

# Blue Ridge Returns to Yokosuka, Concludes Summer Patrol



[Release from U.S. 7th Fleet](#)

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From Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Matt Hall, USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19) Public Affairs

YOKOSUKA, Japan – U.S. 7th Fleet flagship, USS Blue Ridge (LCC-19) returned to Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Aug. 17, after a patrol in the Indo-Pacific region.

The patrol, which began July 8, saw Blue Ridge make port visits to Singapore; Jakarta, Indonesia; Muara, Brunei; and Puerto Princesa, Philippines, enabling dialogue and relationship building among allies and partners.

"I am extremely proud of the hard work and flexibility that the crew showed during this patrol," said Blue Ridge Commanding Officer, Capt. Dale M. Gregory. "Their professionalism and teamwork led to a successful patrol and allowed us engage with partners across the Indo-Pacific. It is in creating these people-to-people ties with our partners that we are able further our shared interests in preserving peace and prosperity and a free and open Indo-Pacific."

At the beginning of patrol, Blue Ridge visited Jakarta, Indonesia July 27 – 29; the ship's first visit to the country since 2019. Thomas conducted talks with Chief of the Indonesian Maritime Security Agency (Bakamla) Vice Adm. Aan Kurnia; U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia, Ambassador Sung Y. Kim; Chief of Staff the Republic of Indonesia Fleet Command, Rear Adm. Didong Rio Duta; and other key-leaders. Additionally, members of the Seventh Fleet staff conducted staff-talks with their Indonesian Navy counterparts, aimed at improving interoperability and addressing shared maritime security challenges.

The visit to Jakarta included a by the U.S. 7th Fleet Band for local members of the Indonesian military at the @America cultural center. The band also spent time with a local school band, sharing their expertise and knowledge, later ending with a joint concert for friends and family members. Additionally, Blue Ridge and U.S. 7th Fleet staff Sailors took part in community outreach activities such as a beach clean-up, a sports day with the Indonesian Navy, and volunteering at local community programs for children.

Second, Blue Ridge conducted a post visit in Muara, Brunei Darussalam Aug. 3 – 5, the first visit to the country since 2002. There, Thomas conducted talks with U.S. Ambassador to Brunei, Her Excellency Caryn McClelland; the Minister of Defence II, The Honorable Pehin Datu Lailaraja; Major General (Retired) Dato Paduka Seri Haji Awang Halbi bin Haji Mohd Yussof; the Commander of Royal Brunei Armed Forces, Major

General Dato Paduka Seri Haji Muhammad Haszaimi bin Bol Hassan; and other key-leaders from Brunei.

While in Brunei, Muslim Sailors had the opportunity to visit a local mosque for Friday prayers. Additionally, Blue Ridge and U.S. 7th Fleet Sailors took part in a sports day with members of the Royal Brunei Navy, strengthening the bond between service members.

Finally, Blue Ridge conducted a port visit in Puerto Princesa, Philippines, Aug. 7 – 10, the ship's first visit there since 2019. In Puerto Princesa, Thomas and U.S. 7th Fleet leadership met with Vice Admiral Alberto Carlos, Commander, Western Command (WESCOM) and WESCOM leaders, where they discussed enhancing interoperability between the two militaries and finding ways to increase cooperation in the maritime domain. Additionally, the U.S. 7th Fleet Deputy Commander Captain Amy Bauernschmidt met with Captain Dennis Labay, the commander of Philippine Coast Guard District Palawan. Thomas and U.S. 7th Fleet staff also met with Puerto Princesa leadership including Atty. Jethro M. Palayon and Mayor Lucilo Bayron.

During the port call, the U.S. 7th Fleet Band performed in front of a live audience at SM City Mall with counterparts from the Philippine Air Force Western Command Band. Additionally, Blue Ridge hosted a tour of the ship to members of the Philippine Air Force Western Command.

Between port visits, Blue Ridge sailed 8,840 nautical miles through the Philippine Sea and the South China Sea, conducted three anchorages, 18 sea-and-anchor details, and four straight transits. 9,100 rounds of ammunition were fired in multiple live-fire exercises, and the "Golden Falcons" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 12 logged 21 hours of flight time in nine helicopter operations.

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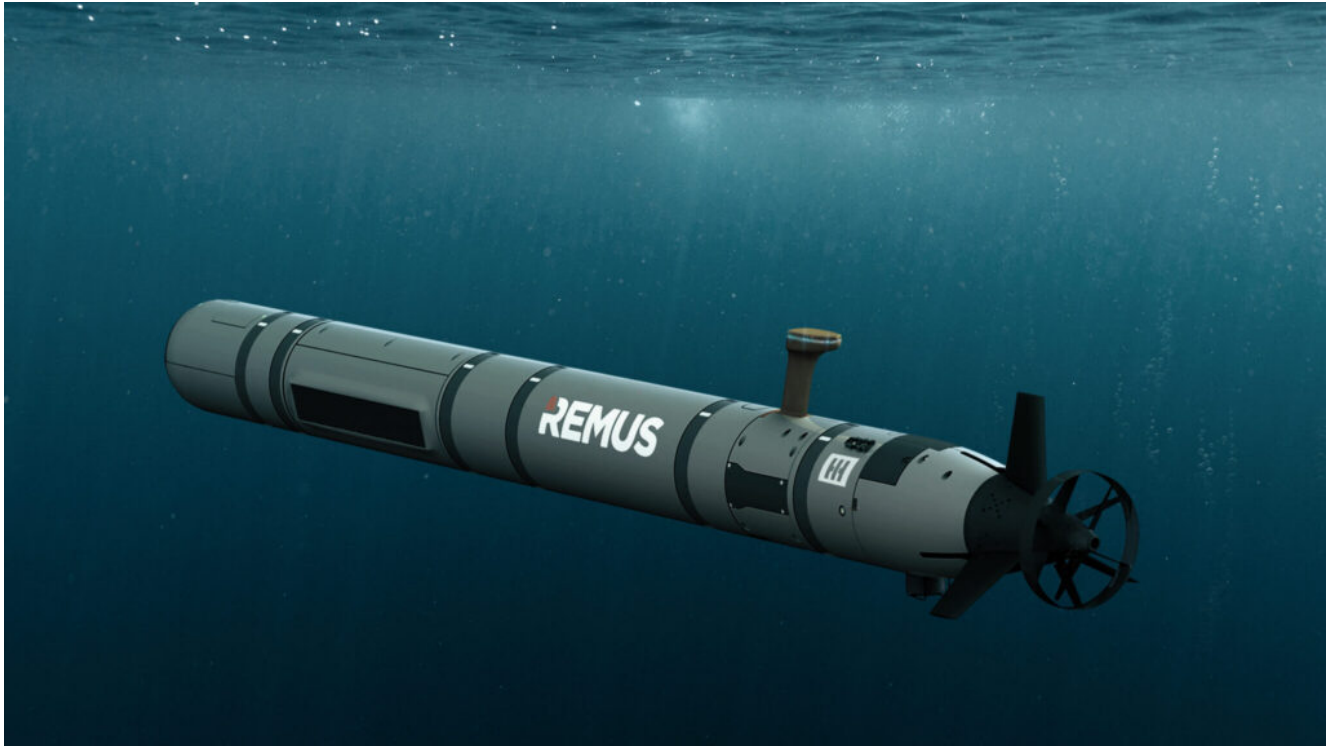
the crew showed during this patrol,” said Blue Ridge Commanding Officer, Capt. Dale M. Gregory. “Their professionalism and teamwork led to a successful patrol and allowed us engage with partners across the Indo-Pacific. It is in creating these people-to-people ties with our partners that we are able further our shared interests in preserving peace and prosperity and a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

Blue Ridge is the oldest operational ship in the Navy, and as U.S. 7th Fleet command ship, is responsible for patrolling and fostering relationships within the Indo-Pacific Region.

For more news from USS Blue Ridge, visit <http://www.navy.mil/local/lcc19/>.

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## **HII RECEIVES ORDER TO BUILD TWO REMUS 620 UNMANNED UNDERWATER VEHICLES FOR NOAA**



### [Release from HII](#)

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McLEAN, Va., Aug. 17, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) recently ordered two REMUS 620 unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs) from HII (NYSE: HII).

The customized, medium-class UUVs will be built by HII's Mission Technologies division in partnership with W.S. Darley & Co. and delivered in 2024.

Unveiled in November of 2022, the REMUS 620 has a battery life of up to 110 hours and a range of 275 nautical miles, providing unmatched mission capabilities for mine countermeasures, hydrographic surveys, intelligence collection, surveillance and electronic warfare.

"The REMUS 620 is the first medium-class UUV designed to accurately deliver this range of advanced above- and below-water effects at long range," said Duane Fotheringham, president of Mission Technologies' Unmanned Systems business group. "We are excited to build these vehicles for the U.S.

government, supporting the mission of our long-term customer, NOAA.”

The vehicles will be customized with a synthetic aperture sonar module, additional energy modules and auxiliary equipment.

An image accompanying this release is available at: <https://hii.com/news/hii-remus-620-unmanned-underwater-vehicle-noaa-2023/>.

“There has been tremendous market interest in the REMUS 620,” Fotheringham added. “Combined with the steadily increasing backlog of our REMUS 300 vehicles, this order is a strong statement on the capabilities of our products.”

NOAA will use the REMUS 620 vehicles for higher-resolution mapping of the Gulf of Mexico and its effort to restore the seafloor habitats damaged by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The agency has previously used other REMUS models for habitat characterization, marine archeology and other ocean mapping and exploration activities.

The REMUS line of UUVs has been successful around the world supporting scientific research and operations and is currently in use in more than 30 countries.

For more information about HII’s Unmanned Systems, visit: <https://hii.com/what-we-do/capabilities/unmanned-systems/>.

For more information about NOAA’s Mesophotic and Deep Benthic Communities Restoration project, visit: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/habitat-conservation/mesophotic-and-deep-benthic-communities-restoration>

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# First round of attack helicopters arrive in the Czech Republic



[Release from Naval Air Systems Command](#)

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NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. –Two AH-1Z Vipers arrived in the Czech Republic this week, marking the first in-country delivery as part of a partnership with the US Marine Corps H-1 Light/Attack Helicopter program office (PMA-276) and industry partner, Bell.

“Four years ago, we embarked on a journey with the Czech Republic Air Force to deliver the H-1 family of aircraft, including four AH-1Z and eight UH-1Y helicopters,” said Col. Vasilios Pappas, PMA-276 program manager. “Since then, we have worked together to award the required contracts, deliver the applicable logistics equipment, develop a training program and so much more, all in preparation for this delivery. This is a

remarkable milestone.”

In 2019, the Czech Republic selected the H-1 to modernize the country’s armed forces and strengthen its homeland defense and the country is expected to be independently operating by late-2024.

A lot has transpired since the initial contract.

From a training perspective, an initial team of Czech aircrew and maintainers had the opportunity to complete the Marine Light/Attack Helicopter Training Squadron (HMLAT) 303 training pipeline, [graduating earlier this year](#). Beginning this fall, H-1 crews will train alongside representatives from Bell, and its supplier, Pinnacle Solutions, through a “train-the-trainer” model. Pilots, crew chiefs and maintainers will learn the additional skills required to operate and sustain its fleet of AH-1Z and UH-1Y helicopters, and train other members of its force.

In addition, the country has a Flight Training Device (FTD) to support skills development, offering access to the controls and weapon systems for preparation purposes. The Czech Republic FTD broke ground in March 2023 and construction will finish in time to begin training this fall.

Now, with the aircraft in-country, the Czech Air Force can begin the acceptance process and over the next 12 months, additional aircraft will arrive based on the production schedule.

The Czech Air Force squadron is expected to be independently operating in late-2024.

PMA-276 manages the end-to-end procurement, development, support, fielding and disposal of the Marine Corps and international customers H-1 family of aircraft. For more information, visit: [PMA-276 | NAVAIR \(navy.mil\)](#)



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# USS Sioux City (LCS 11) Decommissions



Release from LCS Squadron Two

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NAVAL STATION MAYPORT, Fla. – Freedom-variant littoral combat ship (LCS) USS Sioux City (LCS 11) was decommissioned in Mayport, Fla., August 14.

As an operational unit, Sioux City and its crew played an important role in the defense of our nation and maritime freedom. Sioux City and its Sailors were key to determine the operational success and deployment capabilities of today's LCS platform.

During the ceremony guest speaker, Capt. Daniel Reiher, Commander, Littoral Combat Ship Training Facility Atlantic, wished the crew of Sioux City fair winds and following seas as

they bid farewell to their ship.

“Though our ship’s service ends today, her legacy does not. For years to come the Sailors who served onboard will carry forth lessons learned and career experiences gained,” said Capt. Daniel Reiher, Commander, Littoral Combat Ship Training Facility Atlantic. “As those lessons and experiences are used to forge those that follow us, the legacy of SIOUX CITY will strengthen our Navy for generations to come.”

Sioux City and its Sailors contributed a tremendous amount of work and time to ensure success of the LCS program during the ship’s time in naval service. Sioux City completed four successful deployments in December 2020, July 2021, December 2021 and October 2022. The ship deployed to U.S. Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Fleet, integrated with a carrier strike group, performed exercises with partner navies and conducted joint maneuvers with other U.S. Navy warships. While deployed in 2022, Sioux City provided maritime security presence enabling the free flow of commerce in key corridors of trade. Sioux City was also the first LCS to operate in U.S. Fifth and Sixth fleets across the Atlantic where they participated in counter drug trafficking operations with the U.S. Coast Guard to seize over 10,000 kilograms of cocaine worth an estimated \$500 million.

“First off, it’s impressive and humbling to see the shipmates, past and present, and all the well-wishers gathered in attendance today. It’s easy to get locked into the day-to-day grind of running a ship and forget about those who came before you and those who hope and pray for your success,” said Cmdr. Michael Gossett, Sioux City’s commanding officer. “It’s tempting to engross oneself with the finality of the process. Let us not lose sight of the memories we have made, the culture we have built, successes we have had and will endure forever.”

Built by Fincantieri Marinette Marine in Marinette, Wisconsin, Sioux City was commissioned November 17, 2018, at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. Mary Winnefeld, a longtime resident of Sioux City, served as the ship's sponsor.

USS Sioux City (LCS 11) is the first United States Navy Warship named after the city of Sioux City, Iowa. The ship represents the proud people of the Sioux Nation, a combination of the Dakota and Lakota Native American Tribes. Upon decommissioning, Sioux City will be placed into a Foreign Military Sale (FMS) disposition status, and its Sailors will receive follow-on orders to new assignments.

LCS are fast, agile, mission-focused platforms designed to operate in near-shore environments, winning against 21st-century coastal threats. LCS are versatile and are capable to support a broad spectrum of fleet missions and operate alongside regional navies and coast guards while supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence missions around the globe.

For more news from Commander, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron Two, visit <https://www.surflant.usff.navy.mil/lcsron2/> or follow on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/comlcsron2/>

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## **Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility Welcomes First**

# Contingent of AUKUS Personnel



The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

Release from [Naval Sea Systems Command](#)

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16 August 2023

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii (Aug. 15, 2023) – Personnel from participating nations reported to Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and Intermediate Maintenance Facility (PHNSY&IMF) in support of the Australia, United Kingdom, and United States (AUKUS) security partnership's Pillar One initiative Aug. 14, 2023.

The Pillar One initiative is delivering a conventionally armed nuclear powered attack submarine (SSN) capability to Australia. The uniformed and civilian submarine maintenance subject matter experts from Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States comprise the Advance Verification Team (AVT) that, over the coming weeks, will work directly with shipyard personnel to gain a full understanding of the maintenance and industrial skills required to establish Submarine Rotational Force-West (SRF-W) in Australia as early as 2027.

At its height, SRF-W will host up to four Virginia class and one Royal Navy Astute class SSN. Initially, a combined Australian and U.S. team will execute maintenance on the U.S. flagged SSNs. Over time, as Australia grows its workforce and expertise, the U.S. will reduce its presence in Australia. The AVT is working to build a detailed understanding of the types of specialized skills and trades required to establish the SRF-W repair workforce.

AUKUS Pillar One has three distinct phases. Phase One involves establishing SRF-W through increased Virginia class visits to Australia designed to expand Australia's knowledge of SSNs and the development of an Intermediate Level Maintenance capability. Phase Two begins in the early 2030s, pending approval from the U.S. Congress, with the United States selling Australia between three and five Virginia class submarines. Phase Three sees the combination of United Kingdom submarine design and advanced United States technology in the delivery of SSN-AUKUS, the future attack submarine for both Australia and the United Kingdom. Australia plans to deliver the first sovereign-built SSN-AUKUS in the early 2040s.

"Each phase builds on the previous one and SRF-W is the foundation upon which the Australian maintenance, sustainment and new construction workforce is built," said Capt. Lincoln Reifsteck, the U.S. Navy's AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Program Manager, who emphasizes the importance of the AVT's role in the establishment of SRF-W .

"Australians are superior submariners," said Capt. Richard A. Jones, PHNSY & IMF's commanding officer. "They operate one of the best diesel-electric boat classes in the world in a highly complex area of operations. That said, there is a big step between the Australian Collins Class SSK [diesel-electric attack submarine] and Virginia class SSN. We are honored to host the AVT over the next several weeks to share as much as we can, answer their questions, and set them on the right course to building out a holistic sustainment plan."

Once the AVT determines the skillsets and number of personnel required to execute intermediate-level maintenance, they will build an embedment plan to upskill and train Australian personnel within U.S. public naval shipyards.

“With an informed and specific plan, we will control costs by ensuring we send the right people, to the right places, to get the right training, at the right time to meet our requirements,” said Rear Adm. Matthew Buckley, the Australian Submarine Agency’s Head of Submarine Capability.

“Everything the AVT is doing works to grow Australia’s organic capabilities needed to keep our spear point, our attack submarines, sharp,” added Royal Australian Navy Capt. William McDougall, Director Submarine Rotational Force – West. “We are focused on ensuring the work taking place at [Australian base] HMAS Stirling fully supports SRF-West and we have been nothing but impressed by the dedication of our trilateral partners in setting us up for success.”

The AVT will remain in Pearl Harbor for several weeks, return home, and then travel to the United Kingdom to tour British shipyards to refine its plans. “In the UK we have fewer SSNs than the US. We are going to show the AVT how we maintain and modernize a smaller number of submarines, while still operating at the highest possible standards. Given the projected size of the RAN SSN force, Australia will not require facilities akin to the United States Naval Shipyards, but instead infrastructure comparable to those present in the UK. This experience will be enormously beneficial for both the AVT and our personnel, as we look to strengthen our mutual knowledge, and ongoing partnership,” said Rear Adm. Chris Shepherd, the Royal Navy’s Defence Nuclear Organisation AUKUS Director and Senior Responsible Owner for the Replacement Nuclear Submarine Programme.

The AUKUS partnership is a strategic endeavor that strengthens the three nations’ national security and promotes peace and

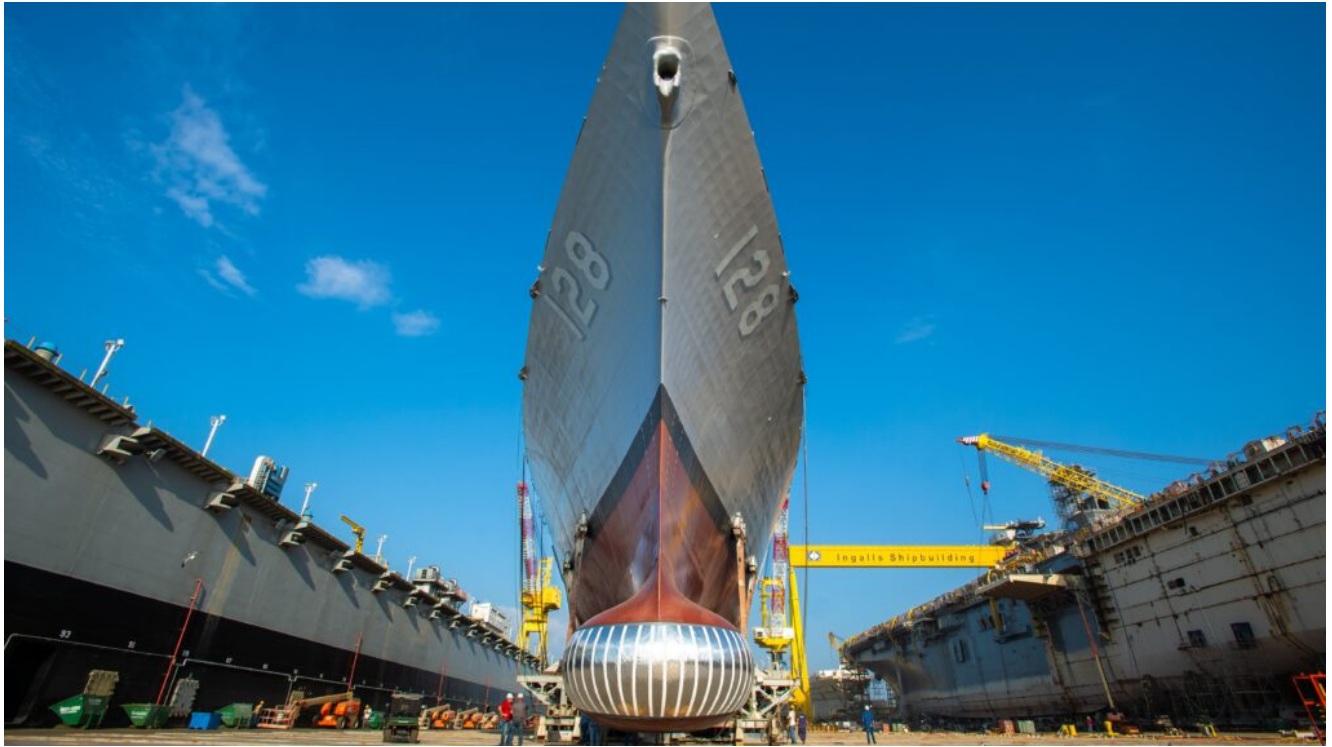


stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Australia will acquire conventionally armed SSNs for the Royal Australian Navy under AUKUS Pillar One via the Optimal Pathway announced by leaders of the three partner nations on March 13, 2023. The AUKUS Integration and Acquisition (I&A) Program Office is responsible for executing the trilateral partnership to deliver conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered attack submarines to the Royal Australian Navy at the earliest possible date while setting the highest nuclear stewardship standards.

To read more about AUKUS click [here](#).

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## **HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding Launches Guided Missile Destroyer Ted Stevens (DDG 128)**



[Release from HII](#)

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PASCAGOULA, Miss., Aug. 15, 2023 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII's (NYSE: HII) Ingalls Shipbuilding division announced the successful launch of the Navy's third Flight III *Arleigh Burke*-class guided missile destroyer *Ted Stevens* (DDG 128).

"The translation and launch are always important milestones for our shipbuilders and the life of a ship," Ingalls Shipbuilding DDG Program Manager Ben Barnett said. "Our team has put in a tremendous amount of work leading up to the launch, and I am proud to see them bring DDG 128 one step closer to completion."

Prior to launch, DDG 128 was translated from land to the dry dock using translation railcars to support the ship. Once in the dry dock, the ship is prepared to launch.

*Ted Stevens* is the 76<sup>th</sup> *Arleigh Burke*-class ship, and its name honors former U.S. Sen. Ted Stevens, who served as a pilot in World War II and later as a U.S. senator representing Alaska. At the time he left office in 2009, he was the longest serving

Republican U.S. senator in history.

Photos and a video accompanying the release are available at:  
<https://hii.com/news/hii-ingalls-shipbuilding-launches-guided-missile-destroyer-ted-stevens-ddg-128/>.

Ingalls has delivered 35 *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyers to the U.S. Navy including the first Flight III, *Jack H. Lucas* (DDG 125), in June of this year. In addition, Ingalls Shipbuilding has four Flight IIIs currently under construction and was awarded an additional six destroyers earlier this month. *Ted Stevens* will be christened Saturday, Aug. 19, while *Jeremiah Denton* (DDG 129), *George M. Neal* (DDG 131) and *Sam Nunn* (DDG 133) are also under construction at Ingalls.

Flight III *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyers built for the U.S. Navy incorporate a number of design modifications that collectively provide significantly enhanced capability. DDG 125 includes the AN/SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar (AMDR) and the Aegis Baseline 10 Combat System that is required to keep pace with the threats well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *Arleigh Burke*-class destroyers are highly capable, multi-mission ships and can conduct a variety of operations, from peacetime presence and crisis management to sea control and power projection. Guided missile destroyers are the backbone of the U.S. surface fleet and are capable of fighting multiple air, surface and subsurface threats simultaneously.

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# **Africa Malaria Task Force focuses on new emerging**

# threats from Africa's top killer



[Release from U.S. Africa Command](#)

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Aug. 15, 2023

By MAJ. JESSICA TAIT, U.S. Africa Command

ACCRA, Ghana — U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa (NAVEUR-NAVAF) Force Surgeon held an operational entomology event in support of the Africa Malaria Task Force (AMTF), July 17-21, in Accra, Ghana.

“This was a fantastic week spent among specialists in the fight against Malaria across all disciplines: physicians, researchers, medical technologists,” said U.S. Navy Cmdr. Carla Pappalardo, Nurse Corps. “They were able to spend ample time together sharing best practices and lessons learned over

the years of study of this particular species, the *Anopheles stephensi*. Its emerging threat is not to be taken lightly, requiring an all hands effort and active involvement from our partner nations in activities such as this.”

Hosted by the Ghanaian Armed Forces (GAF), and co-hosted by NAVEUR-NAVAF and the U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) Office of the Command Surgeon, the five-day event brought together more than 70 representatives from 15 African partner nations to include Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), non-profit organizations (NPOs), and the U.S. government.

“What was gained from this week’s event was not only collaboration, study, and networking, but a reminder that we are truly in this fight together,” stated Pappalardo. “We must continue to leverage each other’s expertise, knowledge and the science in order to stay lock-step in eradicating Malaria.”

The event included facilitated briefings, break-out sessions and field work, which focused on the emerging threat of the invasive malaria causing species, *Anopheles stephensi*, in Africa. Notable facilitators included members from GAF, the World Health Organization (WHO), Navy Entomology Center of Excellence, and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

“Malaria prevention is one of AFRICOM’s top health priorities,” said Col. Tom Eccles, command surgeon, U.S. Africa Command. “As malaria parasites and their mosquito vectors develop new patterns of resistance, there’s a continual need for us to update our approach to malaria prevention. AMTF provides a unique forum for exchanging information with our African partners on tools and strategies for protecting our forces and improving population health.”

Since its inception in 2011, the task force has brought together scientists and policy makers with demonstrated interest in malaria programs to share resources, strategies and expertise that would ultimately act as a catalyst for change.

The African Malaria Task Force complements the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative, focused on malaria prevention in Africa; and the African Partner Outbreak Response Alliance supports global health security objectives for the U.S. and partner nations.

AMTF was designed to strengthen and expand effective malaria programs by providing support for nations, military personnel, their families. NAVEUR-NAVAF and USAFRICOM will continue work with international partners to promote effective military-civilian, country specific and regional African partnerships in infectious disease outbreak detection, prevention and response programs.

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## **Franchetti Takes the Helm After Gilday's Relinquishment of Office**





### [Release from Chief of Naval Operations Public Affairs](#)

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From Chief of Naval Operations Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – Adm. Mike Gilday relinquished the office of the Chief of Naval Operations after successfully concluding his four-year tenure as the Navy's top military leader in a ceremony at the United States Naval Academy, Aug. 14.

Vice Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti, who has been nominated by President Biden to be the next CNO, will perform the duties of the CNO until someone is formally appointed to that role in accordance with law.

Gilday became the 32nd CNO in August 2019. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the CNO acts as an advisor to the President of the United States, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. Under direction of the Secretary of the Navy, the CNO is responsible for the command, utilization of resources, and operating efficiency of naval forces and shore activities.

Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin spoke at the ceremony highlighting the importance of the Navy, and the increasingly critical role the service plays in strategic competition.

“To tackle the national security challenges of the 21st century, we need our Navy more than ever,” said Austin. “We rely on our Navy to project American power, to protect American interests; we rely on our Navy to bolster our unmatched network of allies and partners, from the South China Sea to the Caribbean; and we rely on our Navy to deter conflict and keep the peace.”

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro acted as the presiding officer and keynote speaker of the ceremony. Similar to Austin, Del Toro emphasized Gilday’s “transformational leadership” and prioritization of readiness during an era of strategic competition.

“Admiral Gilday boldly charged forward, leading and inspiring Sailors at every level, from the tactical, to the operational, to the strategic... he’s also championed our strategic relationships with allies and partners,” said Del Toro. “He served as our 32nd Chief of Naval Operations during a pivotal – and perhaps sometimes even a bit chaotic – time for our fleet, for our Nation, and for our friends around the world – many of whom are represented here today.”

For his part, Gilday reflected on the adaptation and change the Navy has undergone in adjusting to a new and challenging security environment, while also calling for the Department to “act with urgency and purpose” in order to maintain maritime superiority. He expressed confidence and optimism in the Navy’s direction, while praising Sailors and families around the Fleet for their resilience and service.

“We have the best Navy in the world,” said Gilday. “Every day, our people are standing the watch, operating globally and at the tip of the spear, strengthening our alliances and

partnerships.”

As he departed, he left the Fleet with a message of service, to be leaders and serve with a purpose.

“Embody humility; selflessness; complete transparency; acknowledge the value of every Sailor and civilian; and always do the right thing, especially when it is difficult,” said Gilday. “Have total ownership of your job and duty... because when you are called upon to sail into harm’s way, your mission is to fight and win for our nation.”

Gilday described Adm. Franchetti as exceptionally well-qualified to perform the duties of CNO during this uncertain and unprecedented leadership transition.

“I am proud that she will be my CNO,” said Gilday. “She is a Fleet Sailor, an operator, a warfighter. She has already made the Navy better as our Vice Chief of Naval Operations, the Navy is in good hands with her at the helm.”

During the ceremony, Franchetti and Del Toro both thanked Gilday, his wife Linda Gilday, as well as their entire family for their service and leadership throughout the years.

“Admiral Gilday and his wife Linda have dedicated so much of themselves and their time over the past four years focusing on quality of life and quality of service issues to ensure our Sailors and their families have the resources they need to be resilient during their time in service to our Navy and our nation,” said Del Toro. “I especially want to highlight Linda’s significant accomplishments in supporting our Navy families and spouses. You have been a shining example for our service members and families of a remarkable professional and an extraordinary public servant; we express our deepest gratitude to you for your devotion to our Navy family.”

VCNO also stressed the importance of a seamless transition with Gilday’s departure.

“As we look to the horizon and prepare for the challenges that lie ahead, I will act with a sense of urgency to ensure our Sailors have everything they need to maintain our warfighting edge,” said Franchetti.

She added, “For the past 247 years, the U.S. Navy has stood the watch. We, along with the Marine Corps are America’s Away Team, around the world and around the clock. As we look to the future, our mission continues, uninterrupted and unabated. We fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows so that others can too.”

In the absence of a confirmed 33rd Chief of Naval Operations, and in accordance with 10 U.S.C. 8035, Franchetti assumes the responsibilities of the CNO as the current Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

Adm. Franchetti was nominated by President Biden to be the 33rd Chief of Naval Operations this past July. If confirmed, she would be the first woman service chief and member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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## **Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III Remarks at the Chief of Naval Operations Relinquishment of Office Ceremony**

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

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Good morning, everyone. It's great to be here with all of you this morning.

I see a number of former chiefs in the audience this morning. And welcome to you all. Good to see you.

Thanks to Secretary Del Toro. Carlos, we appreciate everything that you do for our Sailors and our Marines.

Let me also welcome our outstanding Deputy Secretary, Kath Hicks. Kath, it's an honor to serve alongside you. We're absolutely lucky to have you.

I want to thank the many distinguished guests and senior military leaders who are here today, including General Milley. General, thank you for your tremendous leadership of the Joint Chiefs.

I'm also delighted that we're joined by a great Navy leader who's been a friend and mentor to me and to so many people here, Admiral Mike Mullen. Sir, it's an honor to have you.

And let me say a special welcome to Admiral Mike Gilday's family—including his mother, Mrs. Frances Gilday. And we're joined by two of Mike's siblings, Mark and Mary Joy. And I know that his other siblings, Dave and Brian, are also cheering him on.

It is an absolute honor to be here today in Memorial Hall. The Navy will always steer by the "immortal valor" of the Naval Academy graduates who lost their lives in defense of America.

We're gathered in this sacred space for a simple reason: and that reason is to pay tribute to the finest Navy that the world has ever seen. And we should remember that, right now, thousands of Sailors stand the watch on ships and stations around the world. And that's a testament to the Navy's patriotism and professionalism.

And it's a testament to your leadership as well. So Admiral Gilday, congratulations on your tremendous tenure as the 32nd Chief of Naval Operations. And I'm glad to be here with so many outstanding Sailors today as we celebrate your service and all that the Navy has achieved under your leadership.

Ladies and gentlemen, to tackle the national-security challenges of the 21st century, we need our Navy more than ever. It is especially vital in today's world. And as Mike Gilday likes to say, the global economy floats on seawater.

So we rely on our Navy to secure the world's sea lanes for the free flow of ships, commerce, and ideas.

We rely on our Navy to sail, fly, and operate wherever international law allows.

We rely on our Navy to project American power and to protect American interests.

We rely on our Navy to bolster our unmatched network of allies and partners, from the South China Sea to the Caribbean.

And we rely on our Navy to deter conflict and to keep the peace.

Now, some of our competitors have a very different vision. They want to upend the rules-based international order that was built at such a high cost after World War II. That includes new challenges in the maritime domain.

But we are determined to defend the freedom of the skies, the seas, and space. And we are determined to keep the world of the 21st century open, stable, and peaceful.

And that's exactly what Admiral Gilday has been focused on for the past four years as our CNO.

First and foremost, he's been relentless about readiness. The Navy has been using data-driven reforms to improve



maintenance. And today, our Navy, our shipyards, and our industrial base have sped up the pace of repairs. We've also invested in our supply chains so that when our ships, subs, and aircraft need maintenance, their new parts are more reliable and get to the fleet even faster.

And under Admiral Gilday's leadership, the Navy has also made great strides to modernize our fleet, to strengthen its capabilities, and to project American power on a global scale.

Last October, the Navy deployed its new, first-in-class aircraft carrier, the USS Gerald R. Ford. She's the largest warship in the world. The most technologically advanced. And the most powerful.

In the recent Exercise Neptune Strike, the Ford steamed through the Mediterranean and the Adriatic, sailing together with our NATO allies and other partners to reinforce our common deterrence.

And Navy airwings have deployed with the F-35C—which is a multi-role stealth fighter that is tailor-made for carrier-based operations.

Now that's the type of progress and drive that will keep our Navy on the cutting edge.

And Admiral Gilday has also deepened the Navy's integration with the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard. He and his team developed the first tri-service maritime strategy since 2015. And that strategy will shape the maritime balance of power for years and years to come.

And he has dramatically improved our interoperability with our allies and partners.

To take just one example: our Navy has a key role in our historic AUKUS partnership with Australia and the United

Kingdom. AUKUS is helping our three great democracies work even more closely together to keep the Indo-Pacific free, and open, and secure.

Last month, the first Australian officers graduated from the Navy's nuclear-power school. And just days ago, a Virginia-class submarine visited Australia as a part of the AUKUS partnership. And these crucial port visits help pave the way for our Australian counterparts to operate their own sovereign, nuclear-powered, conventionally armed submarines.

Now, it's a huge task to forge a Navy that will meet today's security requirements. But for our Sailors, it's all in a day's work. And it's all in a life's calling.

Every day, the men and women of the United States Navy defend our democracy.

You do it with courage, skill, and honor. And you're not just advancing American seapower around the planet. You're also advancing America's commitment to an open world of rules and rights.

For the past four years, Admiral Gilday has guided all those advances with vigor, and expertise, and foresight.

Now, Mike was adamant that he did not want today's ceremony to be about him. But Mike, you don't always get to choose. And so I'd be remiss if I didn't say a couple of things about your distinguished career.

Now, his career started right here at the Naval Academy. And by the way, I'm impressed that I was in the building for at least 30 minutes, and nobody said, "Beat Army" to me when I walked in.

You're thinking it though, Admiral.

Mike's classmates knew that he would always put in the work, whether he was studying for an exam or playing ultimate

Frisbee.

And that commitment to excellence defined Mike's 38 years in uniform.

He took on some of the most challenging jobs out there. Service aboard five warships, two of which he commanded, the destroyers Higgins and Benfold. Commander of a Destroyer Squadron and Carrier Strike Group Eight. Commander of U.S. Fleet Cyber Command. Director of operations on the Joint Staff. And even carrying the so-called "nuclear football" on Air Force One.

Now, the Admiral has always understood that the most precious asset in the Navy's arsenal is our people, including our military families. And Mike's own family has supported him every step of his journey.

His wife, Linda Gilday, has had a distinguished career as an engineer and a program manager. And she has brought her own expertise to the Navy as well, including working to improve infrastructure at the Navy's public shipyards.

Linda also helped launch the "Women in the Navy" initiative to honor the inspiring women who have strengthened this service throughout its history. And Linda has been a staunch advocate for military spouses and military families, from working for accessible, high-quality child care to helping families transition from duty station to duty station.

So Linda, on behalf of everyone, thank you for everything that you've done in support of Mike and in support of our United States Navy.

Now, Linda and Mike are deeply proud of their two sons. Michael is a senior at Auburn University. You can say "War Eagle" if you like. Brian is an ensign in the Navy, now serving as an explosive ordnance disposal officer. And that makes Brian third-generation Navy.

So this is an exemplary military family.

Mike, you are a sailor's sailor, through and through. And I'm reminded of something that you said here in May on Commissioning Day. You said that you've always found that "Sailors just want to be led well and treated with respect."

And that's been your hallmark, Mike, from Ensign to Admiral. You've always led superbly, and you've always treated everyone with the respect that they deserve.

Bravo Zulu, Sailor.

We wish you fair winds and following seas.

And I am extremely proud to call you my shipmate.

Let's give Mike and the entire Gilday family a round of applause.

Now, this is indeed a proud day—but I want to take a moment to mark a painful milestone.

As you know, more than 300 nominations for our outstanding general and flag officers are now being held up in the United States Senate. That includes our top uniformed leaders—and our next Chief of Naval Operations.

Because of this blanket hold, starting today, for the first time in the history of the Department of Defense, three of our military services are operating without Senate-confirmed leaders.

This is unprecedented. It is unnecessary. And it is unsafe.

This sweeping hold is undermining America's military readiness. It's hindering our ability to retain our very best officers. And it's upending the lives of far too many American military families.

Our troops deserve better. Our military families deserve

better. Our allies and partners deserve better. And our national security deserves better.

So let me say again that smooth and swift transitions of confirmed leadership are central to the defense of the United States and to the full strength of the most lethal fighting force in history.

And it is time for the Senate to confirm all of our superbly qualified military nominees—including the 33rd Chief of Naval Operations.

Ladies and gentlemen, all around the planet, U.S. Navy ships help to build a world that is more free, more just, and more secure.

Our Sailors never waver. And they never give up the ship. And their idealism reflects our country's highest values of democracy and freedom.

Our Sailors are the reason why the United States has the finest Navy in human history.

And thanks to you, the sight of an American flag fluttering in a sea breeze from a gray Navy hull renews the faith of free people in a more hopeful world.

So thank you to all of the men and women of the United States Navy.

May God bless you.

And may God continue to bless the United States of America.

Thank you very much.

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# New Navy, Edison Electric Institute Collaboration for Resilience



[Release from U.S. Navy Office of Information](#)

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10 August 2023

WASHINGTON (August 10, 2023) – The United States Department of the Navy (DON) and the Edison Electric Institute (EEI) announced today the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The MOU, signed by Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Energy, Installations, and Environment) Meredith Berger, and EEI President and CEO Tom Kuhn, establishes a framework for the two organizations to identify opportunities to align the



common energy goals of the DON, its servicing electric companies, and nearby communities.

Relationships between America's investor-owned electric companies and the Department of the Navy (DON) have been instrumental in increasing energy resilience, reliability, and efficiency, as well as reducing energy consumption at Navy and Marine Corps installations. The MOU will empower these relationships to identify best practices that support the energy grid, local communities, and national security interests.

"EEI and our member companies are excited to continue our partnership with the DON and to pursue additional opportunities to strengthen energy grid resilience," said Kuhn. "The signing of this MOU will allow the industry to play a vital role in maintaining and enhancing America's energy security by laying the foundation to enhance joint energy resilience planning."

The Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations, and Environment ensures mission readiness through resilient installations, personnel, ranges, and capabilities. As the DON's Chief Sustainability Officer, Secretary Berger is also responsible for establishing and overseeing execution of sustainability goals and implementing Climate Action 2030.

"The ability of the DON's installations to plan, prepare, adapt and recover from a range of natural or manmade threats is essential to mission readiness," said Berger. "Energy security is critical to mission success, and working with organizations that share our goals is critical to our efforts."

About Edison Electric Institute: EEI is the association that represents all U.S. investor-owned electric companies. Our members provide electricity for nearly 250 million Americans, and operate in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. As

a whole, the electric power industry supports more than 7 million jobs in communities across the United States. In addition to our U.S. members, EEI has more than 65 international electric companies, with operations in more than 90 countries, as International Members, and hundreds of industry suppliers and related organizations as Associate Members.