

# Navy to deploy SDB-II smart weapon aboard F/A-18 aircraft



An F/A-18 conducts testing with the Small Diameter Bomb (SDB) II at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md. (U.S. Navy photo) [Release from the Naval Air Systems Command](#)

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Nov 6, 2023

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, Patuxent River, Md. – The Navy is set to field the Small Diameter Bomb-II on the F/A-18E/F after declaring Early Operational Capability (EOC) in October.

The F/A-18E/F is the Navy's first platform to carry the SDB-II, giving the aircraft the capability to hit moving targets in harsh weather and address targets in dynamic scenarios.

“The Navy and Air Force team, along with the test community and fleet stakeholders, worked relentlessly to expedite the fielding of this weapon,” said Tyler Alt, Navy SDB-II program manager. “This weapon will give our warfighters a much-needed capability and provide the basis for future network enabled weapons.”

The team will complete two additional operational test events before achieving Initial Operational Capability (IOC) in 2024.

SDB-II is an air-launched, precision-strike standoff weapon that enables the warfighter to defeat moving and fixed targets. It can operate in adverse weather conditions through its tri-mode seeker that employs infrared and millimeter wave radar to see through fog, smoke and rain.

The weapon has the capability to receive updated target coordinates mid-flight via two-way datalink communications. Using these network options, SDB-II allows airborne or ground controllers the ability to send in-flight target updates.

SDB-II is a Joint-Interest, Air Force Lead program and is currently fielded on the U.S. Air Force’s F-15E aircraft. SDB-II will also be compatible and fielded on F-16C/D and F-35 aircraft.

The Navy component of the SDB-II program is executed by the Precision Strike Weapons Program Office (PMA-201), which provides naval aviation with dominant lethal, integrated precision strike solutions for any conflict anytime, anywhere.

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# U.S. Navy Destroyer Conducts Freedom of Navigation Operation in the South China Sea



[Release from Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs](#)

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Nov. 3, 2023

SPRATLY ISLANDS, South China Sea – On November 3, USS Dewey (DDG 105) asserted navigational rights and freedoms in the South China Sea near the Spratly Islands, consistent with international law. At the conclusion of the operation, USS Dewey (DDG 105) exited the excessive claim area and continued operations in the South China Sea. This freedom of navigation operation (“FONOP”) upheld the rights, freedoms, and lawful

uses of the sea recognized in international law by challenging restrictions on innocent passage imposed by the People's Republic of China (PRC), Taiwan, and Vietnam.

The PRC, Vietnam, and Taiwan each claim the entirety of the Spratly Islands, while the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei also claim certain features. The PRC, Vietnam and Taiwan each require either permission or advance notification before a military vessel or warship engages in "innocent passage" through their territorial sea, in violation of international law. Under customary international law as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention, the ships of all States – including their warships – enjoy the right of innocent passage through a territorial sea. The unilateral imposition of any authorization or advance-notification requirement for innocent passage is unlawful. By engaging in innocent passage without giving prior notification to or asking permission from any of the claimants, the United States challenged these unlawful restrictions imposed by the PRC, Taiwan, and Vietnam. The United States demonstrated that innocent passage is not subject to such restrictions.

Unlawful and sweeping maritime claims in the South China Sea pose a serious threat to the freedom of the seas, including the freedoms of navigation and overflight, free trade and unimpeded commerce, and freedom of economic opportunity for South China Sea littoral nations.

The United States challenges excessive maritime claims around the world regardless of the identity of the claimant. Customary international law reflected in the 1982 Law of the Sea Convention protects certain rights, freedoms and lawful uses of the sea enjoyed by all nations. The international community has an enduring role in preserving the freedom of the seas, which is critical to global security, stability, and prosperity.

The United States upholds freedom of navigation for all

nations as a principle. As long as some countries continue to claim and assert limits on rights that exceed their authority under international law, the United States will continue to defend the rights and freedoms of the sea guaranteed to all. No member of the international community should be intimidated or coerced into giving up their rights and freedoms.

U.S. forces operate in the South China Sea on a daily basis, as they have for more than a century. They routinely operate in close coordination with like-minded allies and partners that share our commitment to uphold a free and open international order that promotes security and prosperity. All of our operations are conducted safely, professionally, and in accordance with customary international law. The operations demonstrate that the United States will fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows – regardless of the location of excessive maritime claims and regardless of current events.

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## **U.S. Navy Funds Mercury to Develop Photonics Chiplet Manufacturing Capability for Defense Applications**

# SEAPOWERS

The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

Release from Mercury Systems Inc.

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ANDOVER, Mass., Nov. 02, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – Mercury Systems, Inc. (NASDAQ: MRCY, [www.mrcy.com](http://www.mrcy.com)), a technology company that delivers mission-critical processing power to the edge, today announced an agreement with the U.S. Navy to develop manufacturing capabilities that would allow commercial photonics chiplets to accelerate edge processing in defense applications.

The Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering (OUSD(R&E)) Trusted and Assured Microelectronics (T&AM) Program's Project KANAGAWA aims to mature the domestic supply chain and manufacturing processes for multi-chip packages, where co-packaged optics are integrated with electronic integrated circuits to enable long-reach and high-bandwidth data transfer. Compared to conventional copper connections, photonics uses optical fibers to enable orders of magnitude improvement in data bandwidth at a fraction of the power needed. The promise of this technology for defense systems has been well-known for decades, but demonstrations have relied on expensive and custom approaches that are not

compatible with high-volume production.

Under a \$3.9 million, 17-month Other Transaction Agreement (OTA) with Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Crane Division, Mercury gains access to photonics devices developed for the commercial sector by Intel and Ayar Labs. These chiplet devices use optical technology to move data through systems such as data centers at speeds in excess of a terabyte per second. Mercury plans to develop miniaturized and ruggedized packages using photonics chiplets for defense applications to allow edge sensor data to be ingested much faster, enabling faster decision-making in next-generation radar and electronic warfare systems.

“We are excited to partner with the Navy to bring this game-changing commercial technology to the defense community,” said Tom Smelker, Mercury’s GM of Microsystems. “As we continue to drive innovation in defense microelectronics at the edge and move from board-scale to chip-scale, photonics chiplets will play a key role in advanced packaging and benefit a wide range of systems and platforms.”

“Breaking the data transfer bottleneck is a critical objective for the RF & Optoelectronics (RF/OE) program,” said Joshua Hawke, USD(R&E) RF/OE Execution Lead. “This partnership with Mercury will proliferate co-packaged optics within the Defense Industrial Base and accelerate adoption of innovative technology by the warfighter.”

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## **U.S. Sixth Fleet Conducts**

# Bilateral, Dual-Carrier Operations in Eastern Mediterranean Sea



[Release from Carrier Strike Group 12 Public Affairs and Carrier Strike Group 2 Public Affairs](#)

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EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN SEA – The ships and aircraft of two U.S. Navy aircraft carrier strike groups conducted joint exercises over the last three days.

Sailors and naval aviators from the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) Carrier Strike Group (CSG 12) and those of the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) Carrier Strike Group (CSG 2) trained on high-value unit defense, ballistic missile defense, replenishments-at-sea, cross-deck flight operations, and maritime security operations.

They were joined by USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20) – the U.S. Sixth Fleet Command and Control ship – and the Italian Navy frigates ITS Virginio Fasan (F 591) and ITS Carlo Margottini (F 592).

“Operating and training alongside each other demonstrates the U.S. Navy’s ability to seamlessly accomplish multiple missions, deter aggression and support our allies and partners,” said Rear Adm. Erik Eslich, Commander of CSG 12.

More than 11,000 U.S. personnel participated in the three-day exercises.

“The seamless integration of naval and air commands between us and our partners helps build a theater-wide common tactical picture to make us a more ready and postured force,” said Rear Adm. Marc Miguez, Commander of CSG 2. “Our focus on teamwork and dual-carrier operations provide us the ability to train like we fight.”

The Italian ships Fasan and Margottini joined the two carrier strike groups to exercise NATO alliance integration. Fasan also participated in Composite Unit Training Exercise with the Eisenhower strike group earlier this year.

“Operating dual carrier strike groups alongside Allies and Partners in a dynamic environment demonstrates our capability and capacity to respond with agility decisively to any contingency,” said Vice Adm. Thomas Ishee, commander of the U.S. Sixth Fleet. “Our presence sends a clear signal about our commitment to deter aggression and promote stability throughout the region.”

The ships of the Gerald R. Ford strike group have participated in multiple operations and exercises throughout the Sixth Fleet area of responsibility, including Sage Wolverine, Baltic Operations 2023, exercise Air Defender 2023, and NATO enhanced vigilance activity Neptune Strike, as well as operations with 17 countries in the U.S. Naval Forces Europe/Africa/U.S. Sixth

Fleet area of operations.

The Gerald R. Ford strike group is comprised of the aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 2, the Information Warfare Commander, and the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Normandy (CG 60).

The ships of DESRON-2 are the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Ramage (DDG 61), USS Bulkeley (DDG 84), and USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117).

The Dwight D. Eisenhower strike group is comprised of the aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN69), the guided-missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea (CG 58), the guided-missile destroyers USS Mason (DDG 87) and USS Gravely (DDG 107) of Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 22, and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 3 with its nine squadrons.

U.S. Sixth Fleet, headquartered in Naples, Italy, conducts the full spectrum of joint and naval operations, often in concert with allies and interagency partners, in order to advance U.S. national interests and security and stability throughout Europe and Africa.

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**Adm. Lisa Franchetti Sworn in  
as 33rd CNO**



[Release from the Navy Office of Information](#)

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02 November 2023

WASHINGTON – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro swore-in Admiral Lisa Franchetti as the 33rd Chief of Naval Operations at a small ceremony in the Pentagon, Nov. 2.

“I am honored to have been confirmed as the 33rd Chief of Naval Operations, and am proud to serve alongside the Sailors and civilians that make up our Navy team,” Franchetti said. “I look forward to continuing to lead the world’s most powerful Navy.”

Franchetti most recently served as Vice Chief of Naval Operations, a billet held from Sept. 2022 to Nov. 2023. She is a native of Rochester, New York and was commissioned in 1985. Her operational tours include commanding officer of USS Ross (DDG 71) and DESRON-21, and served as commander of Pacific Partnership 2010, embarked on USNS Mercy (T-AH 19). Her flag assignments include commander, U.S. Naval Forces Korea; commander, Carrier Strike Group 9; commander, Carrier Strike

Group 15; chief of staff, Strategy, Plans and Policy (J-5) Joint Staff; commander, U.S. 6th Fleet, Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO; deputy commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe; deputy commander, U.S. Naval Forces Africa; Joint Force Maritime Component Commander; deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Development, N7; and director for Strategy, Plans and Policy (J-5), Joint Staff..

“It was my honor today to swear in Adm. Lisa M. Franchetti as the 33rd Chief of Naval Operations,” Del Toro said. “I have the utmost confidence that [she] will faithfully fulfill the duties of this esteemed position. I look forward to working with her to lead our Force into the future as we continue to strengthen our maritime dominance, build a culture of warfighting excellence, and enhance strategic partnerships.”

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## **7th Fleet Destroyer and Royal Canadian Navy Frigate Transit Taiwan Strait**



[Release from Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs](#)

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01 November 2023

From Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs

Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Rafael Peralta (DDG 115) and Royal Canadian Navy Halifax-class frigate HMCS Ottawa (FFH 341) conducted a routine Taiwan Strait transit November 1 (local time) through waters where high-seas freedoms of navigation and overflight apply in accordance with international law.

The ships transited through a corridor in the Strait that is beyond the territorial sea of any coastal State. The transit was unremarkable, unprovocative, and consistent with international law. Rafael Peralta and Ottawa's bilateral transit through the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the commitment of the United States and our allies and partners to a free and open Indo-Pacific. Cooperation like this represents the

centerpiece of our approach to a secure and prosperous region where aircraft and ships of all nations may fly, sail and operate anywhere international law allows.

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## Exercise Digital Talon Advances Unmanned Lethality at Sea



ARABIAN GULF (Oct. 26, 2023) A MARTAC T-38 Devil Ray unmanned surface vehicle, equipped with a Lethal Miniature Aerial Missile System, operates in the Arabian Gulf, Oct. 26. U.S. Naval Forces Central Command recently completed Exercise Digital Talon, demonstrating the ability of unmanned platforms to pair with traditionally crewed ships in “manned-unmanned teaming” to identify and target hostile forces at sea. Then, using munitions launched from another unmanned platform, engaged and destroyed those targets. **(Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jacob Vernier)**

[Release from U.S. Naval Forces Central Command Public Affairs](#)

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MANAMA, Bahrain – U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT) is advancing lethality and the combat capabilities of unmanned surface vehicles (USVs) during live weapons firing exercises in the international waters surrounding the Arabian Peninsula, Oct. 23.

The firing exercises were conducted as part of Exercise Digital Talon and constituted the first use of lethal munitions from USVs in the Middle East region.

During the exercise, NAVCENT's Task Force 59, the Navy's first Unmanned and Artificial Intelligence Task Force, demonstrated the ability of unmanned platforms to pair with traditionally crewed ships in "manned-unmanned teaming" to identify and target simulated hostile forces at sea. The hostile forces were represented through the use of a target boat. Then, using live munitions launched from another unmanned platform, NAVCENT forces engaged and destroyed the targets.

During multiple firing events, a MARTAC T38 Devil Ray USV, equipped with a Lethal Miniature Aerial Missile System, successfully scored direct hits each time. A human operator ashore at Task Force 59's Robotics Operations Center made the engagement decisions.

Digital Talon was coordinated with and supported by Commander, Special Operations Forces Central Command.

This exercise is the second time in as many months the U.S. Navy has successfully demonstrated advanced unmanned capabilities in the region, according to Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, NAVCENT commander. In September, unmanned underwater surface and aerial vehicles were able to track Iranian Navy and Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy ships and small boats over several days during routine patrols in and around the Strait of Hormuz.

“We are focused on the operational application of new, cutting-edge unmanned systems and artificial intelligence technologies. Last month, we integrated 12 different unmanned platforms with manned ships for ‘manned-unmanned teaming’ operations to conduct enhanced maritime security operations in the waters surrounding the Arabian Peninsula,” he said. “During Digital Talon, we took a significant step forward and advanced our capability to the ‘next level’ beyond just maritime domain awareness, which has been a traditional focus with Task Force 59. We have proven these unmanned platforms can enhance fleet lethality. In doing so, we are strengthening regional maritime security and enhancing deterrence against malign activity.”

Looking ahead, Cooper said, he expects to see the progress expand in scale and impact, including future exercises expanding the arsenal of combat-capable unmanned systems.

“I’m excited about the direction we’re headed,” he said.

U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. 5th Fleet’s area of operations encompasses about 2.5 million square miles of water area and includes the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, Arabian Sea and parts of the Indian Ocean. This expanse, comprising 21 nations, includes three critical choke points at the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal and the Strait of Bab al Mandeb.

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**Statement From Secretary of  
Defense Lloyd J. Austin III**

# on Senate Passage of Some U.S. Military Nominees



WASHINGTON (Sept. 14, 2023) Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti answers questions from members of the Senate Armed Services Committee during her confirmation hearing at the Dirksen Senate Office Building in Washington, D.C., Sept. 14 2023. Franchetti was nominated to become the next Chief of Naval Operations by President Joseph R. Biden. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Amanda R. Gray)

[Release from the U.S. Department of Defense](#)

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NOV. 2, 2023

I am glad the Senate has today confirmed Adm. Lisa Franchetti as Chief of Naval Operations, Gen. David Allvin as Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and Lt. Gen. Chris Mahoney as

Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps. They are outstanding leaders who have faithfully served their country for decades, and I know they will continue to be great leaders of our force as they continue to tackle the crucial national security issues of these challenging times.

But we still have more than 370 superbly qualified leaders who have seen their nominations unnecessarily stalled. As we face a variety of urgent challenges, the most powerful fighting force in history must be at full-strength. This unprecedented delay in confirming our military's top leaders has hurt our military's readiness and unnecessarily weighed down our military families, who already give up so much to support those who serve. While today's vote is a step forward, we continue to urge the Senate to take swift action on the remaining nominations so that these American heroes can lead our team in keeping our country safe.

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## **USNS Mercy's visit to Marshall Islands marks launch of Pacific Partnership 24-1**



The hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) prepares to anchor off the coast of Majuro, Republic of Marshall Islands, prior to its first mission stop for Pacific Partnership 2024-1 Oct. 30, 2023. Pacific Partnership, now in its 19th iteration, is the largest multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief mission in the Pacific and brings together more than 1000 participants from 8 partner and host nations. (U.S. Navy photo by Grady Fontana)

[Release from U.S. Pacific Fleet](#)

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31 October 2023

On October 30, the United States Pacific Partnership has arrived in Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) to commence the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific region.

The arrival of Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) to Majuro, RMI, signifies the launch of the

Pacific Partnership 24-1 mission, which will enable American and Marshallese participants to work together to enhance disaster response capabilities and foster new and enduring friendships.

“The Pacific Partnership 24-1 mission is one example of our longstanding commitment to the Indo-Pacific region, while further strengthening enduring relationships and cooperation with partner-nations such as the RMI,” said Rear Adm. Mark A. Melson, Commander, Task Force 73 and Executive Agent for this year’s mission. “The RMI is a long and respected partner with deep ties to the U.S. Navy and contributes to security and stability in the region.”

At the invitation of host nations, Pacific Partnership’s mission partners conduct tailored humanitarian civil action preparedness activities in areas such as engineering, disaster response, public health, and host nation outreach events.

This year marks the fifth time Pacific Partnership has been to RMI. This stop will provide tailored medical care focusing on surgeries, training for first responders, clinical care, subject-matter exchanges, and community education at Majuro, Ebeye and Aur Atolls.

Engineering projects will include school renovations at Long Island Elementary and Rita Elementary Schools, while experts in the field will share knowledge exchanges through exercises covering humanitarian and disaster relief topics.

Additionally, the U.S. Pacific Fleet Band will perform alongside Australian military musicians in a variety of community engagements.

“Pacific Partnership creates lasting bonds of friendships and trust between the United States, partner nations, and host nations,” said U.S. Navy Captain Brian Quin PP 24-1 Mission

Commander. "I am excited to continue the tradition and honored to be a part of such an important mission".

USNS Mercy will serve as the mission platform and a combined team of civilian crew members and uniformed military members make up the crew of Mercy, which can staff up to 1,200 medical personnel.

The ship has 12 fully equipped operating rooms, 1,000 hospital beds, radiological services, a medical laboratory, a pharmacy, optometry facilities, a CT scanner and an oxygen-producing plant. In addition to activities aboard the hospital ship, Pacific Partnership medical providers will work shoulder to shoulder with colleagues at the Majuro Hospital and Laura Clinic, ensuring that information exchange results in sustainable medical practices once USNS Mercy leaves the RMI.

Pacific Partnership focuses on multiple effort to help build resilience and host nation capacity to support essential humanitarian services.

As an added feature, RMI will partner with the Mercy's medical team and deploy the country's own hospital ship, Liwatoon Mour, to deliver health care services to outer atolls. They will take aboard and integrate Mercy medical staff to Aur Atoll in an effort to eradicate tuberculosis, a first-time collaboration for the Pacific Partnership mission.

This year's mission will also feature nearly 1,500 personnel from allies and partner nations including Australia, Chile, Japan, Germany, and New Zealand.

Born out of the devastation brought by the December 2004 tsunami that swept through parts of South and Southeast Asia, Pacific Partnership began as a military-led humanitarian response to one of the world's most catastrophic natural disasters. Building on the success and goodwill of this

operation, the U.S. helped spearhead the inaugural Pacific Partnership mission in 2006. This mission leveraged partner militaries and the proficiencies of Non-Governmental Organizations to expand disaster relief capacity in Bangladesh, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Timor-Leste.

Pacific Partnership, now in its 19th iteration, is the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific. Each year the mission team works collectively with host and partner nations to enhance regional interoperability and disaster response capabilities, increase security and stability in the region, and foster new and enduring friendships in the Indo-Pacific.

For more information about Pacific Partnership visit [www.facebook.com/pacificpartnership](https://www.facebook.com/pacificpartnership), [www.instagram.com/pacific\\_partnership/](https://www.instagram.com/pacific_partnership/) or <https://www.dvidshub.net/feature/PacificPartnership>. Pacific Partnership public affairs can be reached via email at [cherylcollins.pp24@gmail.com](mailto:cherylcollins.pp24@gmail.com).

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**Second Cadre of Royal  
Australian Navy Officers  
Graduate from Nuclear Power  
School while First Enlisted**

# Sailors Enter



Release from Naval Reactors and AUKUS I&A Public Affairs

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Oct. 30, 2023

By Naval Reactors and AUKUS I&A Public Affairs

Goose Creek, South Carolina –

A further three Royal Australian Navy (RAN) Officers graduated the U.S. Navy's Nuclear Power School (NPS), Oct. 27, marking continued progress in Australia's goal to operate conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines (SSNs).

This second cohort of RAN Officers started NPS in April 2023, and followed the RAN personnel to graduate in July. NPS is one of the U.S. Department of Defense's most rigorous and demanding schools.

The three students started NPS in April 2023, becoming the second group of RAN personnel to graduate one of the Department of Defense's most rigorous and demanding schools.

"I had heard that nuclear power school was extremely challenging and it definitely was," said one of the students. "Being here in the U.S., attending school, and ultimately helping to prepare Australia for its own SSN capability is a true honor. I already loved being a submarine officer, and am really excited to become a nuclear-qualified submarine officer."

The RAN Officers' will follow the July graduates for further training in an operating nuclear propulsion plant. The officers will then complete a Submarine Officer Basic Course before assignment to an American Virginia-class SSN to continue their training and qualifications with on-board experience.

In another AUKUS milestone, the first cohort of RAN enlisted sailors arrived in Charleston, South Carolina and commenced their training at the Naval Nuclear Power Training Command. Similar to their officer counterparts, these sailors will complete Nuclear Power School and nuclear prototype training before being assigned to a Virginia-class submarine.

NPS trains officers and enlisted sailors in the science and engineering principles that are fundamental to the design, operation, and maintenance of naval nuclear propulsion plants.

"The officers and sailors graduating from the U.S. Navy's nuclear training programs will form the nucleus of the RAN's nuclear-qualified submariners," said Capt. Lincoln Reifsteck the AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Program Manager. "Through them, Australia will develop its sovereign ability to operate and supervise their own conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarine fleet."

“Today marks yet another step forward in building the Royal Australian Navy’s sovereign nuclear-powered submarine capability,” said Vice Adm. Jonathan Mead, the Director-General of the Australian Submarine Agency. “Through AUKUS, Australia is leveraging the decades of nuclear propulsion experience to safely operate, build and maintain our own fleet of conventionally-armed nuclear-powered submarines.”

There will be more than 15 RAN officers and sailors enrolled in nuclear training by the end of this year.

“I could not be more proud of all of the Royal Australian Navy officers and sailors who have attended the U.S. Nuclear Power School,” said the Chief of the Royal Australian Navy, Vice Adm. Mark Hammond. “It’s exciting to see our second cohort graduate from the program. These exceptional members of our Navy are charting the course for our future, receiving incredible training for our future submarine capability.”

Supporting Australia’s acquisition of conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarines for the Royal Australian Navy is the first major initiative under [AUKUS](#).

The leaders of the three partner nations announced the [Optimal Pathway](#) for the acquisition on March 13, 2023.