with two Navy MH-60R Sea Hawk helicopters to distribute sonobuoys.

This iteration of anti-submarine operations represents the first time a forward-deployed MV-22B assigned to the 31st MEU has operated in an ASW role within the Indo-Pacific theater, significantly enhancing the 31st MEU’s capabilities and contributing to regional maritime security.

“The Marine Corps has spent the past five years re tooling to fight in the Pacific and the submarine threat can’t be ignored. The MV-22B complements the Navy’s capabilities so well that it’s hard to believe this wasn’t thought of sooner” said Col. Niedziocha, commanding officer, 31st MEU. “We’ve validated the utility of both amphibious warships and littoral forces, demonstrating the ability to fight as the landward component of the fleet.”

The integration of the MV-22B into ASW operations expands the MEU’s ability to detect, track, and deter potential adversaries operating in the maritime domain. This capability leverages the unique range, speed, and carrying capacity capabilities of the MV-22B with the deployment of advanced sensors and integration with U.S. Navy capabilities, allowing for rapid response and persistent surveillance.

This operation demonstrated the close relationship between the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and U.S. Navy counterparts. Seamless integration and interoperability with the George Washington Carrier Strike Group and the America Expeditionary Strike Group highlighted the strength of combined naval forces. This development underscores the Marine Corps’ commitment to naval integration and the provision of a versatile, rapidly deployable force capable of addressing a wide range of contingencies.

The 31st MEU is operating aboard ships of the America Expeditionary Strike Group in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations, the U.S. Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet which routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

Photo and video packages, including B-roll, will be released by the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit for media use. Content can be found at https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/31MEU

BAE Systems Awarded $181M Contract Expanding Amphibious Combat Vehicle program

From BAE Systems

August 12, 2025 – BAE Systems received a $181 million contract from the U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) to produce 31 additional Amphibious Combat Vehicles (ACVs), a part of the recently awarded full-rate production (FRP) Lot 5/6 contract. This latest award, designated as FRP 5C, brings the total number of ACV-30s ordered to 91.

The FRP 5/6 contract includes a series of options to produce up to 150 vehicles, with the USMC exercising the option for

FRP 5A and 5B in May for 60 vehicles, valued at $360 million.

BAE Systems is also currently under contract for the ACV-Personnel and ACV-Command variants. Work for the ACV-30mm will take place in York, Pennsylvania; Johnstown, Pennsylvania; and Charleston, South Carolina, through the fourth quarter of 2026.