Sparton DeLeon Springs, LLC Receives Competitive Delivery Order for the U.S. Navy for the AN/SSQ-53H Sonobuoy

DELEON SPRINGS, FLORIDA – Aug. 28, 2025 – Sparton DeLeon Springs, LLC has been awarded a Firm Fixed Price Competitive Delivery Order under Fair Opportunities procedures for production of the AN/SSQ-53H for the United States Navy in support of annual training, peacetime operations and testing expenditures, as well as to maintain sufficient inventory to support the execution of major combat operations based on naval munitions requirements process.

Sparton President and CEO Donnelly Bohan said:

“The Sparton workforce prides itself on quickly responding to our customers’ needs. Our portfolio of sophisticated sonobuoys, sensors, and undersea payload delivery systems equip our customers with the very best maritime solutions to be used for Anti-Submarine Warfare and Undersea Warfare anywhere on the globe. This sizeable sonobuoy contract from the Air Anti-Submarine Warfare Systems Program Office signifies the U.S. Navy’s confidence in our solutions and we’re proud to deliver them.”

Can the U.S. Navy’s E-2D

Hawkeye Substitute for the Canceled Air Force E-7A Wedgetail?

An E-2D Hawkeye attached to the "Greyhawks" of Airborne Command and Control Squadron (VAW) 120 performs a touch-and-go landing aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77). *Photo credit: U.S Navy | Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Pierce Luck*

The U.S. Air Force's E-7A Wedgetail Airborne and Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) aircraft was canceled by the Trump Administration in the summer of 2025, although Congress is moving to block such a decision and enacting legislation to prevent the movement of funds out of the E-7A program.

Can its duties be undertaken by the U.S. Navy's smaller, cheaper E-2D Hawkeye?

“I’ll leave that to the decision makers in the United States Air Force as to what the right thing is,” Vice Admiral Daniel L. Cheever, commander of Naval Air Forces and Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, said during a Center for Strategic and International Studies’ “Future of Naval Aviation” live webinar event on Aug. 26, in response to a question from *Seapower*.

“Is the E-2D one of the most capable command and control platforms out there? Yes, it is,” he said. “It has air refueling, so we can stay on station and go serious long ranges. And that team, very small team in the E-2D, is incredibly capable … the three folks in the back are incredible warfighters. Talk about folks that can think strategic, operational, and tactical all at the same time. I think of them as a large umbrella over the whole force, and command and control, and give you the right call at the right time.

“And I think about the trust … the implicit trust I have in the E-2D crew. If they say something and direct me, I do it,” said Cheever, an F/A-18 Hornet pilot. “I don’t pause. I don’t go `Is that the right decision?’ I do whatever they say whenever they say it because they’re always right. And they have that global essay situational awareness that the E-2D brings. And so, it’s kind of inherent [in] that trust piece.”

The E-7A program has been behind schedule and over budget. A single E-7A airborne battle management aircraft’s cost increased by $136 million, or 23%, from $588 million to $724 million. The E-7A is needed to replace the decades old and outdated E-3 Sentry Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS). Both aircraft are manufactured by Boeing and both have aerial refueling capabilities.

The E-7A is already in foreign air forces’ service, flying for the Royal Australian Air Force, the Republic of Korea air force, and the Turkish air force. The E-7A production numbers are low, with 13 flying or in order with air forces around the

world in 2025.

The U.S. Air Force has none, although it wanted 26 before the Pentagon canceled the program and concluded the E-2D Hawkeye can fulfill the AEW&C task, even though the turboprop-powered E-2D is much smaller and thus less capable in speed, range, and endurance. E-2Ds use a 360-degree rotating dorsal antenna that can switch from mechanical to electronic scanning for detecting threats over land, water, and in the littorals.

The jet-powered E-7A is based on a larger Boeing 737 Next Generation (737-700) commercial jetliner and has more range and endurance because it doesn't have to take off from an aircraft carrier. E-7As use a Multi-role Electronically Scanned Array (MESA) fixed to the top of the aircraft, which provides 360-degree long-distance detection and tracking of airborne and sea targets.

"As an interim solution, the U.S. military wants to grow the Navy's E-2D Hawkeye fleet to perform that mission while it builds a network of space-based sensors that can warn troops of enemy aircraft and missiles and help direct the movement of forces," according to an article in Air & Space Forces magazine. "Hawkeyes would supplement a diminished [E-3] AWACS fleet, about half of which have already retired with no alternative in place."

The Pentagon's fiscal 2026 budget request calls for $1.4 billion to buy more E-2s, Bryn Woollacott MacDonnell, the department's acting budget chief, told the magazine. It would also spend $150 million to create a joint expeditionary Hawkeye unit with five planes.

"The E-2D is in production and, as Admiral Cheever indicates, it's a very capable platform that can operate with both persistence and at range from areas of interest," Bradley Martin, a retired U.S. Navy captain and RAND Corporation's senior policy researcher, told *Seapower*.

“It could carry out missions for the joint force in an effective manner. The main advantage is that it’s an aircraft in production with a capability for upgrades as new technology becomes available. This observation does not imply that RAND necessarily recommends the E-2D over the E-7A, just that E-2Ds could perform most of the missions the joint force requires.”

Austal USA Launches First New Utility Landing Craft

MOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA launched the company’s first Navy Landing Craft Utility (LCU) vessel at its ship manufacturing facility in Mobile, Ala. on Aug. 22. LCU 1710 is the first of 12 Navy LCUs under contract at Austal USA, part of a $91.5 million contract awarded by the Navy in 2023. Austal USA has

three LCU under construction.

“I am proud of the LCU program team for the hard work they’ve put forth to reach this important milestone,” stated Michelle Kruger, Austal USA President. “LCU is an important program that plays a critical role in supporting expeditionary operations for the Navy and Marine Corps. Each milestone achieved shores up our position as a key contributor to the strength and success of the maritime industrial base.”

LCU are carried aboard amphibious assault ships to the objective area and used across a range of military operations to deliver vehicles, personnel and cargo from sea-to-shore and back. These connectors provide a heavy-lift capability and can carry about the same payload capacity as several C-17 aircraft.

LCU is one of three shipbuilding programs in serial production at Austal USA’s facility. The company also has three Navy Navajo-class Towing, Salvage and Rescue ships (T-ATS) and two U.S. Coast Guard Heritage-class Offshore Patrol Cutters (OPC) under construction.

Navy Accepts Delivery of Ship to Shore Connector, Landing Craft, Air Cushion 114

By Team Ships Public Affairs, Aug. 29, 2025

NEW ORLEANS – The U.S. Navy accepted delivery of Ship to Shore Connector, Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) 114, from Textron Systems, August 28.

Delivery of LCAC 114 follows completion of acceptance trials and represents the official transfer of the craft from the shipbuilder to the Navy. During acceptance trials, the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey tested the readiness and capability of the craft to effectively meet requirements.

This addition to the fleet enhances Navy's amphibious capability, providing a vital asset for rapid deployment and logistical support.

"The delivery of LCAC 114 reinforces the urgency needed to deliver amphibious capabilities to the Navy and Marine Corps team," said Angela Bonner, acting program manager for Amphibious Assault and Connectors Programs, Program Executive Office (PEO) Ships.

The current LCAC is built with configurations, dimensions, and clearances similar to legacy LCACs—ensuring that it is fully compatible with existing well deck-equipped amphibious ships. LCACs can carry an approximate 60 to 75-ton payload and primarily transport weapon systems, equipment, cargo, and

assault element personnel through a wide range of conditions, including over-the-beach.

Textron Systems is currently in serial production on LCACs 115-126.

PEO Ships, one of the Department of Defense’s acquisition organizations, is responsible for executing the development and procurement of all destroyers, amphibious ships and craft, and auxiliary ships, including special mission ships, sealift ships and support ships.

Undersea Technology is a Top Priority for National Security Leaders

From the Undersea Technology Innovation Consortium, Sept. 2, 2025

NEWPORT, R.I. – The Undersea Technology Innovation Consortium (UTIC) reinforced its role as a leader in undersea defense innovation at SENEDIA's 11th annual Defense Innovation Days. The national event attracted nearly 400 influential defense decisionmakers and innovators.

"UTIC was proud to serve once again as a platinum sponsor for this important conference, which creates valuable opportunities for our members to connect, collaborate and

innovate," said Molly Donohue Magee, Chief Executive Officer of UTIC. "Our members displayed their cutting-edge technology that will provide solutions for future undersea challenges."

Government – Industry Collaboration

The sold-out event included panels and keynote speeches that touched upon the importance of government-industry collaboration and the need to move faster in the scaling of the technology that will maintain the United States' competitive advantage in undersea warfare.

"The battlespace is expanding from the seabed to space, in all oceans and seas across the globe. We must sustain our focus on the fleet needs to make certain our warfighters have the capabilities to dominate any fight, anywhere, any time," said Marie Bussiere, Technical Director at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Division Newport, as part of a panel discussion she moderated on undersea innovation. "To maintain the undersea advantage, we need to get solutions into the hands of the fleet faster."

Pathway to Procurement

UTIC manages the industry consortium for the U.S. Navy's Other Transaction Agreement (OTA), which provides members with the ability to rapidly research, test and prototype undersea and maritime technological innovations in support of Navy requirements.

Several speakers highlighted the U.S. Navy's increasing emphasis on the OTA as a tool for delivering the critical technology needed to enhance mission readiness.

"OTAs now make up 20% of the contracting portfolios spent at Division Newport, and that continues to increase. OTAs are now the first-look for contracting activities. We expect that there will be increased opportunities there," said Steve Lamb, Chief of the Contracting Office at the Naval Undersea Warfare

Center, Division Newport.

Sponsorships

More than a dozen UTIC members served as sponsors of Defense Innovation Days, supporting the event and in turn, promoting meaningful undersea tech innovation.

- Comark – A Division of SourceCode
- General Dynamics
- Globe Composite Solutions
- Granite State Manufacturing
- L3Harris Technologies
- Leidos
- McLaughlin Research Corporation
- Northrup Grumman
- Rite-Solutions
- RTX Corporation
- SEACORP

- SERCO
- Teledyne Marine
- Vatn Systems

Keel Authenticated for Future USS Wisconsin (SSBN 827)

GROTON, Conn. (Aug. 27, 2025) Dr. Kelly Geurts, ship sponsor of the future Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine USS Wisconsin (SSBN 827), welds her initials into the ship’s keel during its keel-laying ceremony under the supervision of General Dynamics Electric Boat welder Robert Ray Jr. The

future Wisconsin will be the second Columbia-class submarine, following the future USS District of Columbia (SSBN 826).
Release From Team Submarine Public Affairs, Aug. 28, 2025

GROTON, Conn. – The keel for the future USS Wisconsin (SSBN 827), a Columbia-class submarine, was laid during a ceremony on Aug. 27 at the General Dynamics Electric Boat Quonset Point facility in Kingstown, Rhode Island.

The keel laying ceremony signifies a major milestone in the life of a ship as it begins to transition from design to reality. The future Wisconsin will be the second Columbia-class submarine, following the future USS District of Columbia (SSBN 826).

“Our ballistic missile submarines are the most survivable leg of our nation’s nuclear triad; they are the ultimate guarantee that no adversary will ever miscalculate America’s resolve,” said Adm. William Houston, Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, in his keynote remarks. “From this keel, the Wisconsin will rise—an intricate structure of power, precision, and purpose. And just as the keel bears the weight of the ship, this vessel bears the weight of our nation’s most solemn responsibility: to deter war and preserve peace through strength.”

Houston directly addressed the workforce charged with building this intricate submarine. “To our shipbuilders, engineers and suppliers: your craftsmanship makes this possible,” said Houston. “You are laying not just a keel, but the foundation of security for generations to come.”

The submarine’s sponsor is Dr. Kelly Geurts, a retired educator and military spouse. Her husband, the Honorable James Geurts, is a former Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition.

This is the third Navy ship to bear the name Wisconsin. The original Wisconsin (BB-9), an Illinois-class pre-Dreadnought

battleship, was commissioned in 1901 and served as the flagship of the Pacific fleet until 1903. In 1908 the ship joined the Atlantic fleet for the trans-pacific leg of the Great White Fleet and was decommissioned in 1920.

Wisconsin (BB-64), an Iowa-class battleship, was commissioned in April 1944. The ship served in combat in the Pacific, notably at the Philippines, Iwo Jima, Okinawa and the final bombardments in Japan. Wisconsin was decommissioned after World War II and was later recommissioned for the Korean War serving until 1958. The ship was recommissioned once more in 1988 to participate in the Persian Gulf War before being decommissioned a final time, in 1991. The ship now operates as a museum battleship at Nauticus Berthing in Norfolk, Virginia.

The keel laying of future USS Wisconsin (SSBN 827) symbolizes the Navy's 250-year commitment to innovation and maritime dominance. From seabed to space, the Navy delivers power for peace – always ready to fight and win. This milestone marks the Navy's enduring legacy and commitment to shaping the future of maritime power.

Columbia-class submarines will replace the U.S. Navy's Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines. The Navy's ballistic missile submarines, often referred to as "boomers," serve as an undetectable launch platform for submarine-launched ballistic missiles. They are designed specifically for stealth and to provide an ensured second-strike capability forming the backbone of the Nation's strategic deterrence strategy.

For more information about Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines visit: https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2169580/fleet-ballistic-missile-submarines-ssbn/

National Security Leaders Underscore Need to Move at the Speed of Technology

For 11th Year, Defense Innovation Days Fosters Increased Collaboration in the Defense Industry

Release From SENEDIA, Aug. 28, 2025

NEWPORT, R.I. – SENEDIA, the Alliance for Defense Tech, Talent, and Innovation, yesterday concluded Defense Innovation Days, a signature national event that attracted nearly 400 of the most important decisionmakers and innovators in the defense industry.

“It is more important today than any time in our history that we have the capacity and skills to not only be competitive with other countries, but to far exceed them,” said Senator Jack Reed (RI), Ranking Member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Reed called on the defense industry leaders in attendance to continue to advance American innovation and security. “What you do ultimately ensures the safety and security of our men and women in uniform across the world. This is a common purpose we share.”

Distinguished speakers at the 11th annual sold-out event represented decades of experience across Navy, Army, Marine Corps, and private sector service, including RDML Peter Small, Chief Engineer and Commander of NAVSEA Warfare Centers; Dr. Andrew Erickson, Naval War College China Maritime Studies Institute; Dr. Michael Winter, Chief Scientist, RTX; COL David Brown (ret.), Naval War College Center for Irregular Warfare and Armed Groups; LtGen Eric E. Austin, Deputy Commander,

Combat Development and Integration, US Marine Corps Combat Development Command, and BG Chris Hackler, Deputy Commanding General, US Army Combat Capabilities Development Command.

Panels included “Future of the Surface Navy and Hybrid Fleet” and “Mastering the Depths: Navigating the Engineering Battlespace.”

Key takeaways from this year’s event are:

- The threat landscape is rapidly evolving, including the unprecedented acceleration of China’s military capabilities and a global rise in authoritarianism.

- Innovation in autonomous vehicles and undersea technology is essential to stay competitive and has redefined traditional warfare.

- The foundation for increased collaboration and innovation exists, and equally important must be the focus on scaling and speed to execution. The priority is a nimble and responsive defense ecosystem that can quickly get new and interoperable technologies into the hands of warfighters.

“More than a decade after we hosted the first Defense Innovation Days, SENEDIA continues to see the critical need to bring together industry and government, civilian and military leaders to connect, collaborate with one another, and ultimately innovate in service of our national security,” said Molly Donohue Magee, Chief Executive Officer of SENEDIA. “Investing in defense is an economic, workforce, and national security imperative.”

More from Defense Innovation Days

An Increasingly Challenging and Complex Environment

Rapid advancements in technology have made internal research and development processes more challenging and increased external and geopolitical pressures have likewise made the warfighting landscape more complex. A rise in authoritarianism around the globe represents a threat to American democracy – including from China.

Returning to Defense Innovation Days, Dr. Erickson provided a deep dive into changes in the Chinese military. He said that Chinese leader Xi Jinping has removed large numbers of military, defense, and political officials, but warned that it does not signal a slowdown. To the contrary, Erickson called it "the most dramatic military build-up since World War II."

"China's military capabilities development and operational readiness are clearly advancing rapidly across the board," he said. "The speed and scope are breathtaking. That is what needs to inform our dedication, our sense of purpose, and the missions to which we are directed."

Several speakers noted the importance of the workforce to maintain American dominance.

"The Navy faces an urgent imperative to increase our capabilities, and our people are our biggest asset," said RDML Small. "It's not just the trades we need to strengthen. We need to rebuild the national maritime engineering workforce. A tremendous national effort to rebuild this workforce is underway."

The Unmanned and Undersea Advantage

The United States submarine program is widely viewed as the greatest deterrent to American adversaries, and two panel discussions focused on undersea challenges and opportunities in an ever-changing maritime landscape. Several speakers used the ongoing conflict in the Black Sea as an illustration of

how maritime strategy is changing, where Ukraine has used naval drones to stave off a strong Russian Navy.

The Mastering the Depths panel was moderated by Marie Bussiere, the Technical Director of the Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Division Newport. She was joined on the stage by NUWC colleagues Mark Vacarro, Director of the Subsea and Seabed Warfare SSTM; Steve Plunkett, Next Generation Weapons and Defensive Systems SSTM; Steve Lamb, Chief of the Contracting Office, and CDR Shawn Stelzel of the Undersea Warfighting Development Center.

Collectively, they urged industry leaders – especially those who have yet to engage with NUWC – to consider delivering their best-in-class tools and technology for defense applications.

“To maintain the undersea advantage, we need to get solutions into the hands of the fleet faster,” Bussiere said.

On the Future of the Surface Navy and Hybrid Fleet panel, CAPT Colin Corridan (ret.), the former leader of Task Force 59, the Navy’s first maritime robotics and AI task force, moderated a panel that included Commander David Brannighan, Royal Navy, British Defence Staff USA, and Austin Gray, Co-Founder and CSO, Blue Water Autonomy.

One takeaway of the panel included a charge to industry to apply their solutions to national security and help ensure a high-low procurement strategy that is diversified between advanced yet expensive high-end systems and cheaper, more flexible low-end systems.

Moving at the Speed of Technology

Across all three days, multiple speakers talked about the need to move faster – from harnessing AI and new technology to developing and quickly scaling new capabilities – to ensure our warfighters have the systems and tools they need when they

need them.

Just as undersea technology has changed the maritime landscape, COL Brown (ret.) pointed to drones as a comparable example of how airpower has been democratized. Beyond weapons, he also warned about disinformation as a weapon of war and how increasingly convincing deepfakes are making it difficult for military leaders and civilians alike to distinguish the truth.

“We are entering an era of breathtaking technological advancement,” he said. “The warning of history is clear: Unless we adapt, the upheavals of the last century may pale in comparison to what lies ahead.”

LtGen Austin and BG Hackler agreed on the importance of government and industry collaboration.

Speed to execution must consider future changes in technology. Dr. Winter shared that RTX has introduced a new military engine nearly every decade over the last century. Looking forward, RTX and other Primes – as well as the supply chain companies that support them – must bring together the digital thread, relying on model-based systems engineering that allows for greater efficiency and responsiveness.

“It is critical that we build these tools with enough longevity and enough forethought,” he said.

Other speakers featured at Defense Innovation Days included Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (RI), Congressman Seth Magaziner (RI-02); and Congressman Gabe Amo (RI-01).

Thanks to Our Sponsors

Sponsors for Defense Innovation Days 2025 include Platinum Sponsors General Dynamics, RTX, and the Undersea Technology Innovation Consortium. Leidos served as Gold Sponsor and IM Technology, Quantic Electronics, Northrop Grumman, SAIC, and

SEACORP as Silver Sponsors.

The sponsors for the two evening receptions were Adler Pollock & Sheehan and Anduril, and Bronze Sponsors included AstrodyneTDI, Comark – a Division of SourceCode, Exail Defense Systems, FORCYS, Globe Composite Solutions, Granite State Manufacturing, Guill Tool & Engineering Company, L3Harris Technologies, McLaughlin Research Corporation, NeQter Labs, PacMar Technologies, Preveil, Retlif Testing Laboratories, Rite Solutions, Serco, Teledyne Marine, and VATN Systems.

Teledyne Brown Engineering Awarded $126.7M Contract to Advance Military Medical Readiness

Release from Teledyne

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. – August 27, 2025 – Teledyne Brown Engineering, a subsidiary of Teledyne Technologies Incorporated (NYSE: TDY), has been awarded a $126.7 million, five-year IDIQ contract by Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) Fleet Logistics Center Norfolk to support the Naval Health Research Center (NHRC). The contract supports continued development and enhancement of the NHRC's medical modeling and simulation tools, including the Joint Medical Planning Tool (JMPT) and Medical Planners' Toolkit (MPTk).

"These solutions help ensure the right care is delivered at the right time, to the right place, to support the warfighter," said Scott Hall, President of Teledyne Brown

Engineering. “We’re honored to continue our partnership with the NHRC and contribute to the mission of optimizing medical readiness.”

Used across the Department of Defense, JMPT and MPTk enable predictive analysis for casualty estimation, medical resource planning, and personnel support across combat, disaster relief, and humanitarian missions. Mandated by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and designated as tools of record by the U.S. Army and Marine Corps, these platforms are critical to operational readiness.

Teledyne Brown Engineering has provided continuous development and support for these tools since their inception for over 24 years.

Naval Aviation at Highest Readiness in Years, ‘Air Boss’ Said

The world’s largest aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), transits the North Sea, Aug. 23, 2025. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Tajh Payne)

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Virginia – U.S. naval aviation is at its highest readiness in years, a senior naval aviation admiral said to an audience in Washington and online.

Speaking Aug. 26 in an event of the U.S. Naval Institute and the Center for Strategic and International Studies sponsored by HII, Vice Admiral Daniel L. Cheever, commander Naval Air Forces and commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet – the Navy’s Air Boss’ – said the Naval Air Forces are “sustaining the readiness increases that we enjoyed” and “we’re at the “highest state of readiness we’ve had in at least 10 to 15 years back. And so, both carriers and the air wings with the carriers and our expeditionary forces are all at that heightened readiness.”

Cheever said that small pockets of challenges to readiness

remained, particularly with the management of the supply chain and sustainment,

“We have a good playbook,” he said. “When there is a challenge, we get after it, and we have a perform-to-plan that re-energizes and gets us back to where we should be for readiness, and that’s across the board. And it’s pretty exciting to be part of that. It’s a lot of hard work but it is totally worth it. The return on investment from all of that parts supply is in the readiness of the force.”

Cheever praised the F-35 Lightning II strike fighter as “a game changer, a difference maker in the fleet,” while noting that there are some supply-chain challenges that are being addressed.

He said that a mixture of 4th-, 5th-, and 6th-generation mix of carrier-based strike fighters with manned-unmanned teaming is the “right blend.”

The 6th-generation strike fighter is being designed to replace the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet strike fighter and the EA-18G Growler electronic attack aircraft.

Cheever offered no details of the concept for the 6th-generation strike fighter but said that “I see a maritime version of the aircraft that starts at the carrier, is made for the carrier, and is a complete carrier version … I’m looking forward to the down-select… because that 6th generation means air superiority in that timeframe in the future, which means sea control.”

He affirmed that aircraft carriers will be central to air superiority in the future for the Navy and America as a maritime nation.

He noted that the MQ-25 Stingray unmanned refueling aircraft will fly this year and be integrated with the aircraft carrier next year.

The air boss praised the design of the USS Gerald R. Ford, lead ship of the Navy's newest class of aircraft carriers. The position of the island superstructure is farther aft than on the Nimitz class produces less of an air burble for approaching aircraft. The increase of aircraft parking space forward of the island eases aircraft handling and enables an aircraft to park directly over a weapons elevator for weapons download.

He also noted that, unlike the Nimitz class carriers, the Gerald R. Ford is completely air conditioned.

Navy Announces Commissioning Date and Location for the Future USS Pierre

Credit: Austal USA
From Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Aug. 20, 2025

SAN DIEGO, California – The U.S. Navy will commission the future USS Pierre (LCS 38), an Independence-variant littoral combat ship, in Panama City, Florida, Nov. 15.

The naming of LCS 38 honors the legacy of the citizens of Pierre and the state of South Dakota and their support of the Navy and Marine Corps.

Ship sponsor and South Dakota native Larissa Thune Hargens will lead the time-honored Navy tradition of giving the order "man our ship and bring her to life!" during the ceremony. Pierre becomes a proud ship of the fleet at the moment when the commissioning pennant is hoisted.

Pierre is the 19th, and final, Independence-variant littoral combat ship (LCS) constructed. LCS 38 is the third ship named

in honor of South Dakota’s capital city, and the second Navy warship to bear the name. The SS Pierre Victory (VC2-S-AP3), a Victory-class cargo ship, distinguished itself during World War II by shooting down a kamikaze plane near Okinawa. The first Navy warship named USS Pierre was a PC-461-class submarine chaser, PC-1141, commissioned in 1943, renamed in 1946, and decommissioned in 1958.

The Pierre will transit to its new homeport in San Diego following commissioning.

LCS is a fast, agile, mission-focused warship designed to operate in near-shore environments to counter 21st-century threats. It is a class of small surface combatants armed with capabilities to defeat challenges in the world’s littorals. LCS can operate independently or in high-threat scenarios as part of a networked battle force that includes larger, multi-mission surface combatants such as cruisers and destroyers supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence in key operational theaters.

The mission of Commander, Naval Surface Force, Pacific Fleet is to man, train, and equip the Surface Force to provide fleet commanders with credible naval power to control the sea and project power ashore.