

DOT Announces Funding Availability for Port Infrastructure Development Program



A cargo ship at the Port of Los Angeles. *PORT OF LOS ANGELES WASHINGTON* – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Maritime Administration announced on March 29 a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) encouraging states and port authorities to apply for \$230 million in discretionary grant funding for port and intermodal infrastructure-related projects through the Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP).

“Our nation’s ports are a key part of our critical infrastructure. They create jobs and make our economy more resilient and sustainable,” said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg. “This funding will build upon

local investments in infrastructure to deliver long-term economic benefits to American workers and communities, while also addressing climate and equity.”

Buttigieg announced this funding at a White House event focused on the development of offshore wind energy programs. Over the past two years, 12 percent of Port Infrastructure Development Program grant applicants included the anticipated development of wind energy facilities and the movement of wind energy components as part of their project proposals. This year’s grant funding will bolster these efforts. More information about the development of these offshore wind energy programs can be found [here](#).

The Port Infrastructure Development Program supports the efficient movement of commerce upon which our economy relies. The grants are awarded on a competitive basis to support projects that strengthen and modernize port infrastructure and support the Nation’s long-term economic vitality. In keeping with the priorities of the Biden-Harris Administration, the department’s review process will also consider how proposed projects address climate change and environmental justice impacts and advance racial equity, reduce barriers to opportunity, and meet challenges faced by rural areas.

“State and local authorities are working to position ports to take advantage of a clean energy economy,” said Acting Maritime Administrator Lucinda Lessley. “These infrastructure grants will continue to bolster their efforts while creating jobs in these communities and the U.S. maritime industry as a whole.”

Previous grants have supported projects such as infrastructure resiliency and shore-side improvements to facilitate wind energy projects.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act 2021, made \$230 million

available for the Port Infrastructure Development Program, with \$205 million reserved for grants to coastal seaports and Great Lakes ports. The minimum award size is \$1 million, with a federal cost-share not to exceed 80%. The federal cost share can be higher for certain categories of projects. To provide technical assistance, the department will host a series of webinars during the Port Infrastructure Development Program grant application process. Details and registration information regarding these webinars will be made available at www.transportation.gov/portgrants.

The deadline to submit an application for the Port Infrastructure Development Program is July 30, 2021. For more information, please visit <https://www.maritime.dot.gov/PIDPgrants> or email PIDPgrants@dot.gov.

Communications, Information Sharing Seen as Critical for Middle East Shipping Security



Collaboration between merchant shipping and military forces is seen as critical to securing trade flows across the Middle East. NCAGS

Collaboration between the merchant shipping community and coalition military forces is critical in securing maritime trade flows across the Middle East region, with communications and information sharing central to such collaboration, a U.S. Navy officer told a recent regional shipping stakeholder conference.

“Events have made it clear that no one entity alone can provide assurance to merchant shipping in this region,” Capt. Todd Hiller, commanding officer of Bahrain-based Naval Forces Central Command’s (NAVCENT’s) Naval Cooperation And Guidance for Shipping (NCAGS) organization, told the annual International Maritime Security Construct (IMSC) conference last month. “Never before has it been more important to collaborate with our coalition partners and stakeholders to protect freedom of navigation in this critical part of the world.”

Established in 2019 following attacks on commercial ships in port and at sea, IMSC is a multinational maritime coalition designed to deter “gray zone” threats to commercial shipping operating between the Southern Red Sea and the Northern Gulf. The 2021 conference, titled Security through Partnership, was IMSC’s second annual event, held virtually due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

While IMSC-led naval presence has done much to deter attacks, risk persists. “From unmanned vessel-borne improvised explosive device attacks, to limpet mines attached to the hulls of tankers, to the recent seizure of the Motor Tanker Hankuk Chemi ... these threats continue to attempt to destabilize commercial shipping,” Hiller said.

“Given the high risk of navigating, and security interests in the Middle East, there has been a steady uptick in stakeholder involvement in information sharing,” he said. “More times than not, stakeholders and coalition partners have shared specific knowledge and expertise that is paramount in staying ahead of the [risk].”

NCAGS acts as a key node in such information sharing, Hiller said. “NCAGS is an organization that bridges the gap between sustainment of forward-deployed military forces and merchant shipping, by providing a framework for communicating directions, advisories, concerns, and information. The mission is to assist the [U.S. 5th] Fleet commander in managing risk by providing maritime domain awareness (MDA), real-time clarity of the merchant shipping picture, and ensuring safe passage of merchant shipping in crisis or contingency.”

Staffed by U.S. Navy reservists, many of whom are merchant mariners or strategic sealift officers, NCAGS can scale up from providing single personnel as merchant marine advisors or liaison officers ashore or at sea, to a large theater contingent providing a shipping coordination center with teams assigned ashore or at sea.

Effective communications and information sharing is two way, Hiller said. For NCAGS, its outputs include creating incident reports, conducting ship visits, recommending transit routes, providing subject matter expertise, sharing best practice (currently based around the stakeholder-produced Best Management Practice document, or BMP 5), supporting NAVCENT forces and building and sharing an overall MDA and “pattern of life” picture. NCAGS is a touchpoint for shipping, for example for vessels transiting high-risk regions like the Southern Red Sea or the Straits of Hormuz. In return, the shipping community shares ship, cargo, and voyage information with NCAGS and encourages vessel masters to follow BMP5 guidance and report incidents to help build MDA.

“[Sharing] the most current information and accurate assessment of the merchant shipping picture is critical to the establishment of the ‘pattern of life’ and the achievement of MDA,” Hiller said.

From NCAGS’ perspective, effective communications and information sharing are enabled by its monitoring, tracking, and wider information technologies.

“Staying ahead with the latest information technology will keep NCAGS ahead of adversaries and reduce risk as it relates to operations, monitoring and surveillance, piracy, war, or other risks that could potentially impact MDA and patterns of life within the region,” Hiller said.

Hiller told *Seapower* that NCAGS information technologies include AIS Live and the SeaVision web-based maritime situational awareness tool, and that it is procuring the Maritime Intelligence Risk Suite tool that combines shipping database, real-time ship tracking, and risk event information.

MARAD Announces Comment Period for Future Use of the Historic Vessel NS Savannah



NS (Nuclear Ship) Savannah, the first commercial nuclear power cargo vessel, en route to the World's Fair in Seattle in 1962. Wikipedia / U.S. government

WASHINGTON – The Maritime Administration (MARAD) has published a Federal Register notice inviting comments on MARAD's future plans for the N.S. Savannah (NSS). The notice can be found at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/01/13/2021-00527/collecting-proposals-for-future-use-of-the-historic-vessel-ns-savannah>

The N.S. Savannah was the world's first nuclear-powered merchant ship. It operated from 1962 to 1971, when it was inactivated. It currently is moored in Baltimore.

Under the authority of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), MARAD is engaged in formal consultations with federal, state, and organizational stakeholders, and expects to enter into a Programmatic Agreement with those stakeholders in the next few months. The agreement includes a stipulation that details how MARAD will consider future uses for the vessel after its nuclear power plant is fully decommissioned.

Comments can be submitted electronically online through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at www.regulations.gov under docket number MARAD-2020-0133. Alternatively, comments may be mailed to the following address: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Management Facility, West Building, Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Washington, DC 20590. In person submissions are being accepted in accordance with social distancing protocols in place.

All submissions to the docket will be posted without change to www.regulations.gov and will include any personal information you provide.

MARAD Announces Funding Opportunity for Small Shipyard Grant Program



MARAD has announced the availability of \$19.6 million in federal funding for small shipyards. USDOT WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Maritime Administration (MARAD) announced in a Jan. 19 release the availability of \$19.6 million in federal funding to U.S. small shipyards through the Small Shipyard Grant Program.

These investments support efficiency improvements and modernizations that allow U.S. shipyards to compete more effectively in the global marketplace.

Since its inception in 2008, the department’s Small Shipyard Grant Program has awarded more than \$243 million through 268 grants to assist U.S. shipyards and their workers reap the benefits of increased production capabilities.

The Small Shipyard Grant Program supports a variety of projects, including capital and related improvements and equipment upgrades that foster ship construction, repair and reconfiguration in small shipyards across the United States. The grants also can be used to support maritime training programs that improve technical skills to enhance

shipyard worker efficiency and productivity. The grants, which are limited to no more than 75 percent of the estimated improvement costs, are available to U.S. shipyards with fewer than 1,200 production employees.

“America’s shipyards are a vital foundation for both our national security and our Nation’s economy. U.S.-flag commercial vessels – built and maintained right here in the U.S. – carry not only military equipment and supplies, but many carry commercial goods in both contiguous and non-contiguous trade,” said Doug Burnett, the MARAD chief counsel who is acting in lieu of the administrator.

Applications for the grants are due by 5 p.m. EST on Thursday, Feb. 25, 2021. MARAD intends to award grants no later than Monday, April 26, 2021. Additional information can be found in the [Federal Register](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/01/09/2020-0163/small-shipyard-grant-program-application-deadlines) at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/01/09/2020-0163/small-shipyard-grant-program-application-deadlines>, or by contacting David M. Heller, Director, Office of Shipyards and Marine Engineering, Maritime Administration, at Room W21-318, 1200 New Jersey Ave., SE, Washington, DC 20590; or at David.Heller@dot.gov.

MARAD Authorizes Construction of Two Additional National Security Multi-Mission Vessels



An artist's conception of the NSMV. MARAD
WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD) authorized the construction of two additional National Security Multi-Mission Vessels (NSMV), which will replace aging training vessels at Maine Maritime Academy in Castine, Maine, and Texas A&M Maritime Academy in Galveston, Texas, MARAD said in a Jan. 19 release.

MARAD previously authorized the construction of the first two NSMVs, destined for SUNY Maritime College in Bronx, New York, and Massachusetts Maritime Academy, in Bourne, Massachusetts, on April 8, 2020.

"The NSMV is part of a strategy to bolster maritime education, revitalize U.S. shipbuilding, and provide a much-needed shot in the arm to the U.S. maritime industry," added Doug Burnett, the chief counsel of MARAD, who is acting in lieu of the administrator. "America must be a maritime nation if it is to continue to lead the world in this century."

With this authorization, recapitalization of our nation's aging maritime training fleet is nearly complete. Construction of all authorized vessels at Philly Shipyard Inc. will also strengthen America's industrial base while supporting more

than 1,200 shipyard jobs in Philadelphia.

The NSMV will feature numerous instructional spaces, a full training bridge, and have space for up to 600 cadets in a first-rate maritime academic environment at sea. State maritime academies graduate approximately 70 percent of all new officers each year – the merchant mariners who help keep cargoes and the U.S. economy moving. Many also support U.S. national security by crewing military sealift vessels.

The NSMV is also a highly functional national asset that includes modern medical facilities, a helicopter pad, the ability to accommodate up to 1,000 people in times of humanitarian need, and roll-on/roll-off and container storage capacity for use during disaster relief missions.

In May 2019, MARAD awarded TOTE Services LLC a contract to be the vessel construction manager for the NSMV program. This contract is an innovative approach to federal shipbuilding where the government benefits from commercial best practices for ship design and construction. In April 2020, TOTE Services awarded Philly Shipyard Inc. a contract to construct up to five NSMVs with fixed prices and schedules.

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Superintendent Receives Third Star



Capt. Charles McDermott, center, gives a tour of the Naval Coordination and Guidance for Shipping (NCAGS) facilities in Bahrain to then -Rear Adm. Jack Buono, Superintendent of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, in this 2013 photo. Buono has now been promoted to vice admiral. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Dawson Roth

WASHINGTON – Now-former Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao promoted U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA) Superintendent Rear Adm. Jack Buono to vice admiral in the U.S. Maritime Service (USMS) at a small ceremony Jan. 11 in the Department of Transportation headquarters, Washington, D.C., the Maritime Administration said in a release.

“Vice Admiral Buono deserves this third star – he’s been a great leader, especially during COVID-19, and has put USMMA at Kings Point on a solid foundation to develop our country’s future maritime leaders,” Chao said on the same day she resigned from her post.

Buono will continue to lead at USMMA, where he has been stationed since joining the academy in November 2018. The

promotion makes Buono the first USMMA graduate to serve in this position at this rank.

Prior to his appointment as superintendent, Buono had nearly 40 years of maritime experience in the private sector. He retired from his last private sector employer in 2016.

“This well-deserved promotion is an indication of the trust and confidence we have in Vice Adm. Buono’s leadership in the critical role of preparing our Nation’s next generation of leaders – afloat and ashore,” said former Maritime Administrator Mark H. Buzby, who has also just resigned. “His steady hand on the wheel continues to steer Kings Point fair.”

Buono is a Master Mariner and a 1978 graduate of the academy. During his tenure as superintendent, he has been responsible for implementing the academy’s strategic plan, which includes updating institutional culture, governance, communications, infrastructure, academics and athletics. More recently, Buono has guided the Regiment of Midshipmen and the academy community through the global health crisis while maintaining a strong focus on accomplishing the mission of the academy. His inspirational leadership has rallied the entire academy family – students, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni.

“I am truly humbled and honored by this promotion, and I look forward to continuing to develop the future of this national treasure we call USMMA,” Buono said. “We will continue to press forward with our mission, developing leaders of exemplary character committed to serving the national security, marine transportation and economic needs of this great nation.”

Other recent and significant accomplishments at USMMA under the guidance of Buono include the first semi-virtual graduation ceremony for the Class of 2020, the pivot to distance learning during the COVID-19 public health emergency,

maintaining at-sea training experience for midshipmen aboard U.S. Flag merchant ships and two state maritime academy training vessels, and the milestone achievement of sending the Regiment of Midshipmen home for the recent holiday break COVID-free.

MARAD Cuts Steel on New Training Ships, Congress Funds Fourth NSMV to Prepare New Mariners



An artist's conception of the purpose-built National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV), to which the Maritime Administration (MARAD) wants to transition to replace obsolete training ships. MARAD

America's merchant fleet and maritime industry are vital to the nation's commerce. The six state maritime academies together produce more than 70 percent of U.S. Coast Guard licensed officers each year. Along with the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, the schools are addressing the shortage of qualified seafarers for U.S.-flagged ships.

The six state maritime academies (SMAs) rely on dedicated platforms for at-sea training in in engineering, seamanship and navigation. Each of the schools have training ships owned by the Maritime Administration (MARAD), but the ships are getting old and challenged by maintenance, repairs and obsolescence, and were never intended for the school-ship role in the first place.

MARAD has embarked on an ambitious effort to replace the fleet of training ships with the new National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV).

Construction of the first two NSMVs will replace training ships at SUNY Maritime Academy and Massachusetts Maritime Academy, ships which are both more than 50 years old.

Steel was cut for the first NSMV Dec. 15 in Philadelphia. The keel laying is expected in about a year, with delivery anticipated for early 2023. The new ship will replace SUNY Maritime Academy's current school ship, Empire State VI.

The current training ships are not representative of the types of vessels on which academy graduates may expect to serve. The NSMV will have a modern, efficient and environmentally compliant diesel-electric power plant and state-of-the-art navigation equipment, which is more typical in commercial shipping today.

Currently, all of the SMAs operate hand-me-down ships that have been adapted for the training mission. With the adoption of the NSMV, the academies will have a standardized and purpose-built state-of-the-art training platform.

NSMV will be 524.5 feet long with a beam of 88.6 feet and a draft of 21.4 feet. It will displace 19,237 tons. The NSMV is equipped with berthing, classrooms and laboratories to train up to 600 cadets, but can also support humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HA/DR) missions with medical facilities, a helicopter deck, roll-on/roll-off and container storage capacity, and the ability to accommodate up to 1,000 people in times of a humanitarian crisis. The ship is compatible with pier length, draft restrictions and mooring limitations at each of the academies, as well as being able to call at austere ports to conduct HA/DR operations.

Congress authorized funding for the fourth ship on Dec. 21, approving \$390 million to fund construction of a fourth NSMV,

which will be assigned to the Texas A&M Maritime Academy at Texas A&M University at Galveston, and is expected to be delivered to campus in 2025.

“Having the ability to live, learn, and train together as a single unit is essential to meeting our mission in educating and training the next generation of merchant mariners who go on to serve in both our armed forces and the maritime industry,” said Col. Michael E. Fossum, vice president of Texas A&M University, chief operating officer of the Galveston Campus and superintendent of the Texas A&M Maritime Academy. The new ship will replace the 224-foot, 1,900-ton TS General Rudder, which began her career in 1983 as the USNS Contender, an ocean surveillance ship for the U.S. Navy.

“While the ship will serve as a state-of-the-art classroom for the maritime program at Texas A&M University at Galveston, it will also provide a key mission capability for disaster response along the Gulf Coast – able to respond to emergencies in other states and U.S. territories – and will provide a needed emergency response resource to Texas and the gulf,” said Nim Kidd, chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management and vice chancellor for disaster and emergency services.

Herbert Engineering Corp. of Alameda, California, was responsible for generating the preliminary specifications and design. In May 2019, TOTE Services LLC was awarded a contract to be the vessel construction manager for the NSMV program. In April 2020, TOTE Services awarded Philly Shipyard Inc. the contract to construct up to five NSMVs. TOTE Services is working with its design partners – Glosten Inc., Philly Shipyard, and Philly Shipyard’s subcontractors, including the design team at DSEC – to deliver the first NSMV in early 2023. Key ship equipment includes GE Wabtec engines and generators, GE Transportation main generator engines, Cummins USA emergency generator sets and Bronswerk air conditioning systems.

“This program will further advance excellence in American maritime education and reignite the jobs engine that is America’s shipyards,” said MARAD Administrator Mark H. Buzby.

Current Training Ships

TS Empire State VI, ex-S.S. Oregon, ex-Mormactide

State University of New York Maritime College

Fort Schuyler, Bronx, NY

Built 1962/Converted 1989

Modified C4-S-1u commercial breakbulk freighter

USTS Kennedy, ex-USTS Enterprise, ex-MV Cape Bon, ex-MV Velma Lykes

Massachusetts Maritime Academy

Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts

Built 1966/Converted 2009

C4-S-66a break bulk cargo freighter

TS State of Maine, ex-USNS Tanner (T-AGS 40)/ex-Upshur, launched as ex-President Hayes 1952

Maine Maritime Academy

Castine, Maine

Build 1990/Converted 1997

Maury Class Hydrographic Survey Ship

T/S State of Michigan, ex- USNS Persistent (T-AGOS-6), ex-USCGC Persistent (WMEC-6)

Great Lakes Maritime Academy

Traverse City, Michigan

Built 1985/Converted 2002

Stalwart-class Tactical Auxiliary General Ocean Surveillance Ship (TAGOS)

TS General Rudder (ex- USNS Contender (T-AGOS-2), ex-T/V Kings Pointer)

Texas Maritime Academy

Galveston, Texas

Built 1984/Converted 1992

Stalwart-class Modified Tactical Auxiliary General Ocean Surveillance Ship

TV *Golden Bear* (ex-USNS *Maury* T-AGS 39)

California Maritime Academy

Vallejo, California

Built 1989/Converted 1996

Pathfinder-class survey ship

TV *Kings Pointer*, ex-MV *Liberty Star*

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy

Kings Point, New York

Built 1981/Converted 2013

MV *Liberty Star*, NASA-owned and United Space Alliance-operated vessel for solid rocket booster SRB recovery ship supporting space shuttle missions.

NMSV Achieves Milestone with Steel-Cutting Ceremony



An artist's rendering of the National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV). MARAD

PHILADELPHIA – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD) launched a new era in maritime education with the Dec. 15 cutting of steel for the new National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV) at Philly Shipyard Inc., MARAD said in a release.

This is the initial major construction milestone for the first purpose-built, state-of-the-art training vessel for America's state maritime academies. In addition to providing world-class training for America's future mariners, the NSMV will be

available to support humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions.

A video of the steel cutting can be found [here](#).

“This new state-of-the-art modern school training ship will be a tremendous addition to the U. S. Flag fleet, be available to respond to disaster relief efforts, and support about 1,200 jobs in Philly Shipyard,” said U.S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao.

Construction of the NSMV will help recapitalize our nation’s maritime training fleet, strengthen America’s industrial base and directly support more than 1,200 shipyard jobs in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

“For more than a decade, MARAD has been working to make the NSMV a reality for America’s state maritime academy cadets who deserve state-of-the-art training ships,” added MARAD Administrator Mark H. Buzby. “Thanks to the strong bipartisan support that the NSMV has received in Congress and the leadership of secretary Chao, this program will further advance excellence in American maritime education and reignite the jobs engine that is America’s shipyards.”

In May 2019, MARAD awarded TOTE Services LLC, a company involved in ship management, marine operations and vessel services, a contract to be the vessel construction manager for the NSMV program. This contract is an innovative approach to federal shipbuilding where the government benefits from commercial best practices for ship design and construction.

In April 2020, TOTE Services awarded Philly Shipyard, the sole operating subsidiary of Philly Shipyard ASA, a contract to construct up to five NSMVs.

“TOTE Services is proud to have been awarded a contract by MARAD to be the vessel construction manager for this new, state-of-the-art training ship that will help provide

qualified officers to support the domestic maritime industry,” said TOTE Services President Jeff Dixon. “Each of us at TOTE Services is thrilled to be part of this historic investment in the U.S. maritime industry, and are working closely with MARAD and Philly Shipyard to advance this new class of vessel built by union labor in a U.S. shipyard with U.S.-made steel and U.S.-made engines.”

Steinar Nerbovik, Philly Shipyard president and CEO, said, “This is a tremendous honor and recognition of our history of building high-quality ships over the last 17 years. This project begins a new chapter in our history, a new customer and the first in series, which is a challenge we are eager to meet. I am confident that our workforce will deliver ships that the state academy cadets will be proud to sail for many years to come.”

The NSMV program is an important investment in the U.S. shipbuilding industry, which supports nearly 400,000 American jobs. As part of the contract, Philly Shipyard will be working with domestic mills to supply steel for the vessels and U.S. manufacturers to provide key ship equipment.

The NSMV will feature numerous instructional spaces, a full training bridge, and have space for up to 600 cadets to train in a first-rate maritime academic environment at sea. State maritime academies graduate more than half of all new officers each year – the merchant mariners who help keep cargoes and our economy moving. Many also support U.S. national security by crewing military sealift vessels.

In addition to being a state-of-the-art training and educational platform, the NSMV is a highly-functional national asset designed to fulfill numerous roles. Each ship will feature modern hospital facilities, a helicopter pad, and the ability to accommodate up to 1,000 people in times of humanitarian need. Adding to the NSMV’s capability, it will provide needed roll-on/roll-off and container storage capacity

for use during disaster relief missions.

TOTE Services has ordered the first two NSMVs and the president's budget request for Fiscal Year 2021 includes sufficient funding for TOTE Services to order the third ship. Construction of the first two NSMVs will replace training ships at SUNY Maritime Academy and Massachusetts Maritime Academy, which are both more than 50 years old.

GE to Supply Power, Propulsion for MARAD's National Security Multi-Mission Vessel



An artist's conception of the National Security Multi Mission Vessel. MARAD

WARWICKSHIRE, U.K. – GE's Power Conversion business has been awarded a \$40 million contract to supply the power and propulsion systems for two National Security Multi-Mission Vessels (NSMVs), GE said in a Nov. 23 release. This new class of purpose-built ships will be used primarily to provide cadets with at-sea training on operational vessels.

GE was selected as the single-source vendor for the ships' propulsion system, which includes the integration of the diesel engines, generators, switchboards, transformers, main propulsion drives, propulsion motors, and auxiliary support systems. While prior training vessels used steam propulsion plants, the new ships will have an all-electric system, enabling students to be trained on the latest technology being

used in the commercial marine industry.

“GE Power Conversion is honored to be selected to provide the power and propulsion systems for the two National Security Multi-Mission Vessels and are equally honored to be partnering with the U.S. Government and MARAD [Maritime Administration] on these vessels,” said Gagan Sood, CEO of GE Power Conversion North America. “We will bring our long history and strong expertise to ensure the U.S. Government and MARAD are training cadets on the latest technology available.”

In addition to introducing cadets to the work of a merchant mariner, the ships also will serve critical national security interests, including missions in support of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief throughout the world. Cadets may also benefit from learning about and working with the latest electric ship systems, gaining valuable insights in how electrification is impacting ship performance and emissions. It is an opportunity to get practical experience of GE’s electric ship technology, learning in a real, safe environment.

The new ships will accommodate up to 600 cadets and instructors and provide comprehensive, instructional spaces and a full training bridge. The vessels have roll-on/roll-off (RORO) capabilities and container storage capacity as well as a helicopter landing pad, enabling them to support humanitarian aid or disaster relief if needed. The NSMV will be powered by Cummins Inc. using Wabtec’s latest 16V250 Series diesel engines, which meet the EPA’s stringent Tier 4 emission standards without using urea-based after-treatments.

MARAD plans to contract for a total of five NSMVs, with power systems contracts estimated at more than \$100 million. The first two vessels are scheduled to enter service in 2023 and 2024, The NSMVs will replace current training ships at the State Maritime Academies.

TOTE Services, an industry leader in ship management, marine operations and vessel services, is the project's vessel construction manager. TOTE Services chose Philly Shipyard, Inc. of Philadelphia, for construction of up to five NSMVs, with South Korea's DSEC overseeing the ships' detail naval architecture design.

Important Expertise

DSEC, in turn, awarded the power systems contract to GE, with GE's Korea team providing global support during the bidding process. "This project award is the culmination of global collaboration within GE, with the Republic of Korea team working closely with DSEC, and the U.S. team supporting Philly Shipyard," said Steve Mankevich, who led Power Conversion's U.S. team on the project.

Ultimately, GE won the power systems contract with its low-risk but high-performance commercial solution. With more than 100 electric and hybrid references with 15 navies globally, GE is one of the top electric propulsion providers to navies around the world.

"We are proud to be selected for this project and will strive to ensure success by offering proven commercial technology that will de-risk the overall program," Mankevich said. "We're the recognized experts, and our knowledge and competence absolutely set us apart."

Major win for U.S. manufacturers

The U.S. Congressional Pennsylvania delegation was particularly adamant that U.S.-based manufacturers such as GE would be used for the ships' construction. The R&D, engineering, and manufacturing of GE's Power Conversion equipment for the two NSMVs will be located out of GE's facility in Pennsylvania, according to Steve Mankevich, who led Power Conversion's U.S. team on the project.

U.S. Sen. Bob Casey (D-Pennsylvania) said, "This federal order will create job opportunities and economic growth in Western Pennsylvania. In my letter to U.S. Maritime Administrator Rear Adm. Mark Buzby, I advocated for contracts awarded by the Maritime Administration for its National Security Multi-Mission Vessel Program to include American manufacturers to the maximum extent and consequently strengthen U.S. manufacturing and contribute to our Nation's economic recovery. I have long supported GE and I am pleased to see that the GE Power Conversion employees in Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania have been awarded this opportunity."

In addition, U.S. Rep. Mike Kelly (R-Pennsylvania), said, "Congratulations to GE Power Conversion for winning the contract for the National Security Multi-Mission Vessels. This award will not only mean jobs in Western Pennsylvania but will help our military achieve its operational goals. Too often when people think of national defense, bullets, shells, and missiles come to mind. In reality, the technologically advanced products of GE Power that allow ships to operate in field at a high level over substantial lengths of time are just as crucial. The awarding of this contract will allow our sailors to train on the most advance American built equipment and be ready to defend our nation on the high seas."

**Biden Focus on
Infrastructure, Environmental
Improvements Could Lift Jones**

Act



The new administration is expected to bolster support for the Jones Act. Crowley

ARLINGTON, Va. – President-elect Joseph R. Biden's Jr. twin goals of rebuilding America's infrastructure, while protecting the environment, could bolster support for maintaining the 100-year-old law that protects the U.S. maritime industry, according to a Washington think tank analyst.

The Biden campaign "had expressed interest in new infrastructure, in new green initiatives, and the maritime industry is actually a pretty good confluence of the two," Tim Walton, a fellow at the Hudson Institute's Center for Defense Concepts and Technology, told a Navy League webinar marking the 100th anniversary of the Jones Act.

Also known as the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, the Jones Act bars foreign-built, foreign-owned or foreign-flagged vessels from conducting coastal and inland waterway trade within the United States and between the United States and its non-contiguous states and territories such as Alaska and Puerto Rico.

The long-standing legislation could figure in plans "where we're talking about building maritime infrastructure, building low carbon emitting transportation mechanisms, green industries that support our economy in the oceans as we build a blue economy," Walton added. A "Blue Economy," according to the World Bank, is built on sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs and ocean ecosystem health.

Critics say the aged Jones Act has led to higher shipping costs, which are passed along as higher prices to vendors, retailers and consumers. They also maintain higher costs have

driven the commercial shipbuilding industry overseas, leading to a smaller pool of qualified U.S. merchant mariners.

Without the law, U.S. Navy and Coast Guard officials have argued there would be no pool of U.S. noncombat ships – or trained American seafarers to man them – in a war or other national emergency. During the Nov. 12 webinar, former Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Paul Zukunft (retired) called for “a coherent maritime national strategy that connects with a national security strategy. That’s where the Jones Act needs to be woven into our national security strategies.”

Former U.S. Rep. Ernest Istook, an Oklahoma Republican, said the need for such a strategy is evident, in a world where 90% of trade is moved by ship, and Great Power competitor China is the world’s biggest shipbuilder, by some measures has the world’s largest navy, and is expanding its commercial ports and naval bases around the world.

Walton’s comment about Biden came after a webinar viewer asked where the Democrat stood on the Jones Act. Both Biden and President Donald Trump support the law, although Trump considered, but later rejected, an extended waiver for foreign carriers to deliver liquid natural gas to hurricane wracked-Puerto Rico and LNG-dependent New England States. Biden incorporated Jones Act support in his campaign’s Buy American/Ship American strategy.

“Historically, the U.S. maritime industry has been a leader in technology,” Walton said, “but now in the 21st century, the Biden administration, as it appears it’s going to be, will have an opportunity, I think, to take some leadership and, as Adm. Zukunft said, actually craft an integrated national strategy for the maritime industry, and then implement it.”

To read the new Navy League special report on the Jones Act and its impact, go [here](#).