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NEWS



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[Release from Fairbanks Morse](#)

BELOIT, Wis. – September 26, 2023 – [Fairbanks Morse Defense](#) (FMD), a portfolio company of Arcline Investment Management (Arcline), is expanding its product and service capabilities through agreements with [Massa Products Corporation](#) (Massa) and

Industrias Ferri S.A. (Ferri).

Through its exclusive North American maritime defense agreement with Massa, a longstanding leader in cutting-edge design and manufacturing of sonar and ultrasonic products, Fairbanks Morse Defense expands its service capabilities with sonar transducer systems, cables, and connectors.

“Massa Products Corporation is excited to collaborate with FMD,” said Dawn F. Massa Stancavish, President/CEO & CINO, Massa Products Corporation. “We feel that competency is our bond at a time when our Navy needs to count on the industry to deliver high-quality reliable products and services in real-time.”

Industrias Ferri S.A. has supported maritime industry clients as a leading manufacturer of deck equipment and auxiliary machinery for over five decades. This sales and service agreement will expand the breadth of product and service offerings of Fairbanks Morse Defense by bolstering the company’s ability to provide U.S. Navy, Military Sealift Command, and U.S. Coast Guard customers with OEM equipment, parts, overhauls, and other services for accommodation ladders, gangways, and other deck machinery.

“Ferri is dedicated to providing high-quality manufacturing and support to the maritime industry. We have developed our technical expertise for over 50 years, and we look forward to bringing this knowledge and skill to our new collaboration with Fairbanks Morse Defense,” said Patricio Fernández, CEO, Industrias Ferri S.A.

In addition to providing support for turnkey service solutions for Fairbanks Morse Defense customers, Massa and Ferri will have access to FMD’s global network of highly trained field service technicians and the defense contractor’s strategically located service centers.

“Massa and Ferri are highly respected leaders in their fields,

and our collaborations with them increase our ability to respond quickly to our customer's needs with the right parts, services, and maintenance so they are always mission ready," said Jay McFadyen, Chief Commercial Officer and President of FMD Services.

Fairbanks Morse Defense currently powers more than 80% of the Navy's ships with medium-speed applications. The defense contractor has rapidly expanded its array of best-in-class marine technologies, OEM parts, and turnkey services for marine defense customers through expansion and the acquisitions of companies such as Ward Leonard, Hunt Valve, Maxim Watermakers, Federal Equipment Company, Research Tool & Die, and Welin Lambie. Additional exclusive product and service capability agreements can be found on the Fairbanks Morse Defense [website](#).

HENSOLDT Provides US Coast Guard with Naval Radars



[Release from HENSOLDT](#)

Follow-on contract to equip Legend-class National Security Cutters

ULM, Germany – 25 September 2023 – Sensor solutions provider HENSOLDT is equipping the US Coast Guard's Legend-class National Security Cutter (NSC) with its proven TRS-3D multi-mode naval radar. The US Coast Guard awarded HENSOLDT a follow-on contract worth approximately \$10 million to deliver a further radar in its latest 'Baseline D' version to be installed at the Coast Guard training center (TRACEN), Petaluma, California. Up to now, HENSOLDT has delivered 12 radars to the US Coast Guard's NSC program.

"With more than 50 radars in service with Coast Guards and Navies worldwide, our TRS-3D naval radar has proven itself", HENSOLDT CEO Thomas Müller says. "We are making sure that our customers capitalize on continuous technology enhancements."

The TRS-3D Baseline D, with the US designation AN/SPS-75,

utilizes gallium nitride (GaN) and solid-state emitter technology to deliver traditional TRS-3D robust performance while improving reliability and options for future development. HENSOLDT's TRS-3D radars have been aboard every NSC since the program's inception. TRS-3D is a three-dimensional, multi-mode naval radar for air and surface surveillance, target acquisition, self-defense, gunfire support and aircraft control. It automatically detects and tracks all types of air and sea targets, alleviating crew workload requirements.

HENSOLDT has decades of experience in radar and actively drives the further development of key technologies in this field. In addition to naval and ground-based air defence radars, the company's portfolio also includes fighter radars as well as ground surveillance and space radars.

USS Bunker Hill
Decommissioned



SAN DIEGO (Sept. 22, 2023) – The crew of the Ticonderoga class guided-missile cruiser USS Bunker Hill (CG 52) stand at attention during the ship's decommissioning ceremony. Bunker Hill was decommissioned after more than 37 years of distinguished service. Commissioned Sept. 20, 1986, Bunker Hill served in the U.S. Pacific Fleet and supported Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm, and participated in the establishment of Operation Southern Watch. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Claire M. DuBois)

[Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet](#)

From Julie Ann Ripley

22 September 2023

SAN DIEGO – USS Bunker Hill (CG 52), the 11th ship of the Ticonderoga class guided-missile cruiser, recognized more than 37 years of naval service during a decommissioning ceremony at Naval Base San Diego, Sept. 22.

During the ceremony guest speaker, Bunker Hill's second

commanding officer, Vice Adm. Rodney Rempt, USN, Ret., wished the current crew fair winds and following seas as they bid farewell to their ship.

Bunker Hill's final commanding officer, Capt. Jason Rogers reflected on the service of his crew and those who came before, addressing the decommissioning of this distinguished vessel.

"With great pride, I acknowledge the dedication and valor of the sailors who served aboard this ship for the past 37 years," said Rogers. "The USS Bunker Hill's legacy is a testament to our commitment to national security. As we lower the flag one final time, we honor the past while embracing the Navy's future. Our sailors' unwavering dedication and the ship's service will never be forgotten. Today's decommissioning ceremony, September 22, 2023, marks the end of an era, but the spirit of Bunker Hill lives on in all of us."

Capt. Rogers also retired from active service during the ceremony. Marine 1st Lt. Mathieu Rogers, assigned to 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, reflected on his father's lifelong guidance. "You demonstrated that finding your passion and sticking to it, not giving up," said 1st Lt. Rogers turning to his father, "is not only a rewarding thing to do, it's the right thing to do."

Bunker Hill maintained a crew of 40 officers, 31 chiefs, and 300 enlisted Sailors. The ship was built in Pascagoula, Mississippi, by Ingalls Shipyard Company and commissioned Sept. 20, 1986, at Charlestown in Boston. It was the first U.S. surface warship to be equipped with the below-deck, advanced MK 41 Vertical Launching System (VLS), a multi-warfare missile-launching system capable of striking targets in the air, on and under the ocean surface, and on land.

Bunker Hill operated in the North Arabian Sea and Gulf of

Oman, supporting 10 Earnest Will convoys in 1987. The ship arrived in its new homeport of Naval Base Yokosuka, Japan the following year. At the end of January 1991 the ship launched its first Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles (TLAMs), a total of 28, against targets in Iraq from its station in the North Arabian Gulf, in support of Operation Desert Storm. It also supported Operations Desert Shield. In 2008, it was one of the Coalition ships from the British-led Combined Task Force (CTF) 150 maintaining a presence off the east coast of Africa in response to the recent events in Somalia. The following year it was the first guided-missile cruiser to receive a complete set of upgrades as part of the Navy's Cruiser Modernization program including a new Aegis Weapons System, the Cooperative Engagement Capability (CEC), and SPQ-9B Radar. The guided-missile cruiser made full speed from off the coast of Panama to reach Haiti, joining U.S. military efforts on the Caribbean island devastated by a massive earthquake in 2010.

The first and second U.S. Navy ships named Bunker Hill honored the Revolutionary War battle fought primarily on adjacent Breed's Hill at Charlestown, Massachusetts, on June 17, 1775.

The battle occurred in the midst of the larger siege of the city of Boston, when the Americans learned that the British intended to deploy troops to some of the heights surrounding the city in order to command its vital harbor. Nearly 1,200 patriots marched stealthily onto the peninsula on the night of the 16th and 17th and dug defensive positions. Despite the colonists' secrecy, the British detected the move and their ships and batteries opened fire on the positions while they landed troops to carry the newly established works. American reinforcements during the battle raised their strength to about 2,400 men, and the British to more than 3,000, though not all the men on either side took a direct part in the fighting. American snipers in Charlestown harassed the British until their ships fired incendiary shot that set much of the town ablaze. In the meanwhile, the British resolutely

assaulted the colonist's positions twice, and both times the patriots, with equal resolution, fired into the regulars and Royal Marines and scythed them down. The British regrouped and attacked a third time as the patriots began to run out of ammunition, and finally drove the Americans back at the point of the bayonet. The Americans inflicted twice the number of casualties on their assailants—an estimated 450 patriots fell as opposed to 1,054 regulars and Royal Marines. The colonist's valiant defiance imbued them with confidence that they could stand up to the British, while the crown's losses shook their officers and they often maneuvered prudently to avoid direct assaults against entrenched patriots in subsequent battles.

The decommissioning of CG 52 supports department-wide business process reform initiatives to free up time, resources, and manpower in support of increased lethality.

Modern U.S. Navy guided-missile cruisers perform primarily in a Battle Force role. These ships are multi-mission surface combatants capable of supporting carrier battle groups, amphibious forces or operating independently and as flagships of surface action groups. Cruisers are equipped with Tomahawk cruise missiles giving them additional long range strike warfare capability. Some Aegis Cruisers have been outfitted with a Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) capability.

The mission of CNSP 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.

VCNO Hosts 25th International Seapower Symposium in Newport



Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti welcomed international heads of Navy and Coast Guard from nearly 100 nations at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, September 19-22, for the 25th International Seapower Symposium (ISS).

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

NEWPORT, R.I. – Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti welcomed international heads of Navy and Coast Guard from nearly 100 nations at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, September 19-22, for the 25th International Seapower Symposium (ISS).

First held in Newport in 1969, and biennially thereafter, ISS offers a forum for dialogue between international navies, coast guards, and the Marine Corps to bolster maritime security by providing opportunities to collaborate, develop trust, and further navy-to-navy training.

“Every Navy and Coast Guard represented here contributes to the stability of the global maritime commons,” said Franchetti. “Whether you are countering drug trafficking, human smuggling, illicit weapons transfers, illegal and unregulated fishing or piracy, policing territorial waters, delivering humanitarian aid, food, or medicine to people in need, assisting mariners stranded at sea, escorting cargo transports or tankers, or deploying forces forward, each nation here is a vital link in the chain that forms the global maritime security network.”

Throughout this year’s symposium, themed “Security Through Partnership,” panels and speakers highlighted the multinational role of allies and partners in competition, crisis, and conflict.

“We have the opportunity to choose engagement over withdrawal, to promote integration over fragmentation, to favor inclusion over exclusion, to champion collaboration over protectionism, and to choose principles over sheer power, as the basis for a partnership that benefits everyone,” said Franchetti.

In addition to VCNO, delegates heard remarks from Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro, U.S. Ambassador to Australia Caroline Kennedy, and U.S. Naval War College President Rear Adm. Peter Garvin.

“The United States has always been a maritime nation,” said Kennedy. “From our earliest days, our history was shaped by the sea. As an Atlantic and Pacific power dependent on trade and commerce, the U.S. Navy has always been at the center of our national identity, working to explore and understand the

oceans, and keep the seas free and open for all.”

The symposium included three regional briefs, four panels, and featured delegates from more than 35 countries through a variety of presentations throughout the week.

Some topics and interest areas discussed included seabed infrastructure; illegal, unreported, and unregulated maritime activity; artificial intelligence; and people. Secretary Del Toro conveyed the significance of discussing these topics as a group.

“It’s important to recognize that the dialogues we had this week doesn’t end at the closing ceremony. Our entire department is excited to continue engaging with each nation long after we leave Newport,” said Del Toro. “It’s in our collective interest to work together in defense of our shared ideals and preserve a maritime common that is free and open for all to use for the benefit of every nation around the globe.”

The War College also hosted a technology demonstration consisting of seven exhibit stations showcasing cutting edge U.S. Navy unmanned technology capabilities. ISS delegates had the opportunity to witness real-world applications for selected equipment, gaining concrete technical knowledge, and interacting directly with U.S. Navy subject matter experts.

As the week concluded, Franchetti thanked the delegates and their spouses for their trust and confidence in the U.S. Navy as a maritime partner.

“The United States Navy is truly honored to have been able to host you here in Newport, and it was a great privilege for me personally to have spent the last few days with you,” remarked Franchetti. “This symposium is one of the most important events our Navy does, and it’s so meaningful because all of you choose to invest your time and share your thoughts with one another.”

The next International Seapower Symposium will be held in Newport in 2025.

SECNAV Hosts New Department of the Navy Science & Technology Board



[Release from the Secretary of the Navy Public Affairs](#)

25 September 2023

On Sept. 22, Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro hosted Department of the Navy Science and Technology Board (DON STB) Chair former Secretary of the Navy Dr. Richard Danzig and members for their first meeting at the Pentagon.

During an open session, Secretary Del Toro welcomed and swore in the board. In addition, he shared how the board came about, why its work is important to the future of our Navy and Marine Corps, and what his expectations were for the board.

Secretary Del Toro outlined his vision and mission for the board and expressed the importance of the expertise of the members, highlighting their diversity of disciplines, of expertise and studies, of professional backgrounds and networks, and diversity in their unique personal experiences as citizens of our great nation.

The Secretary also noted that the board is unlike any Navy science and technology boards of the past—both in terms of the challenges presented for consideration as well as the makeup of the board itself.

Secretary Del Toro charged members, as thought leaders in their respective disciplines, with exploring the cutting edge technologies the DON is aware of and involved in – as well as the technologies in which the DON is not involved, assessing how they will impact warfighting in all domains – at, above, and below the ocean’s surface, ashore, as well as space and cyberspace.

Read Secretary Del Toro’s full remarks [online](#).

Unmanned Surface Vessel Division One Makes Its First

Port Visit in Yokosuka, Japan



The unmanned surface vessel Ranger transits the Pacific Ocean during Integrated Battle Problem (IBP) 23.2, Sep. 7, 2023. IBP 23.2 is a Pacific Fleet exercise to test, develop and evaluate the integration of unmanned platforms into fleet operations to create warfighting advantages. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jesse Monford)

[From By U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs](#)

21 September 2023

YOKOSUKA, Japan – The unmanned surface vessels (USVs) Ranger and Mariner from Unmanned Surface Vessel Division ONE (USVDIV-1) arrived at Fleet Activities Yokosuka on Sept. 18 as part of a scheduled port visit during Integrated Battle Problem (IBP) 23.2.

IBP 23.2 launched this August and is the third multi-domain unmanned capabilities exercise under U.S. Pacific Fleet's Experimentation Plan following IBP 23.1 earlier this year. The event will focus on testing and developing capabilities and concepts for medium and large USVs to advanced manned-unmanned teaming in the Indo-Pacific.

"Unmanned and autonomous technologies are key to growing our distributed maritime operations framework," said Rear Adm. Blake L. Converse, deputy commander of U.S. Pacific Fleet, who visited the USVs last month on Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. "By proliferating our presence in the Pacific and increasing the fleet's situational awareness and lethality, we give ourselves more options to make better decisions at all levels of leadership."

Before arriving in Yokosuka, USVDIV-1 also participated in the Navy and Marine Corps' [Large Scale Exercise 2023](#). During the exercise, USVs have integrated with Carrier Strike Group One to expand its maritime domain awareness in support of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN-70).

"Through the integration of unmanned platforms in our operations, we continue to forge a culture of learning and innovation within our Navy and with joint partners to deliver warfighting advantage," said Rear Adm. Carlos Sardiello, commander, Carrier Strike Group 1. "Testing and integrating emerging technologies in a demanding, real-world operational environment is vital to providing feedback that informs our progress in this domain."

The exercise allows USVDIV-1, the command in tactical control of the exercise, to work closely with type commanders to develop concepts of operations for unmanned platforms.

“Our approach is focused on integrating, exercising, and refining tactics, techniques, and procedures for immediate application into real world operations with the fleet.” said Cmdr. Jeremiah Daley, commanding officer of USVDIV-1.

“Since standing up USVDIV-1 as a pre-commissioning unit in 2021, we continue to turn fleet feedback from exercises into adapting technology and requirement generation in order to provide realistic and impactful capabilities that future USV programs of record will bring to the Navy.”

The port visit marks the first time any U.S. Navy USV has visited Japan as IBP 23.2 is the first exercise to employ USVs in the 7th Fleet area of responsibility. Following the visit, IBP 23.2 will continue to test, develop and evaluate the integration of unmanned platforms into fleet operations alongside partners and allies to create warfighting advantages and ensure regional security and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

MDSU-1 DIVES THE ARCTIC WITH U.S. COAST GUARD



BEAUFORT SEA (August 11, 2023) A military diver swims behind the icebreaker USCGC Healy (WAGB 20) during a scientific mission in the Beaufort Sea with USCG divers of Regional Dive Locker West and Navy divers of Mobile Dive and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 1 Aug. 11, 2023. Together, the Coast Guard and Navy conducted 42 military dives, totaling 656 minutes of bottom time to depths of 40 feet in the Arctic Ocean. As a component of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group One, MDSU-1 provides ready, expeditionary, rapidly deployable mobile diving and salvage companies to conduct harbor and waterway clearance, salvage, underwater search and recovery, and underwater emergency repairs in any environment. (U.S. Navy Courtesy Photo)

[Release from U.S. Fleet Forces Command](#)

BEAUFORT SEA – Navy Divers assigned to Mobile Dive and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 1 trained in one of the most remote parts of the world this summer – under the polar ice cap of the Arctic Circle.

Chief Navy Diver Zachary Hanson, MDSU-1 master diver and his team got underway aboard the icebreaker USCGC Healy (WAGB 20)

in Seattle to conduct ice diving operations alongside U.S. Coast Guard divers. During their time aboard, Hanson and his team also provided training on the decompression chamber they brought with them.

“They [the Coast Guard] don’t have a decompression chamber, but they’re getting one,” said Hanson. “We let them use ours for this mission conducted for the Office of Naval Research (ONR), and we helped train the Coastguardsmen divers on the operation, maintenance and transport of a decompression chamber.”

Joint training operations like this help build interoperability between services in addition to innovating new tactics, techniques and procedures in an environment as challenging as the Arctic Circle.

ONR and Healy’s mission was to observe arctic ice. They used stationary weather buoys equipped with multiple devices to monitor the ocean, weather and the ice to better understand the Arctic environment, its importance to the world, and how to defend it.

During the mission, Hanson learned about the Arctic’s diverse biosphere, which works to sustain life both above and below the massive ice sheet.

“Most people would think the Arctic wouldn’t have any life under the ice, but when we were under there, we saw jellyfish and some kind of shrimp or krill,” said Hanson.

The MDSU-1 team is uniquely qualified to support this type of mission. Hanson and his team used dry suits designed to protect divers against hypothermia while submerged in 30-degree water. The team also used a dual manifold/dual regulator system to ensure they could continue to breathe from their tanks if one of their regulators froze over and a special tool that helped keep everyone safe underwater.

"We've got an ice screw we can use if one of us gets lost under the ice," Hanson said. "Basically, you push it into the ice and hang onto it. With the strobe light on the back of our tanks, it's easy to see someone because the water under the ice is so clear."

Looking at polar ice from above the water, it might be easy to forget the ice is floating because it reflects up to 80% of sunlight, according to the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration. However, the light shining through the ice causes a brightening effect.

"It's got to be the clearest water I've ever dived in my life," Hanson said. "This time of year, there's sunlight 24 hours a day, and from under the ice, the light is a perfect white, like a kind of fluorescent light. This is because the ice is diffusing the sunlight and mixes with the perfect blue of the water, but when you're looking at deep water, the blue is only in your peripheral vision. Everything you look at straight on turns black. It's very surreal."

According to Hanson, most arctic dives are incredibly remote, and while some could argue the Beaufort Sea is as remote as it gets, the MDSU-1 divers had a unique lifeline right at hand.

"We're trained to call the Coast Guard if a diver gets in trouble," Hanson said. "But in this case, we were diving right off the side of a Coast Guard cutter, so we might have been in a super remote place, but the exact people we count on for help were right there."

As a component of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group (EODGRU) 1, MDSU-1 provides ready, expeditionary, rapidly deployable mobile diving and salvage companies to conduct harbor and waterway clearance, salvage, underwater search and recovery, and underwater emergency repairs in any environment.

Australian P-8A Poseidon Fleet to Receive Upgrades



[Release from Naval Air Systems Command](#)

Sep 20, 2023

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md.—Australia recently announced the Royal Australian Air Force's (RAAF) fleet of P-8A Poseidon Maritime Patrol and Response aircraft will be upgraded to Increment Three Block Two, the latest capability upgrade available for the aircraft. The upgrade will enhance anti-submarine warfare, strike and intelligence capabilities.

"The Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft Program Office (PMA-290) works closely every day with our Australian

teammates to promote international security and enhance interoperability, and this upgrade will set us up for future success in these endeavors,” said Capt. Eric Gardner, program manager of PMA-290.

The first aircraft is expected to begin upgrades in 2026 with the final aircraft to be completed in 2030. The upgraded P-8A Poseidon aircraft will continue to be operated by RAAF’s No. 11 Squadron at RAAF Base Edinburgh, South Australia.

The RAAF declared initial operating capability for the P-8A in March 2018. The fleet currently consists of 12 aircraft. In December 2020, the Commonwealth announced the acquisition of an additional two aircraft through its existing cooperative program with the U.S. Navy. The upgrade will ensure the RAAF P-8A’s operational effectiveness into the 2030s. Through cooperative programs such as the P-8A, the U.S. and Australian militaries continue to enjoy more than 100 years of “mateship.”

PMA-290 manages the acquisition, development, support, and delivery of the Navy’s maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft.

**HII’s Ingalls Shipbuilding
Authenticates Keel of
Amphibious Assault Ship
Fallujah (LHA 9)**



[Release from HII](#)

PASCAGOULA, Miss., Sept. 20, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII’s (NYSE: HII) Ingalls Shipbuilding division authenticated the keel today for the *America*-class amphibious ship *Fallujah* (LHA 9). The ship’s sponsor, Donna Berger, former first lady of the Marine Corps and spouse of Gen. David H. Berger, 38th commandant of the Marine Corps, was in attendance to declare the keel “truly and fairly laid.”

During the authentication ceremony Ingalls Welder Seveta Gray welded the initials of the sponsor onto a ceremonial keel plate that will remain with the ship throughout its life.

“Ingalls is honored to mark this important milestone with our shipbuilders and so many of our critical partners here today,” Ingalls Shipbuilding President Kari Wilkinson said. “Whether representing namesake, customer, community or shipyard, today’s keel event demonstrates the unique connection we have to one another through this industry and through our respective devotion to service.”

Photos accompanying this release are available at: <https://hii.com/news/hii-ingalls-shipbuilding-authenticates-keel-fallujah-lha-9>.

Ingalls was pleased to host Under Secretary of the Navy Erik Raven who also provided remarks at the ceremony.

“The USS *Fallujah*, like her predecessors the USS *America*, USS *Tripoli* and USS *Bougainville*, will one day join the amphibious fleet, and serve as the centerpiece for amphibious ready groups and Marine Expeditionary Units,” Raven said. “L-class ships like the future USS *Fallujah* make our Navy and Marine Corps a potent fighting team, forward-postured around the globe, ready to respond to crisis and disaster.”

The future USS *Fallujah* (LHA 9) is the fourth *America*-class large-deck amphibious assault ship built at Ingalls Shipbuilding and the second ship in the class to be built with a well deck. Similar to *Bougainville*, *Fallujah* will retain the aviation capability of the *America*-class design while adding the surface assault capability of a well deck and a larger flight deck configured for F-35B Joint Strike Fighter and MV-22 Osprey aircraft. These large-deck amphibious assault ships also include top-of-the-line medical facilities with full operating suites and triage capabilities.

The *America* class is a multi-functional and versatile ship that is capable of operating in a high density, multi-threat environment as an integral member of an expeditionary strike group, an amphibious task force or an amphibious ready group.

Ingalls has delivered 15 large-deck amphibious ships to the U.S. Navy. The shipyard delivered the first in the new *America* class of amphibious assault ships (LHA 6) in 2014. The second ship in the *America* class, USS *Tripoli* (LHA 7), was delivered to the Navy in early 2020 and *Bougainville* (LHA 8) and *Fallujah* (LHA 9) are currently under construction.

Targeting Capability a Priority for Navy's Triton UAV



By [Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor](#)

ARLINGTON, Va. — Equipping the Navy's MQ-4C Triton high-altitude, long-endurance unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) with a targeting capability is a priority that would enhance the system's capabilities to support distributed maritime operations, the UAV's builder said.

The MQ-4C with the multi-intelligence Integrated Functional Capability 4 (IFC-4) achieved Initial Operational Capability

(IOC) earlier this month when Unmanned Patrol Squadron 19 (VUP-19) deployed a detachment to Guam to establish an orbit. The squadron had deployed a two-aircraft detachment to Guam in 2020 for Early Operational Capability (EOC) with the IFC-3 configuration.

Rho Cauley Bruner, Northrop Grumman's Triton program director, said in an interview with Seapower that her program office is now "fully immersed in delivering [the IFC-4] configuration" in both retrofits to earlier-produced Tritons and "now we're at that stage in the production line where we're building the IFC-4 configuration from the ground up."

"As we look to the future, one of the things that's really important to us is to have the system be as readily modifiable to accommodate threats as they develop and technologies as they mature, so, in partnership with the U.S. Navy, we continue to execute our strategy for advanced development," Bruner said. "That would enable advanced capabilities insertion and mission expansion to keep pace with the threat."

Triton sensors and other mission systems were deployed on a surrogate aircraft—a flying test bed—for targeting missions during Exercise Northern Edge.

"The goal of that was to demonstrate persistent long-range targeting capability," Bruner said. "That demo was done around the Gulf of Alaska and really did demonstrate that Triton has incredible potential to enhance that Distributed Maritime Operations concept that has been evolving over the last several years."

"Adding the targeting capability to Triton [is] going to be a priority for our customer," she said.

The Navy's program of record currently is 27 MQ-4Cs, including the three development aircraft (including one formerly owned by Northrop Grumman for development), the two initial IFC-3 EOC aircraft, and 22 production versions. Australia, a key

partner in the Triton program, is procuring four Tritons for the Royal Australian Air Force.

Bruner said that “we believe that six to seven Tritons would be optimal to help Australia conduct surveillance in its areas of interest.”

The U.S. Navy plans to establish three orbits with its Triton UAV force and establish a second squadron, VUP-11, in fiscal 2026.