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. Virginiaclass 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 piplelines 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) – <u>CORAS</u> 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 <u>Dan Naselius</u>. "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. <u>CORAS supports the</u> 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 fiveyear, \$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."

Indian Navy Carries Out First Drug Interdiction as CMF Member



By Combined Maritime Forces Public Affairs | April 16, 2024

MANAMA, Bahrain — The Indian Navy Ship INS Talwar, operating in support of the Canadian-led Combined Task Force (CTF) 150, conducted its first interdiction of illicit narcotics as a member of Combined Maritime Forces, seizing 940 kg of drugs in the Arabian Sea, April 13.

Talwar, a Talwar-class frigate, seized 453 kg of methamphetamines, 416 kg of hash and 71 kg of heroin from a dhow as part of Focused Operation Crimson Barracuda.

The Indian Navy joined CMF last November.

"I commend the crew of INS Talwar for their efforts throughout this Focused Operation and their hard work has paid off with this seizure of 940 kg of drugs," said Royal Canadian Navy Capt. Colin Matthews, Commander, Combined Task Force 150. "This seizure, the fourth of this Focused Operation, demonstrates the effectiveness and professionalism of CMF, and of the Indian Navy, in deterring and disrupting criminal and terrorist activities at sea."

Crimson Barracuda, which concluded on April 15, focused on countering terrorist and criminal organizations' use of the high seas to conduct smuggling operations in the Western Indian Ocean region.

CTF 150 is one of five task forces under Combined Maritime Forces, the world's largest international naval partnership. CTF 150's mission is to deter and disrupt the ability of nonstate actors to move weapons, drugs and other illicit substances in the Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman.

Combined Maritime Forces is a 42-nation naval partnership upholding the international rules-based order by promoting security and stability across 3.2 million square miles of water encompassing some of the world's most important shipping lanes.

SECNAV Celebrates Keel Laying of the Future Frigate USS Constellation

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The U.S. Navy symbolically laid the keel to its first Constellation-class guided-missile frigate, the future USS Constellation (FFG 62) during a keel laying ceremony at Fincantieri Marinette Marine, Marinette, Wisconsin, April 12. Distinguished guests (left to right) pictured: James Dillenburg, Ceremony Chaplain; Admiral Lisa Franchetti, Chief of Naval Operations; Carlos Del Toro, secretary of the Navy; Jean Wagner, welder; Melissa Braithwaite, ship sponsor; Tony Evers, governor of Wisconsin; Mark Vandroff, CEO, Fincantieri Marinetti Marine; Marco Galbiati, CEO, Fincantieri Marine Group; Rear Admiral Kevin Smith, Program Executive Officer, Unmanned and Small Combatants. SECNAV Public Affairs, 12 April 2024

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro traveled to Marinette, Wisconsin, to celebrate the keel laying for the future USS Constellation (FFG 62), April 12.

The Constellation is the first ship of the Constellation-class frigates awarded to Fincantieri Marinette Marine in 2020.

"USS Constellation and the Constellation-class frigates are a critical next step in the modernization of our surface ship inventory, increasing the number of players on the field available globally for our fleet and combatant commanders," said Secretary Del Toro.

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti joined Secretary Del Toro during the historic occasion.

"This ship will be critical in putting more players on the field," said Franchetti. "The Constellation-class frigate, named after the USS Constellation – the first of six frigates authorized by the Naval Act of 1794 and the first in-class designed and built by American workers – will ensure the free flow of American commerce by sea."

The ship's sponsor is Melissa Braithwaite, the spouse of former Secretary of the Navy Kenneth Braithwaite, who named the ship in 2020.

"I am truly honored to be here as the USS Constellation sponsor. It is one of the greatest honors of my life," said Melissa Braithwaite. "Being a Navy wife and Ken's long service in the Navy, today, I had the honor of truly belonging to the Navy myself."

During his remarks, Del Toro thanked Wisconsin Governor Tony

Evers for his leadership, pointing out that the state's shipbuilding industry was integral to the national maritime statecraft efforts to rebuild commercial and naval power.

"This yard is teeming with activity – Americans from all walks of life coming together to build warships in a demonstration of our industrial might, and showcasing the talents of the skilled workforce that our nation must expand during this critical period in our world's history, said Del Toro.

"After having helped support some of the efforts to update and expand Fincantieri's facilities to meet the needs of an effort of this size, it is great to be here now to celebrate these projects and see how this hard work is paying off," said Evers. "This contract to build these frigates is a great opportunity for Wisconsin to showcase our rich shipbuilding and maritime history and cement our role as leaders in this industry."

The Constellation-Class Guided-Missile Frigate (FFG 62) represents the Navy's next-generation small surface combatant. This ship class will be an agile, multi-mission warship capable of operations in both blue-water and littoral environments, providing increased combat-credible forward presence that provides a military advantage at sea.

Read Del Toro's <u>full remarks here.</u>

USS Roosevelt Departs for Sixth FNDF-E Patrol



Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Roosevelt (DDG 80) in the Artic Circle. Roosevelt, forward-deployed to Rota, Spain, on its first patrol in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations in support of regional allies and partners and U.S. national security interests in Europe and Africa. *U.S. Navy* NAVAL STATION ROTA, Spain – Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Roosevelt departed Naval Station Rota, Spain to begin its sixth Forward-Deployed Naval Forces-Europe (FDNF-E)
patrol, April 11.

The ship and her crew will begin this patrol by crossing the Strait of Gibraltar and operating in the Mediterranean Sea, in support of U.S. 6th Fleet tasking.

"Roosevelt's crew is excited to get underway and get back to sea where we belong," said Commander Jeffrey Chewning, Commanding Officer of Roosevelt. "We look forward to executing the mission we've been given over the next several months."

Roosevelt completed its fifth FDNF-E patrol in November 2023. The fifth patrol took the ship and crew throughout the Mediterranean Sea and across the 6th Fleet area of operations. While in the Med, Roosevelt integrated with the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group, supporting security and stability in the region.

While on patrol in the Baltic in the summer of 2023, Roosevelt participated in NATO's enhanced vigilance activity (eVA) Neptune Strike 23-2 and operated with NATO Allied Maritime Command's Standing NATO Maritime Group One (SNMG-1), demonstrating increased interoperability with NATO allies and partners.

Roosevelt was also the first American warship to conduct a Naval Surface Fire Support live fire exercise off the coast of Latvia.

Roosevelt is one of four U.S. Navy destroyers based in Rota, Spain, and assigned to Commander, Task Force 65 in support of NATO's Integrated Air Missile Defense architecture. These FDNF-E ships have the flexibility to operate throughout the waters of Europe and Africa, from the Cape of Good Hope to the Arctic Circle, demonstrating their mastery of the maritime domain.

For more than 80 years, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-U.S. Naval

Forces Africa (NAVEUR-NAVAF) has forged strategic relationships with our Allies and partners, leveraging a foundation of shared values to preserve security and stability.

Headquartered in Naples, Italy, NAVEUR-NAVAF operates U.S. naval forces in the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) and U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) areas of responsibility. U.S. 6th Fleet is permanently assigned to NAVEUR-NAVAF and employs maritime forces through the full spectrum of joint and naval operations.

HII Delivers Amphibious Transport Dock Richard M. McCool Jr. to U.S. Navy



HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division delivered amphibious

transport dock Richard M. McCool Jr. (LPD 29) to the U.S. Navy on April 11. Pictured from left to right are SUPSHIP Gulf Coast's LPD Program Manager Representative Cmdr. James R. Wilkins IV, Ingalls Shipbuilding's LPD Program Manager Davianne Stokes, and Prospective Commanding Officer for Richard M. McCool Jr. (LPD 29) Capt. Jeffrey D. Baker. *HII* PASCAGOULA, Mississippi – HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division announced the delivery of amphibious transport dock Richard M. McCool Jr. (LPD 29) to the U.S. Navy.

Richard M. McCool Jr. is the 13th San Antonio-class ship delivered by Ingalls and is the final Flight I transition ship before Ingalls moves into production of the LPD Flight II line.

"The LPD 29 delivery demonstrates how our shipbuilders are enabling our combined Navy and Marine Corps team," said Kari Wilkinson, president of Ingalls Shipbuilding. "It is the most recent example of what U.S. industry and government partnerships can accomplish by putting another player on the field. We will now bring the full weight of this collaborative team to bear on steady-state Flight II execution going forward."

Ingalls has two Flight II LPDs under construction including Harrisburg (LPD 30) and Pittsburgh (LPD 31). In March 2023, Ingalls was awarded a modification to the contract for the procurement of the detail design and construction of Philadelphia (LPD 32), the 16th ship in the San Antonio class and the third LPD Flight II.

The San Antonio class is foundational to the U.S. Marine Corp's Force Design construct and can support a variety of crisis response, special operations and expeditionary warfare missions. LPDs can operate independently or as part of amphibious readiness groups, expeditionary strike groups, or joint task forces. These capabilities allow the U.S. Navy to protect America's security abroad and promote regional stability and preserve future peace.

Navy Strives to Realize its Vision for Greater Use of Unmanned Systems



A full-size prototype of Manta Ray, a new class of uncrewed underwater vehicle, is assembled in Northrop Grumman's Annapolis facility. *Northrop Grumman* Unmanned systems are increasingly part of maritime defense, but integrating remote air, surface and undersea capabilities into fields of operation requires new thinking and a whole lot of trust, military leaders and experts said at Sea-Air-Space 2024. "In force fleet, we really try to move from experiments to operationalizing," said Rear Admiral James Aiken, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command and commander, U.S. 4th Fleet. "And then we also want to go from the tactical – from those simple functions that we talk about – to the operational."

Aiken spoke at a panel of senior and retired military leaders from the Navy, Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard and private industry.

Moderating the panel was Bryan Clark, senior fellow and director at the Hudson Institute, a naval operations expert and co-author of the study, "Unalone and Unafraid: A Plan for Integrating Uncrewed and Other Emerging Technologies into US Military Forces."

Clark and co-author Dan Patt argued in the paper the Navy could use "AI-enabled uncrewed vehicles" to gain and sustain operational advantage against a great-power rival like China. "The ability of uncrewed systems to provide resilience and adaptability depends on scale," Clark and Patt wrote in the paper, published last year.

The Navy described its vision for integrating unmanned aerial systems, ships and undersea vehicles into the fleet and fleet marine force in the "Advantage at Sea" strategy and the follow-on "Unmanned Campaign Framework," released in 2001. But, as a 2022 U.S. Naval Institute article argued, Congress is unlikely to fund these vehicles unless the Navy develops a more complete conception of their use across conflicts.

That work is ongoing, panel speakers indicated.

Rear Admiral Kevin Smith, Program Executive Officer of Unmanned and Small Combatants with Naval Sea Systems Command, said his office is supporting Navy efforts by designing, developing, building and modernizing unmanned systems. These include unmanned maritime systems and mine and expeditionary warfare systems. Areas of study and experimentation focus on mechanical and electrical systems, autonomy, interoperability and more.

"Obviously a lot of data is being gathered," Smith said, which can be used to improve the systems and define their requirements for acquisition. And this applies to large unmanned system as well as medium and small systems.

"Taking the Sailor out of harm's way isn't very important – it's paramount," Smith said.

Aiken said getting these tools more quickly into a battlefield environment requires less testing and more operations. He said this has involved "putting unmanned vessels into the hands of operators" and "testing our assumptions" on how the Navy deploys, positions and otherwise uses them.

Aiken said the goal is to combine manned and unmanned systems, and to stack unmanned systems, "which I call the Reese's effect, where we're putting peanut butter and chocolate together," he said. He cited the use of unmanned surface vessels with communications balloons as part of a mesh network.

Retired Rear Admiral John Tammen, deputy of the Undersea Enterprise Campaign for the Northrop Grumman Mission Systems Sector, said he sees three broad areas of opportunities to further the Navy's efforts in this area:

• First, there are more players on the field from private industry. Tammen said a brief walk through the Sea-Air-Space exhibit hall showed the array of firms either operating their own vehicle or supporting their components. "That was very exciting to see and I think we need to support that," he said.

• Two, the evolution of using unmanned systems in capacities beyond surveillance to man-unmanned operations. "The example I like to use is the P-8 tied to the Triton," he said. "Being able to get something that's greater than the sum of the parts – one plus one equals three."

• Three, the increasing ability to get significant payload far forward, from undersea, Tammen said, as has been demonstrated in the DARPA-Northrop Grumman Manta Ray UUV program and others.

In fact, unmanned systems that are contractor-owned and operated appeal to the U.S. Coast Guard, which has a smaller budget and less acquisition, said Thom Remmers, Systems Strategic Team Lead and Naval Engineer and Acquisition Program Manager.

Aiken said at the end of the day, a lot of success involves building service members' trust in unmanned systems — not for use in a lab but in the real world.

HASC Members Prepare to Dive into Navy Budget



Members of the House Armed Services Committee seem prepared to overturn some Navy decisions as outlined in the fiscal 2025 budget request, including retiring some ships early and funding only one Virginia-class submarine.

"What has happened is, as the top line is increased, the game has become, 'we'll add a bunch of the stuff that we know Congress won't add, and we'll take out stuff that we know Congress is going to put back in.' And that will be a net gain. That game has to stop," said Rep. Wittman (R-Virginia), chair of the House Subcommittee on Tactical Air and Land Forces.

As for the Virginia-class sub, Wittman said the Navy position that the program is behind anyway and the shipbuilders can't keep up doesn't make sense.

"It really is about demand signal and, and you can't have it both ways. You can't say, well, the reason we are reducing the submarine request is because we don't think the industrial base can do it. That's wrong," he said. "The industrial base can do it if you send them the demand signal. We're at about 1.6, I think, submarines today annually, we need to be at 2.3. The way we get there is to send the proper demand signal." Rep. Joe Courtney (D-Connecticut), the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, said a defense industry report issued in December highlighted the need for procurement stability.

"Procurement stability was the watchword throughout that report," he said. "And, we're sacrificing that. I mean, literally, within weeks" of the report.

Naval aviation is also an issue, as the Navy has an air attack shortfall, noted moderator Bryan Clark, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute.

"There are some, thanks to Congress, some Super Hornets being procured in this year's appropriations," he said. "But there doesn't seem to be a clear path ahead for the carrier air wing."

This drew an animated response from Wittman, who said there doesn't seem to be a sense of urgency about the situation.

"The challenge now is to make sure we get enough F-35s in production to be able to sustain these carrier wings," and to make sure there's not a "valley" as the Super Hornets retire, "where now all of a sudden you have aircraft carriers sitting at the dock because there's no aircraft on board. That means we have to get those lines to intersect. That's more of a challenge than what a lot of folks think because the tactical air component of that is about maintaining production."

The aircraft also need technical refresh three, an upgraded software capability that contractor Lockheed Martin warned will be delayed.

"I mean, there needs to be an all hands on deck mentality to go, no, that's not acceptable. We need these aircraft and now we're going to have hundreds of aircraft sitting on the tarmac waiting to get a software upgrade, right?" Wittman continued, "F-35 is it, right? That's all we have, right? Let's get our fanny in gear and get this thing going and get it on the decks of the aircraft carriers, get it in the hands of our pilots in the Air Force. Get our fanny in gear. I mean, this is it. I hate to get fired up about it, but I'm fired up about it because this is the future of tactile air for this nation. Get our fanny in gear," he said, slapping the arms of his chair for emphasis.

Workforce Woes

The panel, which included Reps. Donald Norcross (D-New Jersey), Jen Kiggans (R-Virginia) and Ronny Jackson (R-Texas), also discussed the workforce issues plaguing the defense industry.

Kiggans, a former Navy helicopter pilot, said she sat on a HASC task force looking at recruitment and retention and what rose to the top were several issues: Compensation, housing and child care.

"That 5.2% pay raise that we just gave our servicemen and women in the appropriations bills that were passed a couple weeks ago, that's a good starting place, but there's still more work to do," Kiggans said.

As for housing, she said college dorms are better than the places junior enlisted Sailors and Marines are asked to live. "We have to do better for our junior Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen and Marines to be able to expect them to want to do the job that we ask," she said.

On the pay issue, Wittman said, "this 5.2% increase this year was great, but remember, the lower you are on the salary scale, the percentage is not as quite as much in your paycheck. Take for example, if you come into our services, if you are a private in the Army, the Marine Corps, third-class Seamen, third-class Airman, your starting salary is \$23,000 a year. That's 11 dollars and 50 cents an hour asking you to do the most dangerous work of the nation, putting your life on the line. And guess what? You go to Chick-fil-A and serve chicken sandwiches and make more money in a much, much less challenging or dangerous environment. We have got to fix the junior enlisted salary differential."