NAPA Ship Design Software Company Looking to Expand in North America

Mikko Forss, NAPA's executive vice president for Design Solutions (NAPA photo)

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – A major ship design software company is focusing on expanding its customer base in North America, especially in view of the U.S. government's increased shipbuilding initiatives and substantial industry investments.

The company, NAPA, based in Finland, designs software

applications for ship design, safety, and operations.

“We basically provide 3D CAD [computer-aided design] and engineering software for the shipyards’ engineering offices,” said Mikko Forss, NAPA’s executive vice president for Design Solutions, in an interview with Seapower. “With the help of our software, our customers are able to make critical safety- and naval architecture-related divisions during their design process.

“Our customer base represents 90% of the annual shipbuilding output,” Forss said. “If we measure it in terms of compensated gross tonnage, we have a very strong position in the key shipbuilding markets in Korea, Japan, China, Europe, and, we have quite a few customers in North America.

“North America is a very important territory to us,” he said. “Your government has announced the Maritime Action Plan that comes with substantial industry stimulus and investments. We believe we can help the U.S.A. to deliver good quality vessels on time, on budget. So, we’re very much focusing on the North America market at the moment, and we are working with all the key stakeholders… “For the moment, our main focus is on the Navy and Coast Guard. We see ourselves as a really good partner for the U.S. shipbuilding industry to ramp up productivity and efficiency during these unprecedented times.”

Forss said the NAPA ship design software is “off the shelf,” so without any customization you can start to apply it for your design work Most of our customers have actually tailored and customized our software for their needs. That has proven to be a really, really powerful way of solving the specific challenges they have at hand.”

He cited South Korea’s HD Hyundai Heavy Industries, the world’s largest shipyard, as using heavily customized NAPA software to match with their design process.

“With that approach, they can gain more productivity, they can draw more design iterations in less amount of time, and that leads to quality products – ships, in this case – while maintaining the delivery schedule and budget,” he said.

Forss noted that all the major companies designing and building ice-going vessels are using NAPA software for multiple different design disciplines, including hull structure and stability management.

He also said that NAPA is emphasizing skilled workforce development. NAPA has partnered with universities in the United States that offer curricula in naval architecture “to build together a program, a curriculum where our software is included and there we have a mutual and shared vision to produce talent and skills that the industry needs because our industry is having, actually, a very exceptional moment, high order books, political-level attention toward our business that is almost unprecedented. But one major challenge we are facing is that skill shortage, that same thing I’m hearing when I’m traveling in Korea, in Japan, in the U.S. and in Canada. One way to solve this challenge is that we are partnering with academia to offer skills for the future graduates that are readily usable in the industry.”

Founded in 1989, NAPA has offices in ten countries and has 230 experts on board.

Forss, a graduate from Helsinki University and a naval architect for almost 20 years, explained his enthusiasm for his profession.

“Ships are the largest man-made objects that move,” he said. “It’s just a remarkable effort of engineering to design and build those and that is still fascinating me every single day. … Naval architects are one big family, globally, and the relationships and connections are really tight in our business.”

RENK America Moving to Become Second Builder of Ship Propulsion Bull Gears for U.S. Navy Ships

RENK is positioning itself to offer to provide the main gearboxes for the Navy's proposed FF(X) frigate, a development of the Coast Guard's Legend-class national security cutter. (U.S. Navy)

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. — A 120-year-old American manufacturing company now owned by a German firm is positioning itself to return to building main gearboxes for new U.S. Navy ships as a Tier 1 supplier.

RENK Group AG bought Cincinnati Gearing Systems of Cincinnati,

Ohio last year, which made the main reduction gear sets for the two fast combat support ships (AOEs) and the Kaiser-class fleet replenishment oilers three decades ago. Now called RENK America Marine and Industry (RAMI), RAMI is part of the global RENK Group's Marine and Industry division.

RENK Germany provided the main gear boxes for the Coast Guard's Legend-class national security cutters and is providing the main gear boxes for the Heritage-class offshore patrol cutters.

"Right now, for the big gear boxes – on aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers – there's really only one supplier in America," said Thom Burke, president of RENK America Marine and Industry (RAMI), in an interview with Seapower. "RENK's big idea was to use Cincinnati Gear's legacy experience in gearboxes to get back into bringing the Navy a second supplier. I was brought in to pivot us harder towards Navy business."

During his Navy career, Burke commanded two ships, including a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier.

RAMI has approximately 120 employees who "grind the gears, make all the components, assemble the components, [and] test the assemblies." Burke said.

Since supplying gear boxes to the AOEs and T-AOs 25 or 30 years ago, "we fell out of the ability to make the big, giant bull gears that drive those main reduction gear sets," he said. "RENK is making investments in the company to prepare us to do that so that we can compete on frigate, destroyer, battleship, cruiser, whatever that next ship is going to be for the Navy.

Noting that the Navy is planning on building new frigates based on the Legend-class national security cutters, Burke said that "we're [RENK] the incumbent for those vessels, so we're preparing to grow ourselves up to be able to make

frigates for the Navy if they so choose to do that."

RAMI has been asked for a price quote for the proposed frigate Flight 1 design and is "trying to figure out ways to make those gearboxes here in America, here in Cincinnati, instead of Germany."

Burke said that Cincinnati and now RENK products are on every destroyer in the U.S. Navy right now."

The company also builds equipment for Textron's LCAC 100-class of Ship-to-Shore Connectors and components for sustaining the Ohio-class submarines and for equipping the new Columbia-class submarines.

"There's plenty going on now, and there's plenty potential for the future," Burke said, noting that RAMI wanted "to be able to offer the Navy a robust capability."

Asked about RAMI's workforce and the current industry-wide workforce challenges, Burke said, "We have been very aggressively trying to grow the workforce … [and] get a second shift. … "We're filling out that second shift now."

He said RAMI has hired 15 workers over the last six months.

"I'm trying to grow my own," he said. "So far we've made a lot of progress, but it's a continuing challenge for sure."

RAMI has a partnership with a local high school and community college and is leveraging the Navy Talent Pipeline Program and the Accelerated Training in Defense Manufacturing (ATDM) Program in Denville, Virginia, which is "specifically designed to help adult learners earn the skills necessary to make an immediate impact in the submarine industrial base (SIB)," the ATDM website said.

Austal USA Grows Leadership Team

From Austal USA, June 4, 2026

MOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA welcomed three new members to the company's senior leadership team. Michael Pruitt, Vice President of Surface Ship Programs; Michael Oberdorf, Vice President of Submarine Programs; and Andrew Hinkebein, Director of State and Local Government Relations.

With over 25 years of experience directing large-scale shipbuilding activities, Michael Pruitt has managed multi-billion-dollar Navy surface ship portfolios at both Huntington Ingalls Industries and Northrup Grumman Shipbuilding. He's led cross-functional teams to deliver complex Naval and commercial programs. His expertise spans production efficiency, supply chain management, and workforce training development, with a proven track record of fostering safety, compliance, operational excellence, and risk mitigation across all stages of ship construction and delivery.

Pruitt holds a Bachelor of Science in Business and is a certified Six Sigma Green Belt, bringing a strong foundation in business and process improvement to his new role.

A qualified nuclear engineer with a master's of science in electrical engineering and a Navy career that spanned over 30 years, retired Captain Michael C. Oberdorf brings deep expertise in nuclear submarine operations, Navy program funding, and strong relationships with senior leaders, making him uniquely positioned to drive growth in Austal's submarine

module business. He joins Austal USA from Bath Iron Works where he was senior director of operations demonstrating exceptional leadership in new construction programs.

Oberdorf served as Shipyard Commander and Installation Commander at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, leading a $1.5B organization of 6,700 personnel in submarine overhauls, modernization, and refueling. His Navy career includes key leadership roles at Norfolk Naval Shipyard and aboard USS RONALD REAGAN (CVN 76), where he was responsible for consistently improving safety, quality, and operational efficiency.

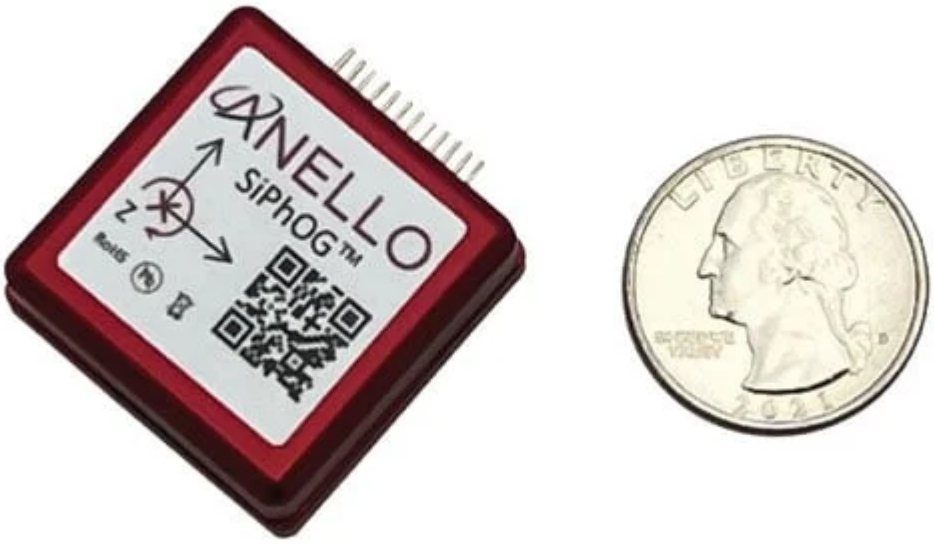
As director of local and state government affairs, Andrew Hinkebein will lead the company's engagement efforts with state and local governments, economic development organizations, community stakeholders, and strategic partners. He'll also oversee Austal USA's external communications initiatives.

A United States Marine Corps veteran, Hinkebein brings extensive experience in the areas of government affairs, public policy, economic development, and maritime defense. Most recently, he served as director of government affairs for Bollinger Mississippi Shipbuilding, where he worked with federal, state, and local stakeholders to advance shipbuilding initiatives, workforce development efforts, infrastructure investments, and defense industrial base priorities.

Hinkebein previously served as State Director for U.S. Senator Tommy Tuberville of Alabama, overseeing statewide operations and stakeholder engagement across Alabama. He also served on the staff of Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Roger Wicker of Mississippi, where he worked on issues involving national defense, shipbuilding programs, economic development, and strategic investments supporting the nation's defense industrial base.

“These three highly experienced industry professionals each boast broad defense backgrounds that will contribute unique perspectives to their Austal USA leadership roles,” Austal USA President Gene Miller stated. “We are excited to have them join our senior leadership team and look forward to having them help to grow Austal USA.”

ANELLO Photonics Miniaturizes Navigation Systems for Unmanned Systems



ARLINGTON, Va. – A Silicon Valley-based technology company is finding success in developing and producing small, silicon chip-based navigation systems ideal for unmanned systems operating in GPS-denied environments across land, air and sea.

ANELLO Photonics, headquartered in Santa Clara, California, develops advanced navigation systems based on silicon photonics technology. The company integrates optical sensing and inertial navigation capabilities onto compact silicon chips to deliver high-performance positioning and guidance solutions.

Its core product, the SiPhOG (Silicon Photonic Optical Gyroscope), is a photonic integrated circuit that provides the functionality of a traditional fiber-optic inertial navigation system used in aircraft, ships, and submarines, while significantly reducing size, weight, power consumption, and system complexity.

“Fiber-optic gyros are high-end, navigation-grade sensors usually used for ICBMs, fighter jets, [and] submarines. They’re the gold standard, [and] often can navigate for weeks or months at a time,” said Dr. Kirstin Schauble, Vice President for Systems Engineering at ANELLO, in an interview with Seapower. “They’re fantastic sensors; the problem with them is that they are big, bulky, power hungry, and extremely expensive.”

As such, fiber-optic gyros are impractical for small unmanned systems, particularly attritable systems.

“We’ve taken the core physics behind traditional fiber-optic gyroscopes – systems that conventionally rely on numerous discrete optical components – and integrated them onto a compact silicon photonics chip,” said Schauble. “By integrating active and passive photonic elements onto a two by five millimeter chip , we’ve dramatically reduced the size and complexity of high-performance inertial navigation technology. The SiPhOG is also mass producible and highly robust, while still delivering the precision expected from traditional fiber-optic gyroscopes due to the significant innovations we’ve achieved in silicon photonics.”

Because the SiPhOG is relatively inexpensive, small, lightweight, and consumes little electric power, it is ideal for equipping swarms of autonomous systems such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), unmanned surface vessels (USVs) and unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs).

Schauble said the SiPhOG is ideal for Group 2/3 fixed wing drones, USVs, and 10-foot-to-200-foot vessels.

“We’re able to bring high precision capability to lower-cost, lower size-weight-power form factors for smaller vessels that previously couldn’t afford FOG-level performance,” she said.

The company’s Maritime Inertial Navigation System (INS) delivers precise and reliable navigation in GPS-denied or contested environments, enabling continuous positioning, heading, and motion tracking for autonomous maritime platforms.

ANELLO’s X3 IMU (Inertial Measurement Unit) integrates seamlessly into existing systems and can operate either independently or as part of a larger navigation architecture, according to Schauble. Designed with an open interface and modular architecture, the X3 supports flexible plug-and-play integration across a wide range of aerial autonomous applications.

According to a company press release, ANELLO was selected in January by the Department of War (DoW) for a $20 million award under the Accelerate the Procurement and Fielding of Innovative Technologies (APFIT) program to fast-track the procurement, production, and scaling of ANELLO’s GPS-denied navigation technology.

ANELLO’s SiPhOG-based Maritime INS is integrated on several autonomous systems, including HavocAI’s USVs and BlackSea Technologies’ Chaser USV.

Schauble said ANELLO's workforce is expanding from its current 35-to-40 personnel.

"We can't build these things fast enough," she said commenting on the flood of orders.

Maritime Industrial Base in Crisis, New CMS Report Finds

By Matt Reisener

America's maritime industrial

base (MIB) is in crisis. Decades of deindustrialization, inconsistent policy su

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However, many of the United States' maritime allies are experiencing similar challenges to their domestic shipbuilding industries and have adopted creative approaches to solving them. The United States must utilize the experience, knowledge and resources of its allies to develop the best strategy possible for building a stronger, more resilient MIB.

Accordingly, the Center for Maritime Strategy conducted a study of America's allied maritime industrial base to examine how five American allies (South Korea, Italy, Canada, Sweden and the United Kingdom) build commercial and naval ships, how they support their shipbuilding industries and what lessons America can learn from its allies about how to revitalize its MIB.

Each country faces similar shipbuilding challenges to America but has taken a different approach to addressing them. Although South Korea and Italy have successfully maintained strong commercial and naval shipbuilding sectors, Canada and the United Kingdom have largely allowed their commercial sectors to atrophy while primarily focusing on warship construction, while Sweden has seen both sectors significantly diminish and maintains only marginal naval shipbuilding capabilities. Many of America's

allies have successfully maintained strong MIBs by streamlining the process for designing and building ships. Among the countries studied, the most successful nations at sustaining strong commercial and naval shipbuilding industries have found ways to minimize late-stage design changes, build a greater variety of ships based on a common design and establish a shipbuilding culture which emphasizes delivering ships on time and under budget.

Similarly, the study illustrates how government investments in their MIBs can set their shipbuilding industries up for success, including by training the next generation of skilled tradespeople and supporting greater supply chain resilience. America's most successful shipbuilding allies have also heavily invested in integrating new technology into their shipyards, fully embracing automation, digitization and artificial intelligence to support their work – often with strong government support for these efforts.

America can build a stronger, more capable MIB by partnering with and learning from its allies. Accordingly, this study provides recommendations for how America can apply these insights to support its MIB while embracing greater multilateral maritime cooperation.

CMS and speakers from the allied nations in the report will host a panel discussion on the new report on Tuesday, April 21 from 3:30-4:30 p.m. in the Cherry Blossom Ballroom.

Recommendations

Reforming the Design and Build Processes

- **Design, then bend:** Only begin vessel construction once the design is 100 percent complete to avoid disruptions.
- **Make VCMs the norm:** Use vessel construction managers (VCMs) to oversee all government shipbuilding projects to streamline production and design processes.
- **Embrace modularity:** Creating common designs to be used across multiple types of ships could reduce delays in the design process and increase interoperability.

Embracing New and Emergent Technologies

- **Digitize, automate, and get "smart":** Integrate automation, digitization, and AI in shipyards to empower—not replace—the existing workforce.
- **Build ships to sail, engineer them to last:** Increase operability by incorporating condition-based maintenance (CBM) in ship design to reduce the unpredictability of maintenance and repairs
- **Cross the digital divide:** Embrace digitization by allocating Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program budgets to digitization, consulting mariners to address their needs, building worker trust in digital systems, and avoiding disrupting essential shipbuilding processes.

Increasing Allied Cooperation

- **Leverage maritime alliances:** Expand opportunities to collaborate with allies on shipbuilding, modeling existing frameworks like AUKUS, MASGA, and OCCAR.
- **Build a "bridge" over troubled waters:** When American yards are at capacity, construct the initial ships in a multi-vessel purchase in allied ports while simultaneously investing in U.S. shipyards to eventually onshore construction.
- **Use allied ports in a storm:** Engage U.S. maritime allies to provide drydock and port access to the U.S. Navy, especially those with maritime infrastructure in the Pacific.
- **"All hands on deck" for skilled labor:** Supplement the domestic shipbuilding labor pool with high-skilled migrants from allied countries.

Ensuring On-Time Delivery

- **Incentivize success:** Offer financial incentives (but not punitive fees) for on-time and on-budget delivery of ships.
- **Small blocks stack just as well as large ones:** Order ships in smaller blocks to allow greater flexibility in design and capabilities and avoid cascading delays across larger block buys.

Training Current and Future Shipbuilders

- **Educate, empower, lead:** Expand shipbuilding apprenticeship opportunities and increase support to trainees.
- **Engineer the future of naval architecture:** Expand existing and create new naval architecture and marine engineering programs to address labor shortages.

Strengthening U.S. Supply Chains

- **If you need it, print it:** Increase additive manufacturing capabilities and training opportunities to mitigate supply chain gaps and reduce overreliance on sole-source manufacturers.
- **Build supply chain contingencies:** Reduce supply chain vulnerabilities in a conflict by developing contingencies which identify alternate sources and lean on dependable allies.

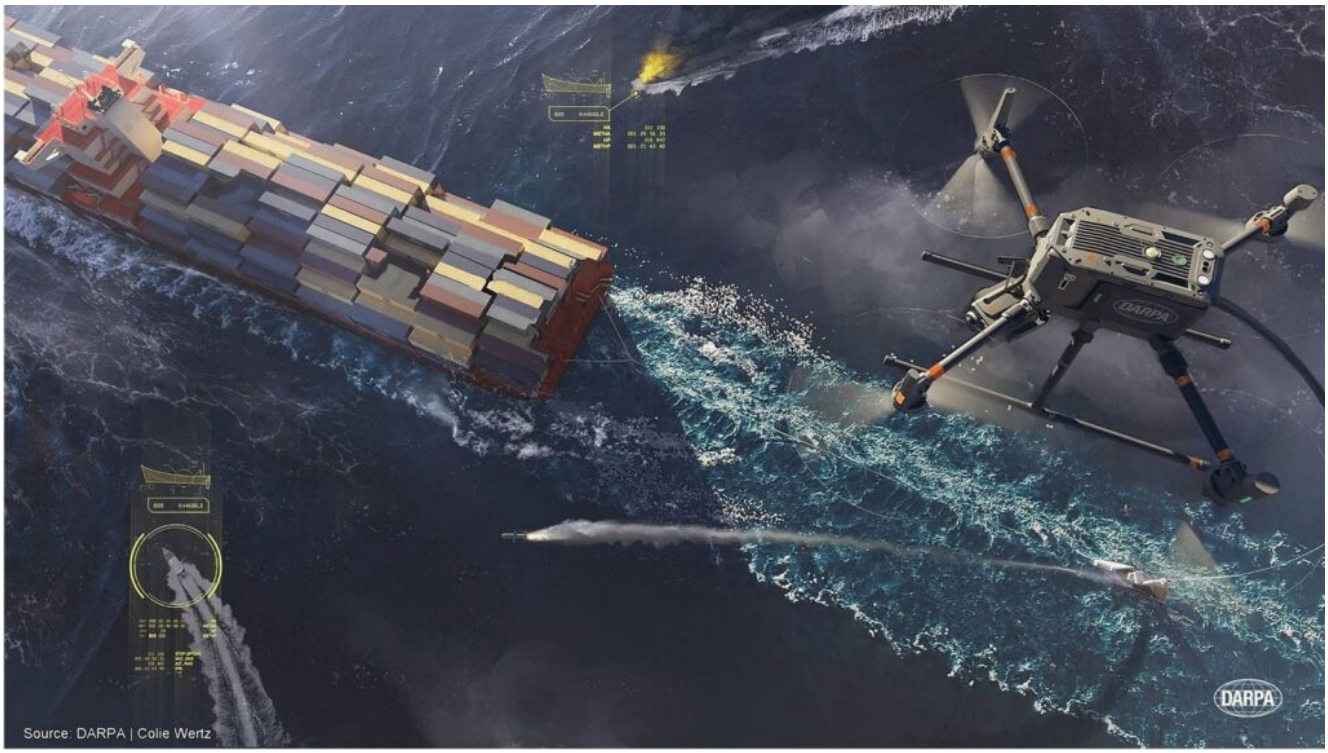
Revitalizing Commercial Shipbuilding

- **Chart a collaborative course:** Facilitate collaboration across government and industry to strengthen America as a competitor in the commercial shipbuilding sector.
- **Shared insight, collective impact:** Share best practices to encourage cooperation among U.S. and AMIB companies to strengthen the shipbuilding industry.

Read the full report here.

RTX's Raytheon Selected by DARPA to Develop Advanced

Maritime Defense Technologies



Release From RTX

New capability will protect vulnerable vessels from threats at sea

PORTSMOUTH, R.I., (February 2, 2026) – Raytheon, an RTX (NYSE: RTX) business, has been selected by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to develop an advanced sensing and targeting system that will help defend vulnerable commercial shipping and naval logistics vessels against emerging threats such as unmanned surface vehicles (USVs).

Under the contract, Raytheon's Advanced Technology team will design, build, and demonstrate a system that consists of Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) sensors, advanced detection software, and robust command and control capabilities to enhance situational awareness and threat response.

The system, which is being developed for DARPA's Pulling Guard program, will deploy the sensors via a tethered drone connected to a semi-autonomous unmanned platform that is towed

by commercial and naval logistics vessels. The sensors will provide real-time target tracking data to remote operators, enabling them to make rapid, informed engagement decisions.

Phase one of the program will focus on simulated engagements to evaluate system performance and operator workflows. In phase two, the system will transition to integrating operational launchers and effectors for live operations.

“Through this development, we are advancing critical security technologies for commercial shipping in regions like the Red Sea,” said Colin Whelan, president of Advanced Technology at Raytheon. “By integrating our proven expertise in command and control, high-performance sensing, and effectors, we will deliver a scalable, cost-effective solution that minimizes risks to both cargo and naval assets.”

Beyond its primary focus of vulnerable ship protection, the technology Raytheon is developing has the potential to deliver broader capabilities across a wide range of naval and security operations, including automated overwatch for medium and large USVs and manned combatants operating in multiple theaters.

Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy Taps New Leadership for U.S. Merchant Marine Academy

Rear Admiral (select) Tony Ceraolo & Dr. Johnathan Gajdos will lead the charge in restoring the Academy's prominence and military readiness

From the U.S. Department of Transportation, Jan. 8, 2026

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy today announced Rear Admiral (select) Tony Ceraolo as Superintendent and Dr. Johnathan Gajdos as Provost at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. Both men bring decades of experience in public administration, military leadership and education.

Under the leadership of President Trump and Secretary

Duffy, Rear Adm. (sel) Tony Ceraolo and Dr. Gajdos are focused on restoring the Academy to an institution worthy of the sacrifices made by these young patriots and strengthening its academic programs so midshipmen are fully prepared to serve, lead, and defend our great nation.

President Trump's Executive Order on Restoring America's Maritime Dominance directed a revitalization of the Academy earlier this year. Secretary Duffy swiftly signed a partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to modernize campus facilities, upgrade simulators and navigation labs, and completely overhaul the IT system. The Secretary also spearheaded the restoration of the Christ on the Water painting. These initiatives aim to ensure the Academy is attracting the best and brightest to serve as our nation's merchant mariners.

"Rear Admiral Tony Ceraolo and Dr. Johnathan Gajdos are precisely the leaders the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy needs at this critical moment—especially after the last administration neglected the Academy and its midshipmen," said **U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy**. "These men bring the experience, discipline, and vision required to reverse years of decline at the Academy, restore America's maritime power, and prepare the next generation of American patriots for service to our country."

"I am honored and excited to serve as the 15th Superintendent of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at a pivotal moment for both the Academy and our nation. With unprecedented focus, support, and momentum behind the maritime sector, this is an exciting time to lead" said **Rear Adm. (sel) Tony Ceraolo, Superintendent at U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.** "I look forward to working alongside our exceptional faculty and staff to educate, mentor and graduate leaders of exemplary character—men and women fully prepared to advance our

nation’s national security, economic success, and marine transportation needs.”

“When I had the opportunity for a campus visit during the selection process for this position, I was immediately impressed by the dedicated faculty, the motivated midshipmen, and the skilled staff, fully embracing the Academy’s critical mission,” said **Dr. Johnathan Gajdos, Provost at U.S. Merchant Marine Academy**. “As I assume the role of USMMA’s Provost, I am excited to support the work of our faculty as they educate America’s future merchant mariners and maritime leaders.”

About Rear Adm. (sel) Tony Ceraolo:

Before joining the Academy as Chief of Staff in 2023, Rear Adm. (sel) Ceraolo spent 34 years in the U.S. Coast Guard. Prior to his retirement, he served as the Executive Assistant to the Coast Guard Deputy Commandant for Operations. Earlier in his career, he served as a Senior Counselor to the Secretary of Homeland Security where he spearheaded and coauthored DHS’s first-ever Strategic Approach for Arctic Homeland Security, as well as Director for Maritime Security and Director for Arctic Region Policy on the National Security Council Staff at the White House.

His command experience includes service as Commanding Officer of two Coast Guard cutters, as well as a deployment as Commander of U.S. Coast Guard Patrol Forces Southwest Asia – the Coast Guard’s largest command outside the continental United States; and, as Sector Commander and Captain of the Port for San Francisco and Northern California.

Captain Ceraolo graduated with honors from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. He earned a Master of Public Administration from Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government, and a Master of Arts with Distinction in National Security and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. He is also a graduate of the Joint Forces Staff

College, a designated permanent cutterman, and an Eagle Scout.

About Dr. Johnathan Gajdos:

Prior to joining the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Dr. Gajdos spent more than 15 years in administrative and teaching roles at the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC), the primary language education and training institution for the U.S. military. Most recently, he served as Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, where he oversaw six schools providing full-time, intensive foreign language training in nine languages.

His prior assignments at DLIFLC include serving as dean of the Persian Farsi School, academic advisor at the Institute's Washington, D.C. office, and teaching team leader and instructor in the German program (earning the DLIFLC Civilian Instructor of the Year award from the Kiwanis Club of Monterey in 2013). Dr. Gajdos has also taught at Monterey Peninsula College, the University of Iowa, and Technische Universität Dortmund, Germany.

Dr. Gajdos earned a Ph.D. and M.A. in Germanic linguistics from the University of Iowa; a Bachelor's in German from Georgetown University; and a Graduate Certificate in Public Administration from the University of North Dakota. A graduate of the Army Training and Doctrine Command Intermediate Leader Development Program, he has completed Army Management Staff College courses as well as Wharton Online's Leadership and Management Certificate program. He is a two-time recipient of the Army Civilian Service Commendation Medal and in 2025 was awarded the Army Meritorious Civilian Service Medal.

The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, located in Kings Point, New York, educates and graduates licensed merchant mariners and leaders of exemplary character who will serve America's marine transportation and defense needs in peace and war. The U.S.

Merchant Marine Academy is administered by the Department of Transportation.

Maritime Administration Will Take Over and Streamline Deepwater Port Licensing

Release From the U.S. Department of Transportation

Accelerating deepwater port licensing will unleash American energy dominance, lower energy costs for families

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Secretary of Transportation Sean P. Duffy today announced the Maritime Administration (MARAD) will take on oversight of deepwater port licensing from the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG). This change will streamline environmental reviews, accelerate license approvals, and lower domestic energy costs.

"The Deepwater Port Program is a key pillar of President Trump's energy dominance strategy. With this change, we'll soon accelerate project approvals so the nation can safely utilize more of its abundant natural resources, create more high paying jobs, and lower energy costs for American families," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy.

"MARAD is excited and proud to lead the Deepwater Port Program. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with our partners at the U.S. Coast Guard to make this process more efficient and fuel our energy economy for years to come," said MARAD Administrator Steve M. Carmel.

While Joe Biden and Pete Buttigieg sat on deepwater port approvals for years to appease Green New Scam radicals, the Trump Administration is in the process of approving multiple licenses in the Gulf of America. These projects will substantially increase our energy revenue and allow America to dominate the global energy market.

Additional Information:

In overseeing the licensing process, MARAD will assume National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and environmental compliance review duties. USCG will instead support as a Cooperating Agency and will remain responsible for overseeing safety, design, construction, and operations of deepwater port facilities. This transition advances President Trump's Executive Order on Unleashing American Energy.

The Deepwater Port Act of 1974 (DWPA) establishes a licensing system for ownership, construction, operation, and decommissioning of deepwater port structures located beyond the U.S. territorial sea for the import and export of oil and natural gas. The DWPA sets out conditions that deepwater port license applicants must meet, including minimization of adverse impacts on the marine environment and submission of detailed plans for construction, operation, and decommissioning of deepwater ports.

Thirty (31) Deepwater Port License Applications have been filed for approval since 1975.

Eighteen (18) applications were filed for licenses to import liquefied natural gas (LNG);

Five (5) applications were filed to export LNG;

Six (6) applications were filed to export oil; and

Two (2) applications were filed for licenses to import oil.

Atlantic Council Launches Task Force to Bolster US Maritime Industrial Base

Task Force brings together leaders across government, industry, labor, and academia to advance a bold vision for US naval shipbuilding and maintenance

Release From the Atlantic Council

WASHINGTON, D.C. – December 16, 2025 – The Atlantic Council's Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security and its Forward Defense program announced today the launch of the Revitalizing US Shipbuilding Task Force in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory (JHU/APL).

Galvanized by momentum in the shipbuilding sector, the Task Force will develop actionable recommendations to strengthen US shipbuilding. It will develop novel approaches to design, construction, and sustainment, while balancing those innovative steps with proven measures to address persistent gaps across the sector.

"The United States has a highly capable Navy, but to remain competitive, it needs to modernize its shipbuilding industry," said Christine Fox, former acting deputy secretary of defense and a co-chair of the Task Force. "It is vital that the United States regains its ability to rapidly repair and produce ships today, while simultaneously preparing to take advantage of modern technology. Only with the adoption of new

technology and processes will it be able to produce new, more capable ships, rapidly and affordably."

The Revitalizing US Shipbuilding Task Force is co-chaired by Fox; Mark Esper, the 27th secretary of defense; and Kenneth Braithwaite, the 77th secretary of the Navy. It will explore, among other aspects, how the United States can:

Integrate advanced manufacturing capabilities in shipbuilding and maintenance;

Develop workforce incentives to energize the maritime industrial base; and

Evaluate the role that ally-headquartered shipbuilding firms can play in increasing US shipbuilding capacity.

Over the next twelve months, this high-level Task Force will convene a bipartisan group of senior leaders to generate practical steps that ensure the maritime industrial base can restore US naval primacy and ensure the nation can effectively compete with China in the Indo-Pacific through sustained maritime presence and power projection.

The Task Force's world-class leaders will include former government officials, private-sector executives, academics, and experts in manufacturing, acquisition, and naval operations. They will convene for the first time on Tuesday, December 16.

Task Force Members

- Doug Beck, former director of the Defense Innovation Unit
- Meredith Berger, formerly performed the duties of US under secretary of the Navy; former assistant secretary of

the Navy for energy, installations, and environment

- Admiral James Foggo, US Navy (retired), former commander, United States Naval Forces Europe-Africa and Allied Joint Force Command Naples

- Admiral Lisa Franchetti, US Navy (retired), 33rd chief of naval operations

- Vice Admiral William Galinis, US Navy (retired), former commander, Naval Sea Systems Command

- Nickolas Guertin, former assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development, and acquisition

- Ellen Lord, former under secretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment

- Erik Raven, former under secretary of the Navy

- Admiral John Richardson, US Navy (retired), 31st chief of naval operations

- Russell Rumbaugh, former assistant secretary of the Navy for financial management and comptroller

- Christopher Watkins, chief mission engineering and integration officer, Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory

Industry Task Force Members:

- George Moutafis, chief executive officer, Fincantieri Marine Group (foundational partner)
- Rear Admiral Tom Anderson, US Navy (retired), president of US shipbuilding, Hanwha Defense USA
- Nicholas Galanos, vice president, navy and maritime industrial base, C3 AI
- Hank Holland, chairman and chief executive officer, Amaero
- John Lehman, vice president of strategy, corporate development and government relations, Abyss Defense
- Rob Lehman, co-founder and chief commercial officer, Saronic Technologies
- Vice Admiral Thomas Moore, US Navy (retired), senior vice president, government relations, HII
- Danny Poisson, federal aerospace and defense chief technology officer, PTC
- Dennis Pyatt, president and chief executive officer, Element US Space & Defense

- Robert Smith, executive vice president, marine systems, General Dynamics

- Vince Stammetti, executive vice president and chief operating officer, BlueForge Alliance

- Jordan Webb, president and general manager, Colonna's Shipyard

- Brooke Weddle, senior partner, McKinsey & Company

- Austal USA representative

The Task Force is directed by Stephen Rodriguez and is managed by Mark Massa, Theresa Luetkefend, and Gabrielle Ellicott.

The lead authors will be Michael Presley and Steven Wills. This work will build on the success of the Atlantic Council's previous Commission on Software Defined Warfare, Commission on Defense Innovation Adoption, and Hypersonic Capabilities Task Force, and work in collaboration with the recently launched ReForge Commission.

More information is available on the Task Force's website. To follow its progress and receive updates, subscribe to Forward Defense. For press inquiries, please contact: press@atlanticcouncil.org.

U.S. Department of Transportation Draws Record Turnout at U.S. Merchant Marine Academy’s Industry Day

180 participants were onsite to learn about the Academy's Campus Modernization Plan and federal contracting opportunities in engineering, design, construction, and modernization services

From the U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Public Affairs

KINGS POINT, NEW YORK – The U.S. Department of Transportation drew a record turnout at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy's Industry Day, welcoming 180 participants from 90 firms to learn about the Academy's Campus Modernization Plan (CMP) and

upcoming federal contracting opportunities. President Trump's Executive Order on Restoring Maritime Dominance dedicated an entire section to the modernization of the Academy.

"Modernizing our historic campus is not just about new buildings – it's about investing in America's future and restoring our maritime dominance," said Captain Tony Ceraolo, Acting Superintendent at U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. "I'm proud to see so many great minds from the private sector coming together to want to help create a campus that will inspire innovation, make our nation more competitive, and prepare the next generation of American leaders."

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers presented the CMP and the upcoming federal contracting opportunities in engineering, design, construction, and modernization services. Participants were also given a tour of the historic campus and joined a Q&A session.