

Historic First – U.S. Nuclear-Powered Submarine Conducts Port Visit in Iceland

[By U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa Public Affairs](#)

GRUNDARTANGI, Iceland – The Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS Newport News (SSN 750) conducted a port visit in Iceland, marking the first time a nuclear-powered submarine pulls into port on Iceland’s shores, July 9, 2025.

“Today’s port visit is a pivotal moment, underscoring our unwavering commitment to collective defense and Arctic security,” said Adm. Stuart B. Munsch, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa (NAVEUR/NAVAF). “Our submarine forces are advanced and vital to ensuring the security of our nations and our Alliance – patrolling the depths and providing a deterrent in an increasingly complex and contested world.”

USS Newport News’ arrival is a significant step from 2023, when Iceland welcomed the first U.S. nuclear-powered submarine into their waters.

“The United States and Iceland maintain the shared goal of low tension in the Arctic, with full awareness of Russia’s efforts to build its military presence in the region,” said Erin Sawyer, Chargé d’affaires a.i. at the U.S. Embassy in Iceland. “Deep coordination with our incredible NATO ally Iceland to achieve this historic visit demonstrates our commitment to freedom of navigation and the security of our allies in the region.”

The visit not only underscores shared security goals but also showcases the dedication and skill of the U.S. Navy’s

submarine force.

“It is an incredible honor for our submarine and crew to make history today with our cherished Ally, Iceland,” said Cmdr. Eric McCay, commanding officer of USS Newport News. “The Sailors on USS Newport News are dedicated, top-performing submariners who are truly excited to be here. In 36 years, this ship has earned 3 Arctic Service Ribbons, a service medal awarded for service performed above the Arctic Circle – a true demonstration of our submarine’s commitment and dedication to safeguarding this region.”

Fast-attack submarines are multi-mission platforms enabling five of the six Navy maritime strategy core capabilities – sea control, power projection, forward presence, maritime security and deterrence. They are designed to excel in anti-submarine warfare, anti-ship warfare, strike warfare, special operations, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, irregular warfare and mine warfare. Fast-attack submarines project power ashore with special operations forces and Tomahawk cruise missiles in the prevention or response to regional crises.

For over 80 years, NAVEUR/NAVAF has forged strategic relationships with Allies and partners, leveraging a foundation of shared values to preserve security and stability. Headquartered in Naples, Italy, NAVEUR/NAVAF operates U.S. naval forces in the U.S. European Command and U.S. Africa Command areas of responsibility.

RTX's Raytheon demonstrates

autonomous capabilities of its Barracuda mine neutralizer



Testing proves maturity as program moves closer to initial operational capability

From RTX

PORTSMOUTH, R.I. (July 8, 2025) – Raytheon, an RTX (NYSE: RTX) business, has successfully demonstrated its Barracuda mine neutralization vehicle in an untethered, semi-autonomous operation for the first time during recent open water testing in Narragansett Bay.

During the demonstration, Raytheon’s Barracuda proved its ability to autonomously navigate, communicate, detect and identify targets, and operate independently underwater.

“This recent testing demonstrates the significant strides we’ve made in advancing mine countermeasure technology,” said

Barbara Borgonovi, president of Naval Power at Raytheon. “Barracuda’s capabilities will dramatically improve safety and efficiency for the U.S. Navy, keeping sailors out of harm’s way while effectively addressing underwater threats.”

Barracuda is the newest U.S. Navy program of record for mine neutralization. It is the first untethered, semi-autonomous mine neutralization system capable of tracking and identifying bottom, volume and near-surface mines with man-in-the-loop delivering a final decision for neutralization. The program started in research and development within Raytheon’s Advanced Technology business segment – a group of innovators that matures technologies that are incorporated into Raytheon products including franchise programs such as LTAMDS and SPY-6.

In line with the Navy’s acquisition plan, Raytheon’s Barracuda is on track to achieve initial operational capability and low-rate initial production by 2030. In addition to executing mine neutralization missions, the company is investing in developing a larger and more advanced variant to meet different mission sets such as subsea and seabed warfare.

USS Gabrielle Giffords Arrives in Seattle in Homeport Change



Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords (LCS 10) transits San Diego Bay past Point Loma, June 23, 2025. The ship recently returned from a deployment to the 7th Fleet area of operations (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kassandra Alanis) From Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, June 28, 2025

SEATTLE – The Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords (LCS 10) departed Naval Base San Diego June 23 and arrived at its new homeport of Seattle June 28, following an 18-month rotational deployment to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations.

While on deployment, the Gabrielle Giffords conducted presence operations and engagements with allies and partners throughout the region to maintain a secure and prosperous Indo-Pacific.

“Gabrielle Giffords has arrived safely in Washington, and we are grateful for a welcoming community.” said Capt. Jose Roman, commodore, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron One.

In the early months of 2024, the Gabrielle Giffords conducted operations with the Philippine Navy offshore patrol vessel BRP Gregorio del Pilar (PS 15) in the South China Sea. The Gabrielle Giffords, while part of Destroyer Squadron 7 in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations, increased interoperability with allies and partners and served as a ready-response force in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

The Gabrielle Giffords participated in CARAT Thailand 2024 alongside the Royal Thai Navy and the Republic of Singapore Navy. CARAT, in its 30th iteration, promoted regional security cooperation, maintained and strengthened maritime partnerships, and enhanced maritime interoperability. It included anti-submarine warfare training, air defense exercises, and surface action group coordination.

The Gabrielle Giffords has both a Blue crew and a Gold crew, which alternate being “on-hull” aboard the ship and “off-hull” conducting training in San Diego. The ship successfully sustained a longer-than-usual deployment because of the hard work of both crews.

Littoral combat ships (LCS) are fast, optimally manned, mission-tailored surface combatants that operate in near-shore and open-ocean environments, deterring 21st-century threats. LCS integrate with joint, combined, manned, and unmanned teams to support forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence missions around the globe.

For more news from Commander, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron 1, visit <https://www.surfpac.navy.mil/comlcsron1/> or follow on Facebook at www.facebook.com/COMLCSRONONE/

USNS Comfort Arrives in Manta, Ecuador



[By U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command / U.S. 4th Fleet Public Affairs Continuing Promise Detachment, July 4, 2025](#)

The Mercy-class hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) arrived in Manta, Ecuador for the third mission stop of Continuing Promise 2025 (CP 25), July 4, 2025.

“We look forward to building upon our relationship with Ecuador through medical care and exchanges, community relations events, and experiencing the vibrant culture of Manta,” said Capt. Ryan Kendall, commodore, Destroyer Squadron 40 and CP 25 mission commander. “Our combined efforts to enhance readiness and strengthen our partnership will lead to a safer, more secure region.”

This visit marks the fifth Continuing Promise visit to Ecuador, as well as the fifth visit aboard Comfort. While in Ecuador, Comfort team will conduct direct patient medical care aboard Comfort and at various medical sites throughout the region. Services provided in conjunction with medical representatives from Ecuador will include general medicine, dentistry, optometry, ophthalmology, pediatric care, internal medicine, women’s health, cardiology, dermatology, physiotherapy, and various subject matter expert exchanges focused on humanitarian aid and disaster relief.

“We are pleased to welcome the USNS Comfort to Ecuador,” said Mr. Lawrence Petroni, Chargé d’Affaires, U.S. Embassy in Ecuador. “This ship’s visit to Manabí exemplifies the United States’ enduring partnership with Ecuador and our comprehensive approach to security cooperation. Beyond delivering essential medical care, the mission will fortify communities by supporting local programs that steer youth away from organized crime through service, education, and health initiatives. These efforts reinforce our shared commitment to lasting regional stability.”

In addition to medical and dental care, veterinarians from the

U.S. Army 248th Medical Detachment Veterinary Service Support will conduct canine tactical combat care seminars as well as a cattle ranching symposium.

The Comfort team will also participate in community relations projects including beautification of Verdi Cevallos Hospital and Gil Pinto School, beach cleanups, and soccer and volleyball games to build camaraderie beyond the scope of medical aid.

“Being able to bring Sailors to experience these foreign interactions helps strengthen our team aboard the Comfort,” said Religious Program Specialist Seaman Apprentice Julian Ventura. “I hope these engagements that help foreign communities also help our Sailors find their purpose as we build relationships during Continuing Promise.”

Ventura shares a similar outlook to Steel Worker 2nd Class Jonas Bresette, who is assigned to Comfort from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 11. NMCB 11's, also known as Seabees, mission is focused on construction and engineering to support military operations and disaster relief efforts worldwide.

“After our recent work in Panama, the shift of dynamic will be focused on more hands-on training with our Ecuadorian counterparts, in addition to working alongside them,” said Bresette,

the detachment safety supervisor for NMCB 11. “I’m very excited to be able to explore the native culture and experience the city of Manta.”

In Ecuador, the Seabees plans to complete engineering and utilities projects at the Escuela Republica Del Ecuador and Unidad Educativa El Porvenir schools in Manta.

CP25 marks the 16th mission to the region since 2007 and the eighth aboard Comfort. The mission will foster goodwill,

strengthen existing partnerships with partner nations, and encourage the establishment of new partnerships among countries, non-federal entities, and international organizations.

CP is committed to assisting host nation efforts to provide vital medical care in the South American region that have limited access and promoting independence in case of medical disasters and emergencies through subject matter expert exchanges.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet supports U.S. Southern Command's joint and combined military operations by employing maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships in order to enhance regional security and promote peace, stability and prosperity in the Caribbean, Central and South American region.

Learn more about USNAVSOUTH/4th Fleet news and photos, visit [facebook.com/NAVSOUTH4THFLT](https://www.facebook.com/NAVSOUTH4THFLT), <https://www.fourthfleet.navy.mil/>, X [@NAVSOUTH4THFLT](https://twitter.com/NAVSOUTH4THFLT), and <https://www.linkedin.com/company/u-s-naval-forces-southern-command-u-s-4th-fleet>

Delaware Returns Home from Deployment



NAVAL SUBMARINE BASE NEW LONDON, Conn. (July 5, 2025) The crew of the Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS Delaware (SSN 791) gathers top-side for a command photo as the boat returns to Naval Submarine Base New London, Conn., July 5, 2025, following a six-month deployment to the U.S. European Command area of responsibility. (U.S. Navy photo by MCC Darren M. Moore)

[Release From Chief Petty Officer Darren Moore](#)

GROTON, Connecticut – The Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS Delaware (SSN 791), under the command of Cmdr. Jason Patton, returned to Naval Submarine Base New London Saturday, July 5, completing a six-month deployment to U.S. European Command area of responsibility.

Cmdr. Jason Patton praised his crew and their commitment to projecting power across the globe.

“The crew of USS Delaware is a group of outstanding professional submariners,” said Patton, from Laramie, Wyoming. “We were deployed for 205 days and we spent 194 of those at sea accomplishing our nation’s tasking. That wouldn’t have

been possible without teamwork, dedication, and tenacity from every Sailor onboard. I'm extremely proud of their accomplishments and lucky to be a part of such a great crew."

Patton also credited the crew's accomplishments to those who were not underway with them.

"I would be remiss for mentioning the crew's accomplishments without acknowledging the world class support from our loved ones back home," Patton said. "While we battled the rough seas and cold they fought through countless home emergencies, car problems, and parenting moments. We are grateful for their steadfast resolve and are ecstatic to be home with them again."

Delaware steamed more than 42,000 nautical miles and made port calls to Haakonsvern, Norway.

During its deployment, Delaware completed the first-ever forward deployed submarine torpedo tube launch and recovery of a Yellow Moray (REMUS 600) unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV). The integration of robotic and autonomous systems is expected to enhance operational flexibility and capabilities of future submarine missions, providing the ability to extend reach at both shallower and deeper depths than a manned submarine can access.

Fifty-four personnel earned their submarine warfare devices – commonly referred to as "dolphins" – during the deployment and two Delaware Sailors had new babies.

Sonar Technician (Submarine) 3rd Class Landon Nichols, from Summerville, South Carolina, and his wife, Anna Nichols, were honored with the ceremonial first kiss on the pier.

Chief Electronics Technician (Nuclear) Douglas Ames, from Sudan, Texas, was awarded the ceremonial first hug with his

wife, Jessica Ames.

Commissioned April 4, 2020, Delaware is the 18th Virginia-class attack submarine and is the seventh U.S. warship named after the first state of Delaware. Due to COVID -19 restrictions at the time, the official commissioning date was April 2, 2020, while the boat was underway, making it the first U.S. naval warship to be commissioned while submerged. It has a length of 377 feet with a beam of 34 feet and can operate at more than 25 knots submerged.

The Virginia-class of nuclear-powered fast attack submarines are designed for a broad spectrum of open-ocean and littoral missions. Fast-attack submarines are multi-mission platforms enabling five of the six Navy maritime strategy core capabilities – sea control, power projection, forward presence, maritime security and deterrence. They are designed to excel in anti-submarine warfare, anti-ship warfare, strike warfare, special operations, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, irregular warfare and mine warfare. Fast-attack submarines project power ashore with special operations forces and Tomahawk cruise missiles in the prevention or response to regional crises.

**Mobile Diving and Salvage
Unit 2 Disestablished;
Explosive Ordnance Disposal**

Mobile Unit 10 Established



VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. – Cmdr. Garret Pankow, commanding officer of Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 2, changes command with Cmdr. Jonathon Maurus, as he assumes command of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EODMU) 10 during a ceremony at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, July 3, 2025. During the ceremony MDSU-2 was disestablished and EODMU-10 established, combining their warfighting capabilities. EODMU-10 is a subordinate command of Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group 2 and operates as part of Navy Expeditionary Combat Force providing skilled, capable, and combat-ready deployable Navy EOD and Navy Diver forces around the globe to support a range of operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jackson Adkins)
From Lt.j.g. Martin Carey, July 3, 2025

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. – The U.S. Navy marked the end of an era and the beginning of a new chapter during a ceremony July 3, as Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit (MDSU) 2 was formally disestablished and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Mobile Unit (EOD) 10 was established aboard Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story.

The ceremony, attended by families, shipmates, and distinguished guests, celebrated the legacy of MDSU-2 – a unit synonymous with diving, salvage, and undersea response excellence – and welcomed the future of integrated expeditionary operations under EODMU-10.

Established in 1982, MDSU-2 was a cornerstone of U.S. Navy diving and salvage capability. Over the decades, its Sailors supported numerous historic and high-profile operations, including the 1986 recovery of Space Shuttle Challenger, the salvage of TWA Flight 800 in 1996 and Swiss Air Flight 111 in 1998, and the recovery of Space Shuttle Columbia in 2003.

Divers and EOD technicians from MDSU-2 also played critical roles in complex salvage operations around the globe, including the 1994 Eritrea Africa ship salvage, the 1999 USS Cole (DDG 67) recovery, and the multi-year recovery project of USS Monitor, a Civil War ironclad warship. The unit supported humanitarian assistance responses for Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Sandy and led pioneering efforts in Arctic diving during Operation Nanook in 2010.

Commander Garrett Pankow took to the podium to deliver his final message as the commanding officer of MDSU-2.

“Today is bittersweet,” said Pankow. “We’re not only executing a time-honored transfer of command but also retiring a combat salvage unit with a legacy that spans the globe, and establishing a new EOD mobile unit. For half a century, MDSU-2 Salvors have operated with character and competency – from the Arctic Circle to the depths of the Red Sea.” He continued, “It has been the honor of my career to be the skipper of MDSU-2. The spirit and capability of MDSU-2 carries forward into EODMU-10, and all East Coast EOD mobile units, as we combine EOD and Salvage warriors at EOD mobile units; ready to support the fleet, anytime, anywhere.”

Commander Jonathon Maurus, from Dearborn, MI, will be the

first commanding officer of EODMU-10.

“I am extremely honored and humbled to take the helm from Commander Pankow during this historic transition – while we close the chapter on MDSU-2, we carry forward its proud legacy as we stand up EOD Mobile Unit-10, ready to meet the Navy’s evolving mission with the same tenacity and excellence.”

Rear Adm. Brad Andros, Commander, Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, served as the ceremony’s guest speaker and stressed the significance of the redesign of the mobile diving and salvage force.

“The transition from MDSU-2 to EOD Mobile Unit-10 is not a loss – it is a consolidation of excellence,” said Andros. “This force redesign brings the full spectrum of EOD and MDSU capabilities under one commander, one unified command – bringing together our teams, our chief’s mess, our wardrooms. Our expeditionary forces must be ready for a future fight. We can no longer look at our niche capabilities as we did 10 or 20 years ago...our Navy Expeditionary Combat Forces will be needed for our full repertoire, full capability and full capacity.”

The establishment of EODMU-10 reflects a greater NECC effort to ensure readiness for the future fight and a deliberate approach to build a more sustainable and agile force. The unit will continue to leverage diving and salvage expertise while aligning under the broader Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group 2 enterprise.

As a critical component of the Navy Expeditionary Combat Force, Navy EOD forces clear explosive hazards to provide access to denied areas; they employ advanced tactics and technologies to exploit and secure the undersea domain for freedom of maneuver; they build and foster relationships with a constellation of capable and trusted partners; and they protect the homeland and our American way of life.

For more information, visit <https://www.necc.usff.navy.mil/eod/>

HII Launches Virginia-class Submarine Arkansas at Newport News Shipbuilding



NEWPORT NEWS, Va., July 2, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII (NYSE: HII) announced today that Virginia-class submarine Arkansas (SSN 800) was recently launched into the James River at the company's Newport News Shipbuilding (NNS) division.

Shipbuilders transferred the submarine from a construction facility to the floating dry dock, where it was launched and moved by tugboats to a submarine pier at the shipyard for final outfitting, testing and crew certification.

“We are committed to increasing submarine construction cadence and throughput for the U.S. Navy,” said Bryan Caccavale, NNS vice president of Navy programs. “Nuclear-powered submarines are critical to our national security and we’re proud to see Arkansas in the water.”

The ship’s sponsors are the six women of the historic group known as the Little Rock Nine, the first African American students to attend all-white Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, during desegregation.

Arkansas is the 27th Virginia-class submarine and will be the 13th delivered by NNS. The advanced capabilities of Virginia-class submarines increase firepower, maneuverability and stealth.

Photos accompanying this release are available at: <http://hii.com/news/hii-launches-virginia-class-submarine-arkansas-ssn-800-at-newport-news-shipbuilding/>.

**Continuing Promise 2025
Mission Update: Ecuador**



The Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) sit at anchor during Continuing Promise 2015. Continuing Promise is a U.S. Southern Command-sponsored and U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet-conducted deployment to conduct civil-military operations including humanitarian-civil assistance, subject matter expert exchanges, medical, dental, veterinary and engineering support and disaster response to partner nations and to show U.S. support and commitment to Central and South America and the Caribbean. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Gary Johnson/Released)

[by U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command / U.S. 4th Fleet Public Affairs](#), July 1, 2025

MAYPORT, Fla. – The USNS Comfort (T-AH 20) is now scheduled to conduct its Continuing Promise 2025 mission stop in Manta, Ecuador from July 4-10, instead of the previously planned July 12-19.

Adjusting the mission dates allows the USNS Comfort to maintain readiness to support U.S. Navy global operations while delivering important humanitarian assistance. The U.S.

Navy is committed to working with Ecuador to promote public health, security, and prosperity.

The United States values its partnership with Ecuador, a nation with which we share a history, strong democratic values, and enduring security and economic ties. The U.S. remains committed to longstanding cooperation with the Ecuadorian people and government and regrets any inconvenience this change causes.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. Fourth Fleet, as U.S. Southern Command's maritime component commander, remains committed to strengthening regional partnerships, fostering solidarity, and cultivating lasting friendships.

HII and Hitachi Lock In Multi-Year REMUS 300 UUV Production Agreement



From HII

POCASSET, Mass., July 1, 2025 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII (NYSE: HII) announced the order from Hitachi, Ltd. (Hitachi) for more than a dozen REMUS 300 small uncrewed undersea vehicles (SUUVs) under a program that will deliver the vehicles over multi-years.

HII's REMUS 300 platform is a modular, open-architecture SUUV engineered for multi-mission adaptability and was the commercial basis for the U.S. Navy's Lionfish program.

The procurement by Hitachi builds on a long-standing relationship with Japan, an important U.S. ally in the Pacific region. The REMUS 300 platform is in service with several nations worldwide and offers critical interoperability with partner and allied forces.

"This procurement represents a key sale milestone for the REMUS 300 commercial program," said Duane Fotheringham, president of Mission Technologies' Uncrewed Systems business group. "We greatly appreciate the confidence Hitachi has placed in us. The success of our commercial REMUS 300 vehicles is a result of our work in the international markets and the

high confidence our customers place in REMUS products. These vehicles deliver critical mine-hunting capabilities and flexible payload options to our allies and partners.”

About the REMUS UUV

The REMUS UUV family delivers critical advantages across modern naval operations and the autonomous systems have been proven to operate independently or in conjunction with crewed platforms – such as *Virginia*-class nuclear submarines – to extend mission range, reduce detection risk and limit personnel exposure.

The REMUS open-architecture design allows rapid payload integration, enabling mission-specific configurations and future tech insertions – key factors in maintaining operational relevance and cost efficiency over time.

To date, HII has sold more than 700 REMUS vehicles to over 30 countries, including 14 NATO members. Notably, over 90% of REMUS units delivered in the past 23 years remain in service, demonstrating platform durability and lifecycle value – both critical in defense acquisition decision-making.

A photo accompanying this release is available at: <http://hii.com/news/hii-and-hitachi-lock-in-multi-year-remus-300-uuv-production-agreement/>.

Securing the Backbone: The Defense Industrial Base



PHOTO BY: Air Force Staff Sgt. Marco Gomez

By [Ryan Caughill](#), President, Western New York Council, Navy League of the United States.

“You can’t fight tomorrow’s war with yesterday’s plans.”

In the summer of 2018, I completed my internship at Moog Inc., one of the United States’ premier defense contractors. My role was in Environmental Health & Safety, but my mission went deeper: I was tasked with modernizing and guiding emergency management planning across an organization that was deeply integrated into the Defense Industrial Base (DIB), and yet, lacked a dedicated emergency management function.

Like my time later at M&T Bank, this experience left a lasting impression. It showed me that even companies at the forefront of defense technology can have blind spots when it comes to continuity, resilience, and crisis preparedness.

[While this article isn't just about my singular experience, but a holistic and general overview,] that's what makes the Defense Industrial Base one of the most paradoxical critical infrastructure sectors in America: incredibly advanced, but dangerously lacking.

The Backbone Behind the Uniform

The Defense Industrial Base is more than just tanks, missiles, or aircraft. It's an expansive network of over 100,000 private companies that provide products, services, logistics, and technologies to support the U.S. military.

This includes:

- Weapons systems and munitions
- Aerospace components and military-grade software
- Advanced electronics and cyber capabilities
- Research and development institutions
- Transportation and supply chain networks
- Small manufacturers producing critical, often irreplaceable, parts

Some of these are Fortune 500 giants. Many are small, family-owned machine shops in rural communities. All are vital.

But here's the problem: there is no unified resilience standard across the DIB. And that's a problem hiding in plain sight.

The Vulnerabilities No One Wants to Talk About

During my time at Moog, I saw firsthand how emergency management often sits outside the core of DIB corporate culture. Not out of apathy, but due to the sheer scale and complexity of operations. Many companies have excellent safety and security programs, but few have comprehensive crisis management systems. Fewer still have trained emergency managers or business continuity professionals guiding cross-

functional coordination across cyber, physical, and operational risks. This isn't to say they don't exist, I've met some, and they do a really great job.

That makes this sector vulnerable in ways most people don't understand.

The DIB is:

- Extremely decentralized: A single failed supplier can halt delivery of critical weapons platforms.
- Highly classified: Cyber breaches can compromise national defense secrets, yet many companies, especially smaller ones, lack mature cyber defenses.
- Logistically fragile: Long-lead items, global supply chains, and just-in-time manufacturing leave little room for error.
- Resource-limited: Many smaller firms simply don't have the bandwidth or expertise to build robust resilience programs.

Worse yet, we take it for granted that these companies – because of what they do – are already hardened. That's not always true.

Why This Sector Isn't Taken Seriously – Until It's Too Late

The Defense Industrial Base occupies an odd place in the national consciousness. We respect the military. We fund the military. But we rarely consider who makes the military work.

The supply chains, R&D labs, fabrication shops, and logistics hubs that build and sustain America's warfighting capability are not invincible. And yet, the DIB isn't regularly treated like critical infrastructure in the traditional emergency management sense, even though it underpins our strategic deterrence, military readiness, and wartime surge capacity.

That disconnect has consequences. If a natural disaster,

ransomware attack, insider threat, or geopolitical disruption strikes a key node in this ecosystem, the effects won't be immediate headlines. They'll show up months or years later when a military platform is delayed or compromised.

In an age of strategic competition with China and resurgent threats in Europe and the Middle East, that delay could mean the difference between deterrence and disaster.

Strengthening the Arsenal of the Republic

If we want the DIB to remain viable, competitive, and secure, we must elevate resilience as a strategic imperative, not an afterthought.

At the Federal Level:

- The DoD must go beyond cybersecurity compliance and require holistic emergency management, business continuity, and crisis communications programs for Tier 1 and Tier 2 contractors
- Congress should fund regional DIB resilience initiatives and technical assistance hubs to help small firms build preparedness capacity
- DIB firms must be integrated into DHS-FEMA and CISA exercises, not treated as isolated contractors

In the Private Sector:

Contractors should invest in full-time emergency managers or resilience officers, especially at multi-site operations

Continuity of Operations plans (COOP) must be tested regularly and integrated across functions – especially cyber, facilities, HR, and production

Leadership should prioritize exercises and scenario planning, particularly for cyber-physical convergence threats

Across the Supply Chain:

Vendors must be mapped and tiered by criticality, with redundancy plans in place for sole-source dependencies. Smaller manufacturers should be given access to resilience toolkits and grant-supported planning assistance.

For the Defense Community:

Collaboration must improve across DoD, DHS, and the intelligence community to identify emerging threats to the DIB. Emergency management professionals should be embedded, or a partner, in acquisition planning and supplier vetting. The public and political class must recognize that defense readiness includes domestic resilience.

Resilience is Readiness

The Defense Industrial Base is one of the quietest, but most consequential, sectors in the nation's infrastructure portfolio. You don't see it in parades. But it's there in every missile defense test, every jet engine, every encrypted radio, and every armored vehicle.

If we allow it to weaken, structurally, logistically, or digitally, we erode not just our defense capability, but our credibility.

We cannot afford to wait for crisis to realize that the arsenal of our Republic isn't just built on innovation or budgets.

It's built on resilience.

These challenges aren't theoretical, they're unfolding in real time. Delays in the F-35 rollout, the Navy's struggles and eventual cancellation with the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) program, and schedule slippages in the next-generation aircraft carriers, guided missile frigates, and Columbia-class ballistic missile submarines all point to a sector under immense strain. While these issues stem from a mix of design complexity, funding cycles, and industrial bottlenecks, one

thing is clear: the Defense Industrial Base cannot afford additional disruption.

A well-funded, well-placed crisis management function, integrated at both the facility and enterprise level, won't solve design flaws or procurement hurdles, but it can absorb shock, accelerate recovery, and ensure continuity when disaster strikes. In a sector already grappling with compounding risks, crisis management isn't a luxury, it's a strategic buffer against the unpredictable threats of 21st century warfare.