

SECNAV Advocates Increased Legal Immigration to Increase Shipbuilder Workforce



Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro visits industry booths during the Navy League of the United States' Sea-Air-Space Exposition 2024 at National Harbor, Maryland, April 9. *U.S. Navy | MC2 Jared Mancuso*

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – The secretary of the Navy said the shortage of workers in the U.S. shipbuilding industry could be partially alleviated by allowing more legal immigrants into the country to work in the shipyards.

Speaking April 23 at the Stimson Institute, a Washington think tank, SECNAV Carlos Del Toro acknowledged that supply chain

issues caused by the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected the ability on shipyards to meet delivery schedules of Navy ships, said he thought “the bigger problem than that ... is actually the lack of blue-collar workers that we have in this country.

“Regretfully, we’re a pretty divided country politically, you might say, but it really is time for Congress to get together and pass comprehensive reform and increase the amount of legal immigration that we actually allow into this country [and] increase the amount of work visa programs that are authorized for blue-collar workers to come from other nations and actually do the work here as has actually existed since the founding of our government, very much so,” Del Toro said.

The SECNAV noted the current unemployment rate in many U.S. states is low, “but what we’ve got to do is open up the spigot a bit, basically, on legal immigration to allow blue-collar workers to come here and also to devote an enormous amount of resources into re-training individuals so they can actually work in our shipyards and be employed by the types of trades that are open to shipyard workers, for example.”

Del Toro noted the U.S. government will in the next five years “be pumping in \$15 billion investment into the submarine industrial base alone and an additional billion-dollar investment into the surface industrial base as well.”

The SECNAV also noted that the atrophied U.S. commercial shipbuilding industry needs to be reinvigorated by a “whole-of-government effort around a national maritime statecraft.”

RTX Breaks Ground on \$115M Expansion of Alabama Missile Integration Facility



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Higgins (DDG 76) launches a Raytheon-built Standard Missile (SM) 2 from a forward launcher while operating in the Philippine Sea, April 5. *U.S. Navy | MC1 Hannah Fry*

HUNTSVILLE, Alabama – Raytheon, an RTX business, recently broke ground on a \$115 million, 26,000 square-foot expansion of its Redstone Raytheon Missile Integration Facility, which will increase the factory's space for integrating and delivering on critical defense programs by more than 50 percent.

The expansion will also bring an estimated 185 new jobs to the area, growing RTX's employee footprint in Alabama to more than 2,200 people.

“This important investment in the Huntsville region will help us meet the growing needs of our military customers and service members,” said Raytheon President Phil Jasper. “It will also ready our operations to accelerate delivery of our vital counter-hypersonic solution.”

Raytheon’s Redstone facility is the final integration point for many missile programs for the U.S. Missile Defense Agency, U.S. Navy, and other defense customers. The facility currently handles integration of nine variants of the Standard Missile family, including Standard Missile-3 and Standard Missile-6, and will accommodate additional defense programs, including the Glide Phase Interceptor.

Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet Participates in Western Pacific Naval Symposium



QINGDAO, China (April 21, 2024) Adm. Stephen Koehler, left, commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet, meets with Adm. Hu Zhongming, right, commander of the People's Liberation Army Navy, at the Western Pacific Naval Symposium in Qingdao, China, April 21, 2024. Koehler met with Hu to discuss the increasing security challenges in the Indo-Pacific. (U.S. Navy photo)

3 April 2024

From U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs

U.S. Pacific Fleet spokesperson Navy Commander Hayley Sims provided the following readout: U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander Adm. Stephen Koehler participated in the 19th Western Pacific Naval Symposium (WPNS), which was hosted this year in Qingdao, People's Republic of China from 21-23 April.

WPNS is a multi-lateral organization with a history dating back to 1987. It includes 23 member and seven observer nations with maritime safety equities throughout the Western Pacific. Responsibility to host WPNS activities, including working

groups and symposiums, is rotated annually among member countries on a volunteer basis. WPNS provides naval leaders the opportunity to discuss maritime matters of mutual interest while also giving the United States, allies, and partners an opportunity to underscore the importance of safe and responsible operations in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Discussions during this year's symposium included maritime issues, areas for cooperation, and military-to-military communication.

While at the symposium, Koehler met bilaterally with heads of Navy from Australia, Bangladesh, Chile, Colombia, France, Thailand, United Kingdom, and Vietnam to discuss the importance of continued multi-lateral exercises and combined operations that enhance interoperability and boost deterrence in support of a shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific region. Consistent with standard practice at WPNS, Koehler also met with host-nation representatives from the People's Liberation Army Navy to discuss the importance of maintaining open lines of communication, operational safety, and regional security concerns.

Admiral Koehler is traveling throughout the region after assuming command of U.S. Pacific Fleet earlier this month. He first made stops to Japan and Republic of Korea where he met with senior officials to discuss the increasing security challenge in the Indo-Pacific and the importance of trilateral cooperation between Japan, Republic of Korea, and the United States to demonstrate the strength and resolve against those who challenge regional stability.

SECDEF Announces Flag Officer Nominations

April 19, 2024

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced on April 19 that the president has made the following nominations:

Navy Vice Adm. Michael E. Boyle for reappointment to the grade of vice admiral, with assignment as deputy chief of naval operations for Operations, Plans, and Strategy, N3/N5, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Pentagon, Washington, D.C. Boyle is currently serving as commander, Third Fleet, San Diego, California.

Navy Rear Adm. Dion D. English for appointment to the grade of vice admiral, with assignment as director for Logistics, J-4, Joint Staff, Pentagon, Washington, D.C. English is currently serving as director, Supply, Ordnance and Logistics Operations Division, N4L, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Sub USS New Hampshire Conducts Brief Stop off Coast of Iceland

By U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Africa / U.S. Sixth Fleet Public Affairs

April 20, 2024

COAST OF ICELAND – The Virginia-class nuclear-powered fast attack submarine USS New Hampshire (SSN 778) conducted a brief stop for personnel and supplies off of the coast of Iceland, April 18, 2024.

This is the second time a U.S. Navy submarine has conducted a brief stop in Iceland since the Icelandic Minister of Foreign Affairs informed the United States that U.S. Navy submarines were allowed to make short visits in Iceland to receive supplies and personnel. The first U.S. Navy submarine to visit Iceland

was the Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS San Juan in April 2023.

“It is an honor to be back in Iceland to conduct a brief stop for personnel and supplies, and we thank our Icelandic Allies for their continued support as we operate in the region in support of our NATO Allies and partners,” said Capt. Benjamin Selph, commodore, Task Force 69. “Stops like this are visible demonstration of the strength of the U.S.-Icelandic relationship and our commitment to promoting security and stability in the region.”

As founding members of NATO, Iceland and the U.S. share a long history of cooperation as we work towards mutual goals of safety and security in the region. Now in its 75th year, the NATO Alliance is a testament to the power of collective defense and the strength of solid relationships between Allied and partner nations.

In addition to allowing U.S. Navy submarines to conduct brief stops for personnel and supplies, Iceland also provides host country support to U.S. and Allied maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft (MPRA) from Keflavik Air Base.

For more than 80 years, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-U.S. Naval Forces Africa (NAVEUR-NAVAF) has forged strategic

relationships with allies and partners, leveraging a foundation of shared values to preserve security and stability.

Headquartered in Naples, Italy, NAVFOR-NAVFAC operates U.S. naval forces in the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) and U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) areas of responsibility. U.S. Sixth Fleet is permanently assigned to NAVFOR-NAVFAC, and employs maritime forces through the full spectrum of joint and naval operations.

**New T-54A arrives at NAS
Corpus Christi to replace
aging T-44C**



Photo By [Ensign Alan Wang](#) | A T-54A multi-engine aircraft sits on the flight line of Naval Air Station (NAS) Corpus Christi,

April 18. The arrival of the T-54A heralds a new generation of Naval Aviators who will use the trainer to earn their wings of gold as they prepare to fly such aircraft as the P-8A Poseidon, E-2D Hawkeye and C-130 Hercules. The T-54A replaces the T-44C Pegasus, an aircraft that has been in naval service since 1977.

From [Chief of Naval Air Training](#), Apr. 18, 2024

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – Two T-54A multi-engine aircraft landed aboard Naval Air Station (NAS) Corpus Christi, April 18. The arrival of the T-54A heralds a new generation of Naval Aviators who will use the trainer to earn their wings of gold as they prepare to fly such aircraft as the P-8A Poseidon, E-2D Hawkeye and C-130 Hercules. The T-54A replaces the T-44C Pegasus, an aircraft that has been in naval service since 1977.

The Navy awarded a contract to Textron in early 2023 to acquire up to 64 King Air 260 aircraft that will be designated as T-54A in the Navy's training fleet. T-44C Pegasus is the Navy's designation for the aging fleet of Beechcraft King Air 90 aircraft. The T-44C has successfully served generations of Naval Aviators after continuously supporting Training Air Wing (TAW) 4 efforts to routinely exceed Naval Aviator production requirements each year. Most recently, TAW-4 effectively employed the T-44C in achieving 110% of fiscal year 2023 requirements for Naval Aviator production. But as aviation and maritime warfare continue to evolve, the T-54A has arrived to better help Student Naval Aviators prepare for the future.

Capt. Michael Albus, commander TAW-4, will oversee the introduction of the T-54A into the Navy's two premier multi-engine training squadrons, Training Squadron (VT) 31 and VT-35.

"We produce the best multi-engine pilots in the world," said Albus. "The T-54A will be the training aircraft to carry that

legacy into the future. With its ProLine Fusion avionics suite, combined with increased range, speed, and altitude, the T-54A will ensure that our aviators are well-prepared to operate complex fleet aircraft, and are ready for tomorrow's challenges in a multi-domain environment."

The arrival of the first multi-engine training system (METS) replacement in over 45 years is not just historic for TAW-4, but for the entire naval air training enterprise. This aircraft is the first of the Chief of Naval Air Training's (CNATRA) entire fleet of over 650 aircraft to include a glossy grey paint scheme. This paint scheme, which was announced alongside a "Midway" blue paint coat for CNATRA's T-6B Texan II aircraft, is an effort to reconnect students and instructors with the fleet. The glossy grey color of the T-54A reflects similar paint coats of the P-8A Poseidon and E-2D Hawkeye.

"The T-44C Pegasus trained generations of Naval Aviators seeking to fly multi-engine platforms. So the arrival of the T-54A is a truly historic moment that signifies the Navy's commitment to training our future pilots," said Albus. "Many will quickly notice that the new aircraft is not painted orange and white like the previous 70 years of naval air training.

The new grey paint scheme is designed to bolster pride not only in our students but in our instructors."

Two crews ferried the aircraft back to NAS Corpus Christi after the Navy took possession of the aircraft days earlier in Wichita, Kansas. Cmdr. Kerry Bistline, TAW-4's officer in charge of METS fixed wing training, was the flight leader for both crews.

"This is a culminating moment for me as a TAW-4 flight instructor. Being able to see this program grow from the acquisition phase to delivery is a highlight for my 27-year

career. It's been a long process to ensure that the METS team got this right. I look forward to seeing this trainer fly in the local Corpus Christi area for many years to come."

Other crew members included Lt. Mike Stengel, Naval Aviator and instructor pilot who volunteered to help ferry the aircraft back home on its maiden voyage as an official naval aircraft.

"The T-54A will be a great addition to the TAW-4 family. This aircraft will lead the way for the next generation of multi-engine aviators. It has been a very rewarding and humbling experience to be a part of the METS team and it will be one of the highlights of my career."

As more T-54A aircraft arrive, the T-44C Pegasus will slowly begin to phase out. Combined with the gradual repaint of T-6B Texan II aircraft, less and less orange-and-white aircraft will appear in the South Texas sky. Increasing numbers of new students in the advanced stage of training for multi-engine platforms will immediately begin to train in the T-54A as other students and instructors lead the T-44C to sundown.

CNATRA trains, mentors, and delivers the highest quality Naval Aviators who prevail in competition, crisis, and conflict. Headquartered at NAS Corpus Christi, CNATRA comprises five training air wings in Florida, Mississippi, and Texas, which are home to 17 training squadrons. In addition, CNATRA oversees the Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels and the training curriculum for all fleet replacement squadrons.

Australian Sailors Graduate Sub Officer Course: Next, Assignment to U.S. Nuclear Attack Submarines



U.S. Navy

By U.S. Naval Submarine School Public Affairs and AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Program Office

GROTON, Connecticut – In a first for the U.S. Navy and Royal Australian Navy, three RAN officers graduated from the U.S. Navy's Submarine Officer Basic Course (SOBC) on April 18, 2024, at the Naval Submarine School in Groton, Connecticut.

The RAN officers' graduation represents a significant step toward realizing Pillar 1 of the trilateral AUKUS partnership, a strategic endeavor aimed at strengthening the security and defense capabilities of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the

United States. Pillar 1 aims to create a sovereign conventionally armed, nuclear-powered attack submarine fleet for the Royal Australian Navy.

“Collectively, we would like to thank our instructors here in Groton and also in Goose Creek, South Carolina, for getting us to this point,” said Lieutenant William Hall. Hall, Lieutenant Commander James Heydon and Lieutenant Commander Adam Klyne are the first RAN officers to complete Naval Nuclear Power School and Nuclear Power Training Unit, located in South Carolina, and now SOBC. “Now, we’re looking to join our boats and continuing our careers as part of Australia’s conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine force.”

The Submarine Officer Basic Course is the last step in the U.S. Navy’s 15-month nuclear submarine training pipeline before assignment to the fleet. The three RAN officer graduates will be assigned to Virginia-class attack submarines based out of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Upon assignment, the graduates serve as division officers, leading a team of highly trained enlisted submariners. In this capacity, they will be tested and qualified on the ship’s systems and in various warfighting and leadership roles.

“Over the last two months, these three officers have trained alongside our Sailors, learning the fundamentals of operating and tactically employing SSNs,” said Naval Submarine School Commanding Officer Captain Matthew Fanning. “At SOBC, they applied both their previous experience and the new skills they developed through our nuclear training schools, to learn how we operate the ocean’s apex predator, the nuclear-powered attack submarine.”

“These officers are the future leaders of Australia’s sovereign conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarine fleet,” said the U.S. Navy’s AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Program Manager Rear Admiral Lincoln Reifsteck. “Their time in

Groton bridged the operational gap between the Collins-class SSKs and the Virginia-class SSN. These tours on U.S. Virginia-class submarines are the key professional development step toward earning the privilege to become submarine executive officers and the first commanding officers of Australian SSNs.”

Nearly 100 RAN officers and enlisted personnel will enter the submarine and Naval Nuclear Propulsion training pipelines in 2024.

“These three officers are trailblazers for the Royal Australian Navy,” said Rear Admiral Matt Buckley, Head of Nuclear Submarine Capability within the Australia Submarine Agency. They are not only the first Australians to be fully trained within the U.S. system but will also gain real-world experience aboard Virginia-class SSNs, which will be foundational to Australia’s ability to sovereignly operate, maintain, and steward these world-class platforms.”

AUKUS is a strategic partnership that will promote a safe, free, and open Indo-Pacific, enhance national security, and uplift the three industrial bases. AUKUS Pillar 1 is delivering a conventionally armed SSN capability to the Royal Australian Navy by the early 2030s. The AUKUS I&A Program Office is responsible for executing the trilateral partnership to deliver conventionally armed, nuclear-powered attack submarines to the RAN at the earliest possible date while setting the highest nuclear stewardship standards and continuing to maintain the highest nonproliferation standard.

CORAS Rolls Out Early Release of Driver Trees Tool



April 17, 2024

Responding to U.S. Navy's Agenda for Performance-based Management, Decision-Making, and Readiness

MCLEAN, Va., April 17, 2024 (NewsWire.com) – [CORAS](#) Federal, a FedRAMP High Software as a Service (SaaS) platform, announced an early release of a Driver Trees feature that adds to its suite of enterprise decision management tools. Driver Trees are a performance-based management process that identifies root causes and the most impactful way of pushing efficient progress and resolution, incorporating the U.S. Navy's (USN) Get Real Get Better and Performance to Plan (P2P).

CORAS Driver Trees are already at work within the USN supporting Program Managers in their "hunt for leverage", using metrics and cause-and-effect relationships to predict future performance and determine the highest-capacity drivers of those metrics. CORAS Driver Trees empower users to identify baseline conditions, align workflows to key performance indicators (KPIs), predict future outcomes, and promote clear

ownership and accountability within teams.

“U.S. Navy departments already trust CORAS to deliver complete insights, informed decisions, proactive collaboration, and a single source of truth across complex multi-system secure environments,” said CORAS President and CTO [Dan Naselius](#). “The CORAS Driver Trees tool is a direct result of listening to our U.S. Navy customers’ needs and delivering them another weapon in our arsenal for DoD defense systems that articulates clear objectives, outcomes, drivers, and data-informed analyses. This tool will keep evolving as we continue to collaborate and refine CORAS Driver Trees’ functionality through customer feedback.”

USN Vice Admiral Morley recently presented a leadership masterclass on Program Management and Driver Trees with an agenda of understanding how to leverage tools like driver trees to align team accountability and deliver positive delta outcomes in USN acquisition environments. [CORAS supports the warfighter](#) by bringing disparate data sources together in secure, real-time environments for leadership to make fully informed decisions with live reporting, predictive AI/NLP, what-if scenarios, automations, and workflows.

April 16 Red Sea Update

U.S. Central Command

April 16, 2024

TAMPA, Fla.- Between 10:50 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. (Sanaa time) on April 16, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully engaged two unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) in Iranian-backed Houthi terrorist-controlled areas in Yemen.

There were no injuries or damage reported by U.S., coalition, or commercial ships.

It was determined the UAVs presented an imminent threat to U.S., coalition, and merchant vessels in the region. These actions are taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S., coalition, and merchant vessels.

Rite-Solutions Awarded Navy Task Order to Support Electronic Warfare and Support Trainers

MIDDLETOWN, R.I. – Rite-Solutions has been awarded a five-year, \$10.7 million competitive Task Order from the Naval Undersea Warfare Center (NUWC), Division Newport to provide hardware and software development services for Electronic Warfare (EW) and Electronic Support (ES) elements of the Submarine Multi-Mission Team Trainer (SMMTT).

The win – Rite-Solutions’ third prime contract win in as many months – will enable the company to continue to support the Undersea Warfare Combat Systems Department, Product Development Division (Code 253) with critical analysis, designing, prototyping, programming, integrating, testing and evaluation, training and installation of EW and ES products.

Execution of this contract will fall under Rite-Solutions’ Engineering Services Business Unit, led by Senior Vice President Laura Deady. “SMMTT is a critical tool in ensuring

our sailors have the necessary skills in areas such as strike warfare; anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare; mine warfare; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; navigation; command, control, communications, computers and intelligence; and special warfare,” said Deady. “Rite-Solutions brings the experience, capability, and high-caliber personnel necessary to ensure that our sailors are safe, trained, and prepared.”

Rite-Solutions will support EW System environment simulations such as WLR-8 and BLQ-10, in addition to related Early Warning Receiver (EWR) subsystems. Additionally, Rite-Solutions will support the development of inorganic sensor data analysis, and emitter simulations of potential vessels or vehicles within a trainer gaming environment.

“Software development is a critical element to our company’s core capabilities, and NUWC Newport is one of our most valued customers,” said Joe Marino, Rite-Solutions’ co-founder and CEO. “This contract win is a testament to our technical capabilities, our reputation in the industry, and our amazing team of engineers, scientists, and technical professionals who have an unwavering focus on our customers and their requirements.”