

# Navy's T-54A Brings New Era of Pilot Training



The U.S. Navy's T-54A Marlin II is a modern training aircraft designed to prepare pilots for advanced fleet platforms. It will support Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and allied training needs through 2055.

From Naval Air systems Command, June 9, 2025

NAS PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The U.S. Navy declared initial operational capability for the T-54A Marlin II training aircraft in May, giving future naval aviators a modern platform to prepare them for the advanced aircraft they will fly in the fleet.

“Achieving IOC reflects our commitment to provide student naval aviators with the most realistic, effective training aircraft to equip them for today's complex battlespace,” said Capt. Duane Whitmer, Naval Undergraduate Flight Training Systems Program Office (PMA-273) program manager. “We know what's at stake for our nation's sons and daughters. The T-54 team's tireless dedication and hard work are making an impact

on the next generation of pilots.”

The T-54A multi-engine training system is replacing the aging T-44C Pegasus aircraft, which the Navy has begun to retire. The T-54A incorporates the latest avionics and navigational updates, including a pressurized, state-of-the-art cockpit with side-by-side seating and a jump seat. The platform provides advanced instrument and asymmetric engine handling training to student naval aviators selected for multi-engine and tilt-rotor fleet communities.

The aircraft’s technology also captures data that allows for condition-based maintenance plus, a capability that enables the Navy to trend aircraft health over time to facilitate improved maintenance planning and efficiency.

The Navy has received 15 T-54A aircraft and plans to procure up to 64 aircraft per the contract it awarded to Textron in 2023. Aircraft deliveries are scheduled through calendar year 2026. The T-54A meets training requirements for the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and select U.S. allies through 2055.

As part of [Program Executive Office for Tactical Aircraft Programs](#), PMA-273 manages the T-54A, T-44C and other training aircraft. The program office develops and oversees diverse and carrier-capable naval flight training systems where student pilots and undergraduate military flight officers acquire mission-critical aviation skills necessary to carry out current and future missions of the U.S Navy.

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# USS Cole Relieves USS Gravelly, Assumes Southern Border Mission



From U.S. Naval Surface Force Atlantic, June 6, 2025

MAYPORT, Fla. – The Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer USS Cole (DDG 67) departed Naval Station Mayport, Florida, to support U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) southern border operations, June 5.

Cole takes over duties previously carried out by the Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer USS Gravelly (DDG 107) and will conduct similar operations in support of USNORTHCOM's border security objectives.

USNORTHCOM is working together with the Department of Homeland Security to provide additional military forces and

capabilities at the southern border.

The Cole, homeported in Norfolk, Va., will deploy under U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. Fourth Fleet. The deployment aims to enhance maritime security and support interagency collaboration in the region through presence operations and the support of an embarked U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET).

Since entering the Gulf of America on March 15, Gravely has received support from P-8 aircrafts assigned to Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida, allowing for enhanced and increased identification of illicit activity for the embarked Coast Guard LEDET in the Gulf of America. Along with the embarked USCG LEDET, the "Swamp Foxes" of Helicopter Maritime Squadron (HSM) 74, MH-60R Sea Hawk helicopters, is the attached helicopter detachment.

"USS Gravely remains at the forefront of maritime operations, ready to take on any challenge," said Cmdr. Gregory Piorun, commanding officer, USS Gravely. "We will continue to stand strong, protect vital waters, and ensure that justice prevails. True to our motto, we remain always, 'First to Conquer'."

On May 25, Gravely seized an estimated 860 pounds of illegal drugs from a vessel in the Caribbean Sea. The interdiction by Gravely was conducted by the ship's Visit, Board, Search and Seizure (VBSS) team alongside a LEDET assigned to the ship. The VBSS team boarded a vessel of interest and discovered and seized 19 bales of cocaine, with an approximate weight of 860 pounds and an estimated value of \$13,650,000.

"This operation supports the administration's focus on integrated homeland defense and maritime border security," said Capt. Raymond Jackson, commanding officer, Coast Guard Tactical Law Enforcement Team South. "By uniting Coast Guard

law enforcement expertise with Navy reach and surveillance, we're enhancing deterrence, increasing domain awareness and reinforcing our commitment to protecting the homeland."

The U.S. Coast Guard LEDET has unique legal authority to conduct U.S. law enforcement operations in support of border security missions under U.S. Northern Command. Utilizing the Coast Guard's jurisdiction, the Cole will employ LEDET personnel to perform vessel boardings, searches, and seizures in U.S. and international waters, targeting drug trafficking, illegal immigration, and transnational crime with a nexus to the U.S. southern border. With LEDET's tactical expertise guiding interdiction efforts, the Cole will harness its advanced surveillance systems and mobility to locate and intercept suspect vessels, effectively extending Coast Guard authority through naval power to enhance maritime security operations. This collaboration ensures a robust, legally empowered response to maritime threats, strengthening U.S. border protection efforts.

U.S. 2nd Fleet, reestablished in 2018 in response to the changing global security environment, develops and employs maritime forces ready to fight across multiple domains in the Atlantic and Arctic in order to ensure access, deter aggression and defend U.S., allied, and partner interests.

For more U.S. 2nd Fleet news and photos, visit [facebook.com/US2ndFleet](https://www.facebook.com/US2ndFleet), <https://www.c2f.usff.navy.mil/>, X – @US2ndFleet, and <https://www.linkedin.com/company/commander-u-s-2nd-fleet>.

U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet serves as a trusted maritime partner for Caribbean, Central and South American maritime forces and promotes unity, security, and stability in the region.

For more USNAVSOUTH/4th Fleet news and photos, visit

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# Raytheon Awarded \$646M Production and Sustainment Contract for SPY-6 Radars



From RTX, June 9, 2025

*Production continues for U.S. Navy's most advanced maritime radar*

ANDOVER, Mass., (June 9, 2025) – Raytheon, an RTX (NYSE: RTX) business, was awarded a \$646 million contract to continue producing [AN/SPY-6\(V\) radars](#) for the U.S. Navy. This is the

fourth option exercised from the [March 2022 hardware, production and sustainment contract](#) that is valued up to \$3 billion over five years.

Under this contract, the U.S. Navy will receive four additional radars, increasing the total amount of radars under contract for procurement to 42.

“SPY-6 enables the U.S. Navy to see further than they’ve ever seen before, providing sailors with more time to respond to detected threats,” said Barbara Borgonovi, president of Naval Power at Raytheon. “This latest contract builds on our decades of experience and technical expertise in developing modular, scalable, and highly maintainable radars.”

SPY-6 is one of several radar programs designed and manufactured at Raytheon’s Radar Development Facility in Andover, Massachusetts, a 30,000-square foot site supporting the production of diverse types of radars for U.S. and allied forces. This vertically integrated and highly automated site is one of the most advanced in the world, with sophisticated radar testing and integration happening around the clock.

Majority of the work under this contract will take place at the Andover facility through 2028.

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## **Michael Duffey Assumes Role as New Acquisition, Sustainment Chief**



June 5, 2025 | By Army Maj. Wes Shinego, DoD News

Michael P. Duffey was sworn in today as undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment following a swift Senate confirmation that places him in charge of the Defense Department's vast procurement, sustainment and industrial base enterprise.

After Duffey received Senate confirmation yesterday, Deputy Defense Secretary Steve Feinberg administered the oath of office during a brief Pentagon ceremony.

Duffey now oversees more than \$300 billion in annual procurements and policies related to contracting, logistics, installations, energy resilience and the nuclear enterprise. He also leads an acquisition workforce of roughly 190,000 civilian and military professionals.

In a statement released after the ceremony, Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth called Duffey "a proven reformer who knows how to translate strategy into the tools our forces need in the

field.”

Although Duffey limited today’s remarks to thanking family and colleagues, he outlined his priorities during a [March 27, 2025, Senate Armed Services Committee hearing](#).

“America’s ability to protect our interests requires a military force structure with the capability and capacity to deter and, if necessary, to defeat our adversaries,” Duffey told lawmakers.

He also emphasized the need to modernize “how the department integrates requirements, budgeting and acquisition processes – aligning incentives to deliver results.”

Duffey said future wars may hinge as much on industrial production as battlefield performance.

“Future conflicts will be won on the factory floor as much as on the field of battle,” he said, warning that the side able to replace lost equipment fastest will hold the upper hand.

He said the United States must “outpace our adversaries in our ability to supply the joint force with decisive advantage while building an industrial base agile enough to replenish those forces as needed.”

Among his first tasks, Duffey plans to better align service requirements with congressional resources, expand rapid-fielding pathways for emerging technologies and apply data-driven metrics to keep programs on budget and schedule.

He also pledged a comprehensive review of the Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification 2.0 framework, aiming to balance security needs with regulatory burdens – particularly for small businesses.

Duffey brings two decades of experience in the Pentagon and White House. Inside the department, he served as the deputy chief of staff to the defense secretary and chief of staff to

the undersecretary for research and engineering, among other senior positions. Outside the building, he guided national security budgets as associate director at the Office of Management and Budget, giving him what colleagues describe as “a 360-degree view” of the policy-to-production pipeline.

A native of Wisconsin, Duffey is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin–Madison and holds executive certificates from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

In the weeks ahead, Duffey plans to tour depots, shipyards and suppliers to assess production bottlenecks and meet with service acquisition executives to discuss modernization priorities.

He will also chair the Nuclear Weapons Council, linking strategic-deterrent recapitalization to its broader acquisition agenda.

“Our charge,” he told senators, “is to convert American ingenuity into ready combat power at a pace that preserves the nation’s decisive edge.”

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## **DLA            Fuels            Maritime Superiority With \$5 Billion Contract**

June 5, 2025 | By Cindy Pray, Defense Logistics Agency Land and Maritime Public Affairs

The Defense Logistics Agency Maritime Mechanicsburg, located in Pennsylvania, recently awarded a \$5 billion contract to six

small businesses, expediting support for Virginia-class submarines and active surface ships, in a move that will significantly enhance the nation's maritime advantage.

The Maritime Acquisition Advancement Contract is designed to accelerate DLA's procurement of integrated weapons systems equipment and services. The awardees will play a vital role in providing essential resources for the Navy's latest class of advanced capability nuclear-powered fast-attack submarines.

With five one-year options, each valued at \$1 billion, the MAAC could potentially reach a total of \$10 billion.

At an April 8, 2025, hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Navy leaders emphasized that strengthening supply chain capacity is crucial to achieving the goal of building two Virginia-class submarines per year. The submarines will replace the aging Los Angeles-class fleet.

"This contract supports a mission that's a top priority at the highest level," said Elizabeth Allen, DLA Maritime Mechanicsburg's deputy director, underscoring Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth's emphasis on the Virginia-class program.

The MAAC, a yearlong endeavor, culminated in a competitive acquisition process that yielded nine offers. Contracting Officer Brian Stevens said it will propel DLA's support for the Navy into the future and highlighted its alignment with the Defense Department's guiding principle of "speed over process."

"We created this vehicle to do more with less – we can do larger contracts faster, which coincides perfectly with the Virginia-class initiative," Stevens said. "I'm very proud of the work we've done."

Allen further explained that the multi-award structure was

essential to handle the sheer volume and requirements.

“There are significantly long lead times the Navy faces ... this contracting vehicle streamlines and reduces our end of the administrative lead time,” she noted, adding that “it leverages innovative methods to get items into contract quickly.”

Timothy McCloskey, acquisition director for DLA Maritime Mechanicsburg, explained the contract’s widespread impact is broad in scope.

“It’s not just a benefit for DLA here in Mechanicsburg; it’s a benefit for any other buying activity that wants to use it,” he said.

Nestled within Naval Support Activity Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, DLA Maritime Mechanicsburg is responsible for procuring depot-level repairable assets, directly supporting Naval Supply Systems Command’s surface, submarine and aircraft carrier operations. The detachment falls under Columbus, Ohio-based DLA Land and Maritime, which manages the supply chains for thousands of land-based and sea-based weapons systems.

Allen said the team has already engaged with other DLA detachments and naval shipyards and is planning roadshows to reach other commands that may want to utilize the contract vehicle. She stressed the MAAC’s inherent flexibility and responsiveness to the dynamic needs of the Navy and its warfighters.

“It’s one team, one fight,” she said. “We’re working together with the Navy – they’re excited about this contract vehicle, and we’re engaged with industry. They’re seeing the benefits. They know the need, they know the criticality of the items and they’re ready to go.”

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# Caine Calls on Industry: 'Focus on Fighting the Next War, Not Fighting the Last War'

June 4, 2025 | By C. Todd Lopez, DOD News

The joint force alone can't defend against the threats the United States faces today; it's going to need help from the community of innovators responsible for driving America's efforts on artificial intelligence, said Air Force Gen. Dan Caine, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, during the AI+ Expo in Washington today.

"We cannot do this alone. We have to do this ... together. And frankly, my friends, the joint force needs your help," he said.

Right now, Caine said, the U.S. is dealing with an array of threats on the global stage, including the growth and increased activity of China's military, events in the Middle East, the war between Russia and Ukraine, North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons and counterterrorism activities.

He added that the country is facing an "axis of aligned powers" that have differing views from those of the U.S.

"Our adversaries are working together, sharing technologies and intelligence at unprecedented levels – decreasing the time required for them to field advanced technologies," he said, noting the U.S. must produce its technology faster while working with private industry.

The general also acknowledged that working with the government can be a challenge for the private sector, and the federal government must make it easier for them to bring technology to the warfighter.

“Together, we’ve got to be focused on fighting the next war, not fighting the last war,” he said. “We need entrepreneurs, both in the private sector and in government.”

Caine said the joint force must continue to evolve to meet the needs of the president, the defense secretary and the nation, and noted that there are a handful of things it will need to do so.

“We’ve got to be properly armed,” he said. “We owe it to our nation’s warfighters to have the right combat capability with the right capacity, at the time that commanders in the field are contemplating plans and activities – not at the point of crisis or conflict.”

Accomplishing that, he said, means bringing in the right technology, including weapons, capabilities and decision-making tools. It also means having an acquisition process that allows the department to get those things.

“We’ve got to do some work on the requirements process, and I acknowledge that there are times, oftentimes, that the [U.S. government] needs to be better buyers,” he said. “I know this from my time in the private sector, where I tried to sell things to the government when I was an entrepreneur – it’s hard; it’s not easy.”

Secondly, Caine said, the Defense Department must be globally integrated. Combatant commands, geographical and functional commands and military services must be connected with other agencies, allies and partners.

The department must also integrate with technology innovators, he said. “[We must] scale that capability in order to meet the

challenges that we need to. We're doing awesome, but we can do more."

Finally, Caine said, the military must be ready for what comes next.

"We've got to be clear-eyed that the joint force of the future needs to be organized, trained, equipped and rehearsed to be able to go not when we might want to, but to be able to go when we need to," he said. "Our systems need to be built for the war of the future, not the war of the past – and this means using technology and innovation at the tactical edge."

Caine called on the private sector for assistance. "Your nation needs you with a sense of urgency," he told industry partners.

"We need your creative, innovative, patriotic and diabolical minds, 24/7, 365," he said. "Peace in our nation will not be won by the legacy systems that we've had or the legacy thinking. It will be determined by the entrepreneurs and innovators and leaders, both in government and out of government, that create overwhelming strength."

Innovations in AI, cyber, autonomy, space, energy, advanced manufacturing, data and computing power are what the chairman outlined as the most needed.

"We need your help with this," he said. "I need you inspired to help us. You've got the agility, the boldness, the culture and spirit to do these big things, and we welcome your ideas."

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# Honeywell Selected by L3Harris Technologies to Support Development of NGJ-LB

From Honeywell, June 3, 2025

PHOENIX, June 3, 2025 – Honeywell (NASDAQ: HON) has been selected by L3Harris Technologies to support its development of custom tactical jamming pods designed to modernize the U.S. Navy’s airborne electronic attack capability. The contract win comes on the heels of Honeywell’s acquisition of CAES Systems Holdings, LLC, completed in September 2024.

The U.S. Navy awarded L3 Technologies Inc., Communication Systems-West a \$587.4 million contract for the engineering and manufacturing development of the Next Generation Jammer Low Band system. Honeywell’s portion of the work will take place at its Lansdale, Pennsylvania facility.

“Honeywell’s world-class manufacturing facilities and specialized capabilities enable us to provide reliable solutions for some of today’s most critical missions,” said Brad Westphal, Honeywell Aerospace Technologies president of Electromagnetic Defensive Solutions. “As we work together to bring the latest technologies to our Armed Forces, we look forward to continuing to be a trusted partner of L3Harris and the Navy.”

“Honeywell’s Lansdale site has a proven history of developing, producing, and delivering reliable electronic warfare technology,” said Clayton McClain, Honeywell Aerospace Technologies general manager, Mission Systems division. “We’re proud to support the Navy and L3Harris as they remain on the forefront of advanced technology to stay ahead of adversaries.”

The Next Generation Jammer Low Band system is part of a larger system that will augment and ultimately replace the legacy ALQ-99 Tactical Jamming System on the EA-18G Growler aircraft. Using the latest software and active electronically scanned array technologies, the Next Generation Jammer will provide enhanced airborne electronic attack capabilities to disrupt, deny, and degrade enemy air defense and ground communication systems. This latest increment will counter a larger capacity of adversary systems in the low-frequency electromagnetic spectrum.

Honeywell is a premier supplier of advanced electronic systems that enable customers to fully utilize the electromagnetic spectrum by combining decades of experience with electronic warfare systems and advanced technology. Learn more about Honeywell's electronic warfare capabilities [here](#).

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## **USS Sampson Deploys to U.S. Northern Command Area of Responsibility**



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Sampson (DDG 102) steams alongside the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) in the Pacific Ocean, Oct. 5, 2024. Nimitz is underway in 3rd Fleet conducting routine training operations. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Joseph M. Paolucci)

From U.S. Fleet Forces Command Public Affairs, June 4, 2025

SAN DIEGO – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Sampson (DDG 102) departed Naval Base San Diego, June 3, 2025, to support operations in the U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) area of responsibility.

Sampson is relieving littoral combat ship USS Charleston (LCS 18), continuing the Navy's role in maritime operations that support national security priorities.

Sampson will conduct operations in direct support of USNORTHCOM's mission to protect the homeland by enhancing maritime domain awareness and deterring illicit activities in coordination with U.S. interagency and law enforcement partners.

The deployment is part of the Department of Defense's support to national objectives along the U.S. southern border, following Presidential directives and ongoing interagency efforts to improve border security and homeland defense.

During this deployment, Sampson will operate with an embarked U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET). This joint presence strengthens the ship's ability to conduct maritime interdiction operations, contribute to border security, and support counter-narcotics efforts and humanitarian missions as needed.

As a surface combatant assigned to Destroyer Squadron 9, Sampson brings robust multi-mission capabilities to the task of defending U.S. sovereignty and supporting homeland defense operations in coordination with USNORTHCOM.

USFFC is responsible for manning, training, equipping and employing more than 125 ships, 1,000 aircraft, and 103,000 active-duty service members and government employees, and providing combat-ready forces forward to numbered fleets and combatant commanders around the globe in support of U.S. national interests.

USFFC also serves as the Navy's Service Component Commander to both USNORTHCOM and U.S. Strategic Command, providing naval forces in support of joint missions as Commander, Naval Forces Northern Command (NAVNORTH) and Commander, Naval Forces Strategic Command (NAVSTRAT). USFFC is the Strategic Command Joint Force Maritime Component Commander (JFMCC STRAT) and executes Task Force Atlantic in coordination with U.S. Naval Forces Europe.

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# BAE Systems Awarded \$30M for Identification Friend or Foe Common Transponder



From BAE Systems, June 4, 2025

*IFF technical refresh positions the Department of Defense to meet future cyber and crypto requirements and eliminates obsolescence*

GREENLAWN, N.Y. – June 4, 2025 – The U.S. Navy has awarded BAE Systems \$30 million to refresh the AN/APX-123A(V) Common Transponder (CXP), which provides time-critical insights that help prevent friendly fire incidents. The refreshed CXP will support the U.S. Navy fleet and joint forces for air defense, weapon systems, air traffic control, and range instrumentation.

The upgrade will serve as a replacement option for currently installed Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) transponders on existing and emerging platforms including unmanned aerial vehicles, ships, fixed-wing aircraft, and helicopters. As a form, fit, and function replacement, its design will address obsolescence and processing capacity to support future needs. The open-system architecture design and high-density field programmable gate array technology ensures ongoing versatility and future utility through software upgrades, without the risk and cost associated with hardware modifications.

“Common transponders provide our service men and women with a reliable and secure solution to help them identify friendly forces and make decisions in a variety of threat environments,” said Seth Guanu, Combat Identification Products program area director at BAE Systems. “The level of speed, security, and accuracy matters to support interoperability across U.S. forces. This modernization effort enables us to deliver a critical capability to thousands of existing applications and equip emerging platforms.”

The AN/APX-123A(V) CXP will be Mark XIIB IFF certified with Mode S and Mode 5 for secure and encrypted data exchange – meeting latest Department of Defense standards. It will also include additional receive channels for passive acquisition of Mode 5 Level 2 and Automatic Dependent Surveillance – Broadcast In, enhancing situational awareness for warfighters. It will provide high-performance, multi-function capabilities while supporting the latest crypto requirements.

With more than 80 years of [IFF experience](#), BAE Systems has delivered over 1,500 interrogators, 6,000 combined interrogator transponder systems, and 16,000 transponders.

The AN/APX-123A(V) CXP technical refresh work will be performed at BAE Systems’ Greenlawn, New York and Austin, Texas facilities. Production hardware is expected to be qualified for flight and delivered to users in 2027.

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# SECDEF Orders Renaming of USNS Harvey Milk



The John Lewis-class replenishment oiler USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO-206) conducts a replenishment at sea with the world's largest aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), December 13, 2024. Photo credit: *U.S. Navy | Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Maxwell Orlosky*

According to numerous reports, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth has ordered the renaming of USNS Harvey Milk (T-AO-206), a John Lewis-class oiler named after the Navy veteran and gay rights activist.

First reported by Military Times, a memorandum has ordered the changing of the name and the timing of the action, right at the beginning of Pride month, was on purpose, part of the Department of Defense objective of re-establishing a "warrior

culture.”

Fox News reported that further name changes may be coming pending internal reviews.

Milk served four years in the Navy in the early 1950s, serving aboard the submarine rescue ship USS Kittiwake as a diving officer and later as a diving instructor at Naval Station San Diego. He resigned at the rank of lieutenant junior grade, leaving service rather than face a court martial for being gay, according to Wikipedia.

Later, he became the first openly gay man to be elected to public office in California as a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. In late 1978, Milk and San Francisco Mayor George Moscone were shot to death by a disgruntled member of the board of supervisors, according to Wikipedia. Milk was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2009.

The USNS Harvey Milk, the second in the John Lewis class of oilers, was officially named in 2016 and launched in 2021. The ship is operated by Military Sealift Command.