

Navy Satellite Center Disestablished, Transferred to U.S. Space Force



Vice Adm. Ross Myers, commander, U.S. Fleet Cyber Command/U.S. 10th Fleet, left, shakes hands with U.S. Space Force Lt. Gen. Stephen Whiting, commander, Space Operations Command, during the Naval Satellite Operations Center disestablishment ceremony. *U.S. NAVY / Ensign Drew Verbis*

POINT MUGU – Naval Satellite Operations Center, onboard Naval Base Ventura County, transferred to the U.S. Space Force under Space Delta 8 and was designated as the 10th Space Operations Squadron during a historic Disestablishment and Assumption of Command Ceremony June 6, said Naval Base Ventura County Public Affairs in a June 8 release.

Vice Adm. Ross Myers, commander of U.S. Fleet Cyber Command

and U.S. 10th Fleet, presided over the ceremony.

“For 60 years NAVSOC has advocated and advanced American maritime superiority,” said Myers. “NAVSOC enabled satellite communications to afford the United States and her allies the crucial ability to provide defensive measures, conduct over the horizon monitoring and targeting, and project combat power in areas of conflict and instability around the globe.”

NAVSOC was the first military space operations command in history, commissioned in April 1962 as the Navy Astronautics Group. Tasked with operating the Navy’s satellites, the unit commanded TRANSIT, the world’s first satellite navigation system. Navy Astronautics Group was re-designated as NAVSOC in June 1990.

“As we look toward the future of space operations, we see the domain is both crowded and growing,” said Myers. “To lead this next phase of the space race, the United States established the Space Command with the budget and authorities to consolidate joint-capabilities and harness cross-cutting disciplines and services.”

The Space Force is a separate and distinct branch of the armed services, organized under the Department of the Air Force in a manner very similar to how the Marine Corps is organized under the Department of the Navy.

“It’s hard to overstate how impactful this mission is and the critical role this team plays in linking the force across air, land, and sea,” said U.S. Space Force Lt. Gen. Stephen Whiting, commander, Space Operations Command. “This activation marks the beginning of the Department of Defense’ consolidation of all narrow-band, wide-band, and protected SATCOM to include all associated responsibilities for training, acquisition, and sustainment activities under a single military service for the first time in history.”

In addition to the command operation center, NAVSOC

transferred the Laguna Peak Facility (three miles from the Point Mugu), which supports the Space-Ground Link System and satellite TT&C operations, and 13 satellites to include 1-FLTSAT, 5-UFO, 5-MUOS and 2-POLAR.

According to Space Delta 8, the new unit is intentionally numbered the 10th Space Operations Squadron to pay honor to its heritage under U.S. 10th Fleet.

“Space has become highly contested,” said U.S. Space Force Col. Matthew Holston, commander, Space Delta 8. “Our adversaries recognize our reliance on space, and they are actively seeking ways to create vulnerabilities to take away our competitive advantage. It is the 10th Space Force Operation Squadron that is on the front lines to guaranteeing our American way of life.”

The Space Force is expected to grow from 2,400 active-duty service members to 6,400 by the end of the year, according to a statement made by Chief of Space Operations Gen. John Raymond.

“Today we complete the first chapter in military space operations,” said Myers. “Our military stands better connected, more informed, faster, and able to operate with greater precision because of NAVSOC.”

Navy Air Reserve Begins Transition to P-8A Poseidon

Aircraft



A P-8A and P-3C fly over Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, in 2010. *U.S. NAVY / Liz Goettee*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy Air Reserve has begun to retire its P-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft and upgrade to the P-8A Poseidon MPA.

Current and former members of Patrol Squadron 62 (VP-62), based at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida, gathered June 4 at the squadron's hangar to bid farewell to the squadron's P-3Cs as the squadron begins its transition to the P-8A.

The transition will leave VP-69 at NAS Whidbey Island, Washington, as the last reserve VP squadron to operate the Orion. VP-69 is scheduled to begin transition to the P-8A in fiscal 2023.

The 12 active-component fleet VP squadrons began transition in 2012 and completed the upgrade to the P-8A in 2020.

For many years, the Navy was uncertain as to whether the two reserve VP squadrons would be able to upgrade to the P-8A. Eventually, the Navy's program of record was increased to procure enough P-8As to equip the two reserve squadrons.

The two reserve VP squadrons are very active in augmenting the fleet squadrons in operations and exercises. With more than 300 Sailors assigned, VP-62 is manned by a staff of full-time support personnel, selective reservists and a few active-component personnel.

At the height of the Cold War, the Navy Reserve fielded 13 VP squadrons equipped with Orions.

Munsch Nominated for Admiral, Command of Naval Forces Europe/Africa



Vice Adm. Stuart B. Munsch. *U.S. NAVY*

ARLINGTON, Va. – Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced June 8 that the president has nominated Navy Vice Adm. Stuart B. Munsch for a fourth star and assigned commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe; commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Africa; and commander, Allied Joint Forces Command,

Naples, Italy.

Munsch is currently serving as director for Joint Force Development, J-7, Joint Staff, Washington, D.C.

Munsch, a native of North Dakota, graduated from the Naval Academy in 1985 with a Bachelor of Science in electrical engineering. At Annapolis, he was brigade commander of his class and an All-American and national champion pistol shooter. Selected for a Rhodes Scholarship, he attended Oxford University and earned a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts in philosophy, politics and economics.

He then was assigned to four consecutive sea duty assignments, serving on USS Will Rogers (SSBN 659), USS Jefferson City (SSN 759), USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) on the staff of Commander, Cruiser Destroyer Group 5, and USS Tucson (SSN 770). In 1999, Munsch reported ashore to U.S. Pacific Command, where he served in the Plans and Policy Directorate (J5) prior to becoming deputy executive assistant to the commander. He then was selected for a White House Fellowship and served as special assistant to the Secretary of Agriculture.

Munsch commanded USS Albuquerque (SSN 706) from 2002 to 2005, followed by duty in the Pentagon as the military assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense and then as executive assistant to the Director, Submarine Warfare, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (OPNAV N87).

Munsch commanded Submarine Development Squadron (DEVRON) 5 from 2008 to 2010 and then returned to the Pentagon to head the Navy Strategy branch (OPNAV N513). Selected for flag rank, he was reassigned as deputy director, Undersea Warfare (OPNAV N97).

Sent overseas to Japan and Bahrain, Munsch commanded Submarine Group 7 and Task Forces 74 and 54 from 2013 to 2015, followed by duty in the Pentagon as the senior military assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense. In 2017 Munsch reported to

OPNAV N3/N5 as the assistant and in 2018 became the deputy chief of naval operations for Operations, Plans and Strategy. In 2019 he established and served as the initial deputy chief of naval operations for Warfighting Development, N7. He assumed his role as director for Joint Force Development (J7) in 2020.

Chief of Navy Reserve: Top Budget Equipment Priority is C-130J Transport Aircraft



A C-130T Hercules, assigned to the “Condors” of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VR) 64, recovers at Naval Air Facility Misawa, Japan. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Benjamin Ringers*

WASHINGTON – The admiral in charge of the Navy's reserve force told Congress his top budget equipment priority is to acquire C-130J Super Hercules transport aircraft to recapitalize the legacy C-130T fleet.

Testifying before the Senate Appropriations Committee's Defense subcommittee, Vice Adm. John B. Mustin, chief of Navy Reserve, said the C-130J is necessary to replace the C-130Ts and KC-130Ts – with an average age of more than 30 years – serving in five of the Navy Reserve's fleet logistics support squadrons.

"Procurement of the more capable C-130J aircraft variant to replace the three-decade-old C-130 airframes is the Reserve's number one equipment priority," Mustin said. "Last year, Navy Reserve fleet logistics squadrons flew 26,000 hours and moved 24 million pounds of cargo at a cost avoidance of a billion dollars. However, the current C-130 fleet is challenged to meet sustained fleet logistics requirements. Modern KC-130Js will realize an additional \$200 million in annual transportation cost savings.

The five Navy Air Reserve fleet logistics squadrons operate 19 C-130Ts and 11 KC-130Ts. Five other KC-130Ts are operated by the two Navy test wings to support test and evaluation activities. The KC-130Ts were transferred from the Marine Corps Reserve when its two reserve Marine aerial refueler/transport squadrons upgraded to the KC-130J, a process completed in April 2021.

"There is no active-duty counterpart to what we do [with the C-130] in the reserve force," Mustin said. "That's our intra-theater lift. Certainly, working with the Air National Guard and the Air Force, we're able get from CONUS into theater whether that's in the EUCOM area or INDOPACOM. Once there, however, transition to strike groups and distributed U.S. Navy is impossible without C-130s.

“We’ve got C-40s – smaller capability – but if we want to transfer an F-35 engine, we’ve got to have the C-130s,” he said.

Mustin noted that with the age of the C-130 aircraft “our mission-capable rates are lower, and we struggle to maintain given that we are the only service – active or reserve – to continue to fly what is called the Tango variant [C-130Y/KC-130T]. The incessant demand from not only our fleet commanders but combatant commanders drive my urgency to recapitalize there.”

DC Congresswoman Pushes DC Statehood at Keel-Laying for Navy Submarine



U.S. Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-District of Columbia), approves the welding of her initials onto a metal plate during a ceremony at the General Dynamics Electric Boat Facility at Quonset Point, Rhode Island, June 4. The congresswoman is the sponsor of the future U.S. Navy ballistic missile submarine District of Columbia. *U.S. NAVY / GENERAL DYNAMICS ELECTRIC BOAT*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The keel-laying of the U.S. Navy's next-generation ballistic-missile submarine (SSBN) was celebrated June 4 in Quonset Point, Rhode Island, by the submarine's designers and builders and the Navy that will operate it.

At the ceremonies for the future USS District of Columbia (SSBN 826), one of the ship's two sponsors, Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-District of Columbia, also used the event as an occasion to advocate for the cause of her life: statehood for the District of Columbia.

The day before the ceremonies, Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro announced that the first ship of the Columbia class would be named USS District of Columbia, instead of Columbia.

"The decision to name SSBN 826 is to alleviate any name conflicts with the already-commissioned USS Columbia (SSN 771). §10 U.S.C. 8662(a) states that not more than one vessel of the Navy may have the same name," the secretary's public affairs officer said in a June 3 release. "The Columbia program was named in 2016 with the lead ship projected to enter service in 2027, consequently overlapping with the existing USS Columbia (SSN 771). SSBN 826 will be named after the nation's capital while SSN 771 is named after cities in South Carolina, Missouri, and Illinois named Columbia, following the naval tradition of SSNs being named after U.S. cities."

General Dynamics Electric Boat President Kevin Graney presided at the keel-laying ceremonies. Also speaking were Jennifer Boykin, president of Newport News Shipbuilding, a Huntington Ingalls company that builds sections of the Columbia-class submarines; Rep. Joe Courtney (D-Connecticut), in whose district the Columbia SSBNs will be assembled; Reps. David Cicilline and Jim Langevin and Sens. Sheldon Whitehouse and Jack Reed, all Democrats from Rhode Island, site of Electric Boats' Quonset Point fabrication facility; Adm. Daryl Caudle, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command; Del Toro; and Norton.

Graney said the new SSBN was going to be "the most capable and quiet submarine ever built."

He noted Electric Boat invested almost \$2 billion in facilities and hired thousands of workers to build the Columbia class, and that as the program progressed the company would "need to hire and train many thousands more."

Graney called the Columbia class SSBN was "arguably be the greatest engineering achievement of the most advanced military

in the world.”

Boykin noted that “our Sailors’ lives depend on the quality of our product, and it is this responsibility that guides everything that we do.”

She noted Newport News Shipbuilding has been allied with Electric Boat in the Virginia-class attack submarine program that began nearly 25 years ago.

“As every ballistic-missile submarine has since the keel laying of USS George Washington (SSBN 598) here at Electric Boat in November 1958 – the District of Columbia, and all those in its class will continue to serve as the most survivable leg of the nuclear triad – standing constant watch far beneath the waves, as we have done for over 63 years, a stalwart deterrent against those who would seek to do the unspeakable,” Caudle said.

Del Toro noted the Washington Navy Yard in the district is the Navy’s oldest shore facility.

“While it’s common to refer to D.C. as our nation’s capital, I also like to think of it as our naval capital,” Del Toro said, in reference to notable Sailors and Marines who were born and raised in the district. “That’s why I want to make it clear that this boat honors the people and the spirit of the District of Columbia.”

Norton – the boat’s sponsor along with the district’s mayor, Muriel Bowser – wrote her initials on a steel plate. The initials were then welded onto the plate by Electric Boat welder Maria Betance-Pizarro. The plate will be fixed to the structure of the submarine.

“I can’t say how pleased I am today as we celebrate the USS District of Columbia-class submarine, commissioned in recognition of my hometown and the jurisdiction I represent in the Congress, the District of Columbia,” Norton said.

Norton, who has been a staunch advocate for statehood for the district during her long career, used the occasion to plug her top political goal.

Norton said the submarine's name is "fitting that it recognizes the jurisdiction that will become the 51st state of the United States of America. ... As we celebrate this keel-laying today, we also underline the Congress must no longer exclude the residents of our nation's capital from the democratic presence, forcing residents to watch from the sidelines as Congress votes on laws that affect the nation or votes even on laws on the duly elected government. Democracy demands more, D.C. residents demand much more. They deserve statehood."

Navy Identifies Pilot Killed in Super Hornet Crash Near Trona, California



U.S. Navy pilot Lt. Richard Bullock. *U.S. NAVY*
SAN DIEGO – U.S. Navy pilot Lt. Richard Bullock was killed when his F/A-18E Super Hornet crashed in the vicinity of Trona, Calif., at approximately 2:30 p.m. (PDT), June 3, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific said in a June 5 release.

Bullock was assigned to Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 113 based at Naval Air Station Lemoore, California, and was flying a routine training mission at the time before his aircraft when down in a remote, unpopulated area. No civilians were harmed as a result of this incident.

The incident is currently under investigation and the scene of the crash is secured by Navy and local authorities while recovery efforts are ongoing.

Textron Systems Selected for Continued U.S. Navy Expeditionary Sea Base UAS Operations



The Aerosonde unmanned aerial surveillance vehicle Buck G returns to the Expeditionary Sea-Base USS Hershel "Woody" Williams (ESB 4) from a 10- hour night surveillance in the Atlantic Ocean, Sept. 26, 2020. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Sgt. Megan Roses*

HUNT VALLEY, Md. – Textron Systems Corp. has been awarded a contract valued up to \$18.3 million including all options by the U.S. Navy's Naval Air Systems Command to provide continued

unmanned aerial systems operations support for the USS Hershel “Woody” Williams (ESB 4), the company said June 2.

The one-year base contract includes two 12-month options and two six-month options, for a total potential performance period of four years. The company was originally selected to support the ESB 4 in 2018.

Under this contract, Textron Systems will continue to deploy its Aerosonde UAS to provide maritime operations aboard the ESB 4. The company’s personnel work alongside Sailors to provide on-demand Aerosonde UAS operations to support a variety of maritime missions.

“Our shipboard customers need UAS solutions that can deliver actionable data from multiple mission payloads without sacrificing valuable space on deck,” said Wayne Prender, senior vice president, Air Systems. “It’s equally important that we create a strong support ecosystem to keep availability and reliability rates high as operational tempo demands. In continuing to support our ESB 4 customer, we maintain our focus on setting the bar higher and higher in all these areas to keep our Sailors informed and out of harm’s way.”

Textron Systems’ UAS operators also support U.S. Navy Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers with the Aerosonde UAS, as well as multiple DoD and international customers with land-based contractor owned, contractor operated activities.

Navy Successfully Completes

First Flight Test of Mission Computer Alternative on the T-45



The Navy's Air Combat Electronics program office (PMA-209) successfully completed first flight test of the Mission Computer Alternative in a T-45, at Naval Air Station Patuxent River on March 30. Pictured are PMA-209 team members (from left) Bill Brown, Michael Kay, Jason Bean, Jeff Boyce, Kelly Pruitt, Jeff Williamson, Brandon Patz, Richard Boecher and Tom Adams. *U.S. NAVY*

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The Navy's Air Combat Electronics program office (PMA-209) recently completed the first test flight of the T-45 trainer aircraft's Mission Computer Alternative, intended to improve readiness for the legacy system, the Naval Air Systems Command said May 31.

PMA-209 collaborated with the Naval Undergraduate Flight Training Systems program office (PMA-273), which manages the T-45 aircraft, and Air Test Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23 to execute the March 30 flight at Patuxent River and test out the design replacement for the existing Mission Display Processor.

“The flight was flown successfully, proving MCA is on the right track,” said Lt. Alex Mensing, VX-23 test pilot. “We know what needs to be improved and will continue to work together to bring an accurate and reliable system to the fleet.”

PMA-273 sought out MCA as a mission computing solution primarily to address the potential obsolescence issues the Navy may face on an aging platform. They plan to leverage the MCA to support additional capabilities such as required navigation performance/area navigation.

The MCA is a Hardware Open Systems Technologies-conforming mission computer that drastically reduces schedule for regular hardware and software updates associated with mission computing. It can be economically and rapidly adapted to support platform requirements and processing needs. The system is on track to provide required navigation performance/area navigation in the near future.

“The Navy developed this mission computer technology using OA standards, bringing the government one step closer to getting much needed capabilities and functionality to the fleet cheaper and faster,” said Capt. Margaret Wilson, PMA-209 program manager.

The Navy will leverage investments made during the MCA’s development to support and minimize development cost of future MCA iterations, and lower the hardware and software logistics lifecycle funding footprint by using common, commercial-off-the-shelf hardware and software development designed to OA

standards.

U.S. Navy Announces 28th RIMPAC Exercise



Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2022 senior leadership and staffs pose for a group photo onboard Naval Base Point Loma, Feb. 18. The weeklong conference brought the RIMPAC senior leadership and staffs from seven RIMPAC partner nations together for detailed planning in advance of the world's largest maritime exercise, scheduled to be held this summer in both Hawaii and San Diego. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication 2nd Class Kevin F. Johnson*

SAN DIEGO – Twenty-six nations, 38 surface ships, four submarines, nine national land forces, more than 170 aircraft and approximately 25,000 personnel will participate in the

biennial Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise scheduled June 29 to Aug. 4, in and around the Hawaiian Islands and Southern California, Commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet Public Affairs, said May 31.

RIMPAC 2022 is the 28th exercise in the series that began in 1971.

As the world's largest international maritime exercise, RIMPAC provides a unique training opportunity designed to foster and sustain cooperative relationships that are critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security on the world's interconnected oceans.

The theme of RIMPAC 2022 is "Capable, Adaptive, Partners." Participating nations and forces will exercise a wide range of capabilities and demonstrate the inherent flexibility of maritime forces. These capabilities range from disaster relief and maritime security operations to sea control and complex warfighting. The relevant, realistic training program includes amphibious operations, gunnery, missile, anti-submarine and air defense exercises, as well as counter-piracy operations, mine clearance operations, explosive ordnance disposal and diving and salvage operations.

This year's exercise includes forces from Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Hosted by Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, RIMPAC 2022 will be led by Commander, U.S. 3rd Fleet, who will serve as Combined Task Force commander. Royal Canadian Navy Rear Adm. Christopher Robinson will serve as deputy commander of the CTF, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Rear Adm. Toshiyuki Hirata as the vice commander, and Fleet Marine Force will be

led by U.S. Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Joseph Clearfield. Other key leaders of the multinational force will include Commodore Paul O'Grady of the Royal Australian Navy, who will command the maritime component, and Brig. Gen. Mark Goulden of the Royal Canadian Air Force, who will command the air component.

During RIMPAC, a network of capable, adaptive partners train and operate together in order to strengthen their collective forces and promote a free and open Indo-Pacific. RIMPAC 2022 contributes to the increased interoperability, resiliency and agility needed by the joint and combined force to deter and defeat aggression by major powers across all domains and levels of conflict.

First E-6B Inducted Under New Maintenance Contract



Members of PMA-271 along with industry partners pose with the

first E-6B Mercury inducted under the new Integrated Maintenance and Modification Contract at Lake Charles, Louisiana, May 9. *NORTHROP GRUMMAN*

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The first E-6B Mercury arrived at Northrop Grumman Corp.'s Aircraft Maintenance and Fabrication Center in Lake Charles, Louisiana, for Block II modification on earlier this month, the Naval Air Systems Command announced May 31.

The work is part of an Integrated Modification and Maintenance Contract (IMMC) awarded in February, which focuses on fielding improved airborne strategic communications sooner.

"This is an important event because it's the first time a single company will be responsible for executing the entire installation," said Bob Stailey, Airborne Strategic Command, Control, and Communications Program Office (PMA-271) E-6B deputy program manager. "NGC Lake Charles built an integrated modification schedule that implements efficiencies and lessons learned from previous efforts."

The Block II upgrade consists of six modifications to improve the aircrafts' command, control and communications functions connecting the National Command Authority with U.S. strategic and non-strategic forces.

The previous modification contract was executed by two separate commercial activities and one organic activity with a 19-month average turnaround time. With this new IMMC, the team anticipates ultimately achieving a six-month modification turnaround timeline.

"This contract streamlines how we are fielding our capability upgrades," Stailey said. "We are fully engaged with the fleet and our partners as we reduce the time required for aircraft modifications."

Driving toward the timeline reduction goal has been a team effort with partnership between the program, Naval Air Warfare

Center Aircraft Division, Fleet Readiness Center Southeast, Defense Contract Management Agency, Strategic Communications Wing One, Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron 4, Navy liaison officers and program representative's onsite in Lake Charles.

"I'm very proud of the entire team and all the work they've done to get to this point," said Capt. Adam Scott, PMA-271 program manager. "It's taken a big effort and they are constantly looking for ways to identify and overcome any challenges."

Faster turnaround times with the upgrades will lead to more aircraft being available with increased capabilities for the warfighter.

"Our number one priority is ensuring SCW-1 accomplishes its mission providing assured airborne strategic communications and that the president is always connected to his nuclear forces," Scott said.