USNS Wally Schirra Completes Major Maintenance at South Korean Shipyard

GYEONGSANGNAM-DO, Republic of Korea—Military Sealift Command's (MSC) Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ship USNS Wally Schirra (T-AKE 8) departs Hanwha Ocean shipyard after a seven-month overhaul at Gyeongsangnam-do, Republic of Korea, March 12, 2025. (Courtesy photo)

GYEONGSANGNAM-DO, Republic of Korea – Military Sealift Command's (MSC) Lewis and Clark-class dry cargo ship USNS Wally Schirra (T-AKE 8) completed a seven-month regular overhaul (ROH) at Hanwha Ocean, Gyeongsangnam-do, Republic of Korea, March 12, 2025.

The ROH marks the first time that a Republic of Korea shipyard

has bid on and won an ROH contract of this scale for an MSC vessel. The ROH is much larger work vice voyage repairs (VRs), which are conducted routinely in the Republic of Korea.

“The Republic of Korea’s ability to conduct large-scale maintenance to USNS ships within the Indo-Pacific Theater demonstrates the strong strategic partnership between the Republic of Korea and the United States,” said Rear Adm. Neil Koprowski, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Korea. “Maintenance in Theater reduces downtime and costs, while enhancing operational readiness. This is a landmark achievement to be celebrated as a symbol of our strengthened partnership and ironclad commitment to the ROK-U.S. alliance.”

ROH conducted aboard Wally Schirra in the Republic of Korea included dry docking, and more than 300 work items that addressed hull corrosion and a full rudder replacement.

“Hanwha addressed extensive deterioration and damage to the hull, propeller, rudder, and rudder post/steering gear,” said Cmdr. Patrick J. Moore, commanding officer, MSC Office-Korea. “Notably, Hanwha engineers reverse-engineered the damaged rudder, completely replacing the unit when blueprint were not available. This saved significant time and resources in getting Wally Schirra back to sea, a testament to their resilient supply chains, advanced automations, and skilled workforce.”

Wally Schirra is one of the many ships that are part of the U.S. Navy’s Combat Logistics Force (CLF). CLF are the supply lines to U.S. Navy ships while at sea. These ships provide virtually everything Navy ships need including fuel, food, fleet ordnance, dry cargo, spare parts, mail, and other supplies.

“We appreciated the opportunity to complete this maintenance in the Republic of Korea, which will ensure Wally Schirra is

ready for any tasking," said Moore. "The addition of ROH capability for MSC ships in the Republic of Korea's shipping industry adds additional means to deliver repair of military logistics vessels in order to sustain the readiness necessary to support Fleet operations."

CLF ships enable the Navy fleet to remain at sea and combat ready for extended periods of time. In addition to U.S. Navy ships, CLF ships also resupply international partners and allies operating in the Indo-Pacific Region.

MSC Far East supports the U.S. 7th Fleet and ensures approximately 50 ships in the Indo-Pacific Region are manned, trained, and equipped to deliver essential supplies, fuel, cargo, and equipment to U.S. forces and coalition partners, both at sea and on shore.

Navy Accepts Delivery of Ship to Shore Connector, LCAC 112

LCAC 112 was delivered to the Navy on March 13. US Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) photo.
By Team Ships Public Affairs, March 13, 2025

NEW ORLEANS – The U.S. Navy accepted delivery of Ship to Shore Connector, Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) 112, from Textron Systems, March 13.

Delivery of LCAC 112 follows completion of acceptance trials and represents the official transfer of the craft from the shipbuilder to the Navy. During acceptance trials, the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey tested the readiness and capability of the craft to effectively meet requirements.

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

"This new craft will provide the Navy and Marine Corps team with unparalleled capability in amphibious warfare, ensuring we remain agile and responsive to emerging threats and global challenges," said Angela Bonner, program manager for Amphibious Assault and Connectors Programs, Program Executive

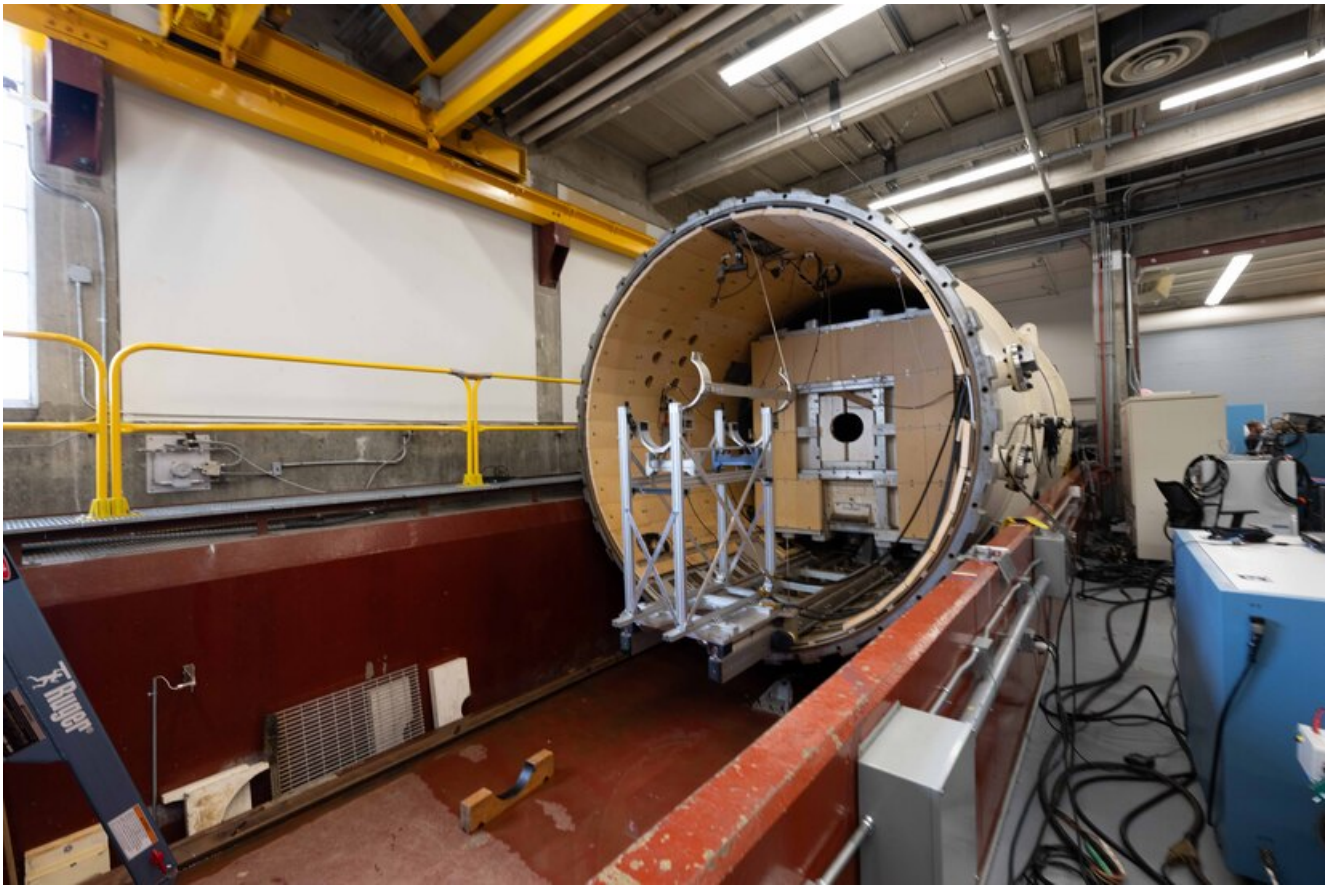
Office, Ships (PEO Ships). “The introduction of LCAC 112 into our fleet marks another significant milestone in our ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance operational readiness.”

The current LCAC is built with configurations, dimensions, and clearances similar to legacy LCACs—ensuring that it is fully compatible with existing well deck-equipped amphibious ships. LCACs can carry an approximate 60 to 75-ton payload and primarily transport weapon systems, equipment, cargo, and assault element personnel through a wide range of conditions, including over-the-beach.

“The successful delivery of LCAC 112 demonstrates the strong partnership between the Navy and Textron Systems,” said Bonner. “This advanced craft will significantly enhance operations, providing a critical link in our ability to project power and support joint operations across the globe.” Textron Systems is currently in serial production of LCACs 113-125.

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

Sound-Absorbing Chamber Allows Navy to Test Torpedoes Indoors



March 13, 2025 | By Katie Lange, DoD News

The Navy has various methods of testing torpedoes and other underwater weapons, including at tracking ranges. One unique Navy facility in Keyport, Washington allows experts to test these systems indoors.

The Weapons System Test Facility at Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division was built in the 1980s to conduct land-based testing and evaluation of various undersea weapons capabilities including torpedoes and the sensors attached to them.

“Back the Cold War, they running every torpedo on our test ranges. Every single one that’s produced … before deploying it to the fleet. Obviously, there’s a lot of cost and schedule associated with that,” said Will Buck, the deputy division head of the Undersea Systems Acquisition and Assessment Division that runs the facility.

To save time and money, the Navy built the facility that

contains a pressure chamber that’s 45 feet long and 12 feet in diameter. The chamber can hold 40,000 gallons of water that Buck’s team of about 20 people can pressurize and heat up or cool down to test torpedoes, sensors and unmanned underwater vehicles in their operational environments.

“It only takes about 30 minutes to fill and drain the tank, turn the wrench and test again,” Buck said. “So, it just helps us quickly move through test evolutions to make sure that Navy systems are working the way they’re supposed to.”

While the facility was first set up in the 1980s, it sat dormant for about 20 years after an accident in 1996 at a similar U.S. facility led to its closure. About a decade ago, Buck and his team knew the space could be useful, so they got approval to revitalize and modernize it.

Typically, undersea weapons find their targets through sounds created underwater. The current facility includes an anechoic chamber – a box within the primary pressure chamber that absorbs sound waves – that can simulate the acoustics of an undersea environment.

Buck’s team tests weapons in the chamber to find answers to questions such as, what direction the sounds are traveling, if they’re loud enough and if they’ll be heard far enough away.

There were other questions the team considered. “What’s the directivity of this source? How long is the pulse? How loud is it? What frequency is it?” Buck said. “We’re trying to make sure that meets the performance requirements of the system,” Buck said.

If those parameters aren’t up to par, the risk for a weapon to miss its target is higher, he said.

The team has tested several Mark 48 and Mark 54 torpedoes in the pressure chamber, as well as torpedo warning systems parts, the Gavia UUV and submarine sonar known as the high-

frequency chin array.

“We can put almost any kind of naval system – I mean, outside of a submarine or something really, really big – and we can recreate the physical characteristics it’s going to operate under and provide high-confidence data in how it’s going to react, how it’s going to perform and what changes, if any, are going to be made to the system before it goes out into the hands of the fleet.”

Buck said his versatile team constantly gets to flex its design and engineering muscles with the wide variety of work it’s asked to do, especially with all the new technological capabilities that are coming onto the scene.

“Everything we’re doing with UUVs is relatively modern and novel,” Buck said.

Buck, who’s been at NUWC Division, Keyport, for more than a decade, has a bachelor’s degree in physics and a master’s degree in acoustics. He said for many in his field of work, there aren’t a lot of opportunities outside of academia, so the Navy has been a great place for him to put those skills to work and make a real difference.

“They value competent and well-thought-out ideas and will put investment behind that,” Buck said of his division. “We’ve come a long way as a result. I’ve loved being here.”

The facility has partnered with various institutions on some of its work, including the Applied Research Lab at Pennsylvania State University. Several of the members of the team have published their work and presented at scientific conferences, helping them to stay engaged with academia.

America ARG Completes Westpac Patrol

12 March 2025

SASEBO, Japan – The America Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) and the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) completed their first patrol of 2025, March 6.

This routine patrol, coordinated between the U.S. Pacific Fleet (PACFLT) and U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific (MARFORPAC), served to maintain a consistent presence in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations.

“Throughout our time at sea, we have remained on plan and on target conducting routine operations in the U.S. 7th Fleet area to enhance interoperability with our allies and partners,” said Commander, Amphibious Squadron (PHIBRON) 11, Capt. Patrick German. “Together, we continued to serve cohesively as a ready-response force to defend peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.”

During the winter patrol, the America ARG consisted of PHIBRON

11, the America-class amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA 6), the San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship USS San Diego (LPD 22), and the Whidbey Island-class dock landing ship USS Rushmore (LSD 47). Additionall y, the San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship USS New Orleans (LPD 18) briefly joined the team of ships at sea, while conducting routine operations.

“It has been great to have all our assets underway,” said German, who previously served as New Orleans commanding officer. “I am extremely proud to have all four amphibious ships underway simultaneously. Having all ships underway simultaneously goes a long way in ensuring our allies and partners that we are a ready force here to assist when and where it’s necessary.”

From an amphibious assault ship, to an amphibious transport dock ship, to a dock landing ship, each vessel brought its own capabilities to form one, united ARG, operating at sea.

“Each ship has a specific role and while there’s some overlap, some of those roles are specific to that particular ship,” said German. “For instance, LSDs have the largest well decks in the Navy’s amphibious fleet. Then you have the LHA, which is a floating airport. Even though we have aviation capabilities on the LPDs and the LSDs, they can’t assume the same role as the LHA or LHD. So, the aggregate of a three to four ship ARG increases strength and enhances the multi-role capability of an amphibious outfit.”

Additionally, the 31st MEU integrated into the ARG to form a powerful and cohesive blue-green team. Its aviation combat element comprised of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron 262 (Reinforced) and a detachment from Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 242; the ground combat element comprised of Battalion Landing Team 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines (2/4); and the logistics combat element comprised of Combat Logistics

Battalion 31.

“Working alongside the Marines was critical for us,” said San Diego Commanding Officer Capt. Timothy Carter. “As we continued to learn from each other, we also built on the foundations of our partnerships within our own organization, so that when the time comes to provide support to our allies and partners, we are ready, welding, and prepared to execute our mission.”

Carter added having Marines and Sailors working together is the name of the game in an ARG; having a Blue-Green team is vital to the strength of amphibious operations and capabilities.

During 25.1, America and Rushmore also participated in Iron Fist 2025, while San Diego became the third U.S. ship to visit Ishigaki, Japan in three years, underscoring the strength and commitment of the U.S.-Japan alliance as a cornerstone to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.
Throughout 25.1, the ARG worked as one team in response to operational tasking, from start to end.

“It has been phenomenal watching our teams come together,” said Carter. “We all bring different types of capabilities to the fight. Everyone has a unique art and everyone plays a valuable role in what we have accomplished here. Throughout our interoperability and certifying exercises, we truly came together as a unit, both sea force and landing force while operating as one.”

Based in Sasebo, Japan, and consisting of the amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA 6), transport dock ships USS San Diego (LPD 22) and USS New Orleans (LPD 18), and the dock landing ship USS Rushmore (LSD 47); PHIBRON 11 provides centralized planning embarkation, movement control, coordination and integration of all aspects of amphibious

warfare.

Navy Intends to Ramp Up Shipbuilding Through Collaborative Efforts

March 11, 2025 | By David Vergun, DoD News

U.S. shipbuilders continue to produce the highest quality, safest and most advanced warships on the planet, said Brett A. Seidle, deputy assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development, and acquisition, who testified today at a House Armed Services Committee's seapower and projection forces subcommittee hearing on the state of U.S. shipbuilding.

“We have the finest Navy ever assembled in the history of the world,” Seidle said. “They’re coming to a theater near you, bringing their A game.”

However, at a time when adversaries around the globe challenge the maritime commons, the U.S. shipbuilding industry is challenged to produce the quantity of ships at the rate required, he said.

Cost and schedule performance remain challenging with deliveries approximately one to three years late and cost rising faster than overall inflation. These issues are prevalent across the nuclear and conventional shipbuilding communities with both the Navy and industry sharing responsibility, Seidle said.

Some things brought this about, he said, including reduced competition and capacity at tier-one shipyards. Additionally, suppliers have experienced atrophy of the manufacturing sector, shifting Navy requirements, burdensome acquisition processes, depressed investment, workforce shortages, diminished proficiency, supply chain disruptions, historic underinvestment and industry consolidation following the end of the Cold War.

“I was not raised in the shipbuilding environment and therefore am not saddled with preconceived notions of ‘this is how we’ve always done it.’ I certainly welcome informed perspectives from those who are passionate about strengthening our fleet,” Seidle said.

He believes these collective challenges can be overcome, he said.

“This committee has my passionate commitment to collaborate with Congress, industry, academia, training organizations, trade associations, as well as all levels of government in pursuit of improved cost and schedule performance,” Seidle testified.

“Our nation and the world need the strength of our Navy, and my intent is do everything in my power to deliver on that promise,” he said.

Mass Timber, 3D Printing May be Future of Military Construction for Army, Navy

March 11, 2025 | By C. Todd Lopez, DoD News

Army and Navy barracks may one day be 3D printed or built using mass timber construction that involves large wooden structural beams manufactured from smaller lumber.

Today on Capitol Hill, Dave Morrow, director of military programs for Army Corps of Engineers, and Keith Hamilton, chief engineer for Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command, met with lawmakers from the House appropriations committee, subcommittee on defense, to discuss the current and potential future uses of innovative construction techniques and technologies by the armed forces.

Additive construction – 3D printing buildings – high performance cement and concrete mixes, geosynthetics, mass timber, composite materials, industrialized construction, tension fabric structures, and carbon fiber reinforced polymers were all part of the discussion with lawmakers about how the Army and Navy can develop the most cost efficient and resilient military construction projects.

“In an increasingly complex global security environment, our commitment to innovation in military construction is not just

about building structures, it’s about building the resilience and readiness our forces need to prevail,” Morrow said. “By working with industry to leverage these advancements, we can deliver more durable, sustainable and cost-effective infrastructure for our military, ensuring taxpayer dollars are used efficiently, while equipping our troops with the best facilities in the world.”

The Army Corps of Engineers, Morrow said, has already piloted 3D printed construction at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, and Fort Bliss, Texas. At Fort Bliss, three new projects, involving barracks, were constructed using 3D printing technology.

Morrow said this technology can be used in garrison or in expeditionary environments.

“Additive construction has [the] potential to reduce costs, manpower, logistics and time, while opening the door for improved and new applications, such as unconventional countermeasures,” he told lawmakers.

The USACE’s Engineer Research and Development Center, has played a part in the development of unified facilities criteria, to allow additive construction in 80% of the United States, Morrow said. The criteria, developed jointly, sets basic technical requirements that must be followed to deliver code-compliant, complete and usable military facilities.

In Hampton Roads, Virginia, the Navy is now piloting the use of mass timber, also called cross-laminated timber for construction of a child development center, Hamilton said.

In testimony submitted to the committee, Hamilton said the new facility will use a hybrid mass timber exterior envelope consisting of cross-laminated walls and diaphragms.

“DOD has expressly acknowledged the applicability of CLT with the creation of a guide specification,” Hamilton said. “As the

CLT construction industry matures, CLT may prove more competitive and could be utilized more broadly in DOD construction."

The USACE is also working with mass timber projects, Morrow said.

"We recently designed the Army's first barracks made primarily with mass timber structural elements and are soliciting interest in construction of a project at Mountain Home Air Force Base, calling for the incorporations of mass timber design," he said, adding that mass timber construction in those projects may reduce construction timelines.

Hamilton told lawmakers, at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, North Carolina, NAVFAC was involved in piloting the use of high-performance concrete to build a new F-35 Lighting II hanger.

Advancements within HPC include durability, strength, and resistance to extreme environmental conditions, as well as improved thermal and acoustic properties.

"HPC has been used extensively for our piers, runways and other critical infrastructure; and we are broadening its application," Hamilton wrote in submitted testimony.

Like USACE, Hamilton said, NAVFAC is looking to newer technologies to provide better facilities and better capabilities to warfighters.

"NAVFAC is actively testing and employing innovative technologies, materials and methods for design and construction today, and we are leaning forward to increase collaboration with industry, academia and other government partners to identify and leverage future opportunities," Hamilton said.

Within the Navy, he told lawmakers, new guidance requires

NAVFAC planners and engineers to evaluate if new military construction projects can use alternative construction methods to meet warfighting requirements, lower costs and accelerate project delivery.

Curtiss-Wright Awarded $50 Million IDIQ Contract by Naval Air Systems Command for High-Speed Data Acquisition Systems

ASHBURN, Va. – March 11, 2025 – Curtiss-Wright's Defense Solutions Division today announced it has been awarded an approximately $50 million firm-fixed-price Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract by Naval Air Systems Command to provide its high-speed data acquisition systems hardware and associated repair services in support of the Naval Air Systems Command Special Flight Test Instrumentation Pool. The contract, which is scheduled to run through January 2030, covers Curtiss-Wright's full line of flight test instrumentation products, including data acquisition units, network switches, data recorders, network gateways, Ethernet radios, RF transmitters, C-Band transponders, and high-speed cameras supporting fixed-wing and rotary military aircraft. This contract will support numerous platforms including the F-35, F-18, CH-53K, E-2D, EA-18, C-130, and future U.S. Navy development programs.

"We are honored that our high-speed data acquisition

technology and services have been selected by Naval Air Systems Command," said Brian Perry, Senior Vice President and General Manager, Curtiss-Wright Defense Solutions Division. "This IDIQ contract, which is the renewal of an existing contract that has been in use for over 15 years, represents Naval Air Systems Command's continued endorsement of the reliability and performance of our flight test instrumentation technology to support critical naval air deployments and future U.S. Navy development programs."

Chief of Naval Air Training Awarded Meritorious Unit Commendation for Training Excellence

(U.S. Navy photo by Ensign Alan Wang)
By CNATRA Public Affairs

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – The Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) has been awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation (MUC) by the Chief of Naval Operations in recognition of its exceptional performance in training student naval aviators. This honor highlights CNATRA's commitment to excellence in naval aviation training from October 2022 to March 2024.

During this period, CNATRA achieved unprecedented success in preparing the next generation of naval aviators. CNATRA stayed committed to providing top-notch aviation training, using the latest technology and embracing new, innovative methods, which resulted in two consecutive years of exceeding Naval Aviation production requirements.

“The men and women of CNATRA have demonstrated an extraordinary level of commitment to the mission,” said Rear Admiral Rich Brophy, Chief of Naval Air Training. “This commendation is a testament to their hard work meeting our North Star requirement of producing high quality Naval Aviators.”

CNATRA oversees all primary, intermediate, and advanced flight training for student naval aviators. This commendation is awarded to the five training air wings and 17 training squadrons under the CNATRA. The command plays a vital role in the Navy’s operational readiness, producing highly capable pilots who will go on to serve in fleet squadrons around the globe.

The MUC is awarded to units that distinguish themselves through outstanding meritorious achievement or service in combat or non-combat situations. CNATRA’s recognition underscores its critical role in maintaining the Navy’s warfighting edge through superior training and tactical effectiveness.

USS Oregon Completes Homeport Shift to Norfolk

From Petty Officer 1st Class Justin Yarborough, March 10, 2025

NORFOLK – The Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS Oregon (SSN 793) arrived at Naval Station Norfolk, following a change of homeport from Naval Submarine Base New London, March 7, 2024.

Oregon's arrival marks the sixth Virginia-class fast-attack submarine currently homeported at Norfolk's waterfront, and the submarine will be assigned to Submarine Squadron Six.

Cmdr. John H. Ross, commanding officer of Oregon, took time to express his excitement and gratitude to his crew for their support and hard work in anticipation of the homeport shift.

"Speaking on behalf of the Oregon crew, we are excited to be here," said Ross. "After finishing sea trials and building our tactical warfighting edge, we're looking forward to working

with our Squadron Six teammates and bringing the fight to the enemy.”

Before completing the homeport shift from Groton, Connecticut, Oregon completed a post-shakedown availability.

Commissioned in May 2022, Oregon is the third U.S. naval vessel to be named for the 33rd state, the 20th Virginia-class fast attack submarine built, and the second Block IV Virginia-class submarine.

Block IV Virginia-class submarines incorporate design changes focused on reduced total ownership cost. By making these smaller-scale design changes to increase the component-level life cycle of the submarine, the Navy will increase the periodicity between depot maintenance availabilities and increase the number of deployments.

Blocks I-III Virginia-class submarines are planned to undergo four depot maintenance availabilities and conduct 14 deployments. Block IV design changes are intended to reduce planned availabilities by one to three, and increase deployments to 15.

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 preparation of regional crises.

The Virginia-class submarine is 377 feet long and 34 feet wide, and weighs about 7,900 tons when submerged. Underwater,

it can reach speeds in excess of 25 knots.

Saildrone Launches in St. Pete for First Ocean Mapping Mission of Florida’s Coastal Waters

Saildrone Launches in St. Pete for First Ocean Mapping Mission of Florida’s Coastal Waters

Two Saildrone Voyager USVs have been deployed from St. Petersburg for the first time to map Florida’s coastal waters within the continental shelf.

From Saildrone, March 10, 2025

ST. PETERSBURG, Florida: Saildrone is launching two 10-meter Saildrone Voyager uncrewed surface vehicles (USVs) from its facility in St. Petersburg, FL, to begin a mapping mission as part of the Florida Seafloor Mapping Initiative (FSMI), a multiyear effort to provide statewide stakeholders with accessible, high-quality, and high-resolution seafloor data of Florida's coastal waters within the continental shelf.

At 2,170 kilometers long, Florida's coastline is second only to Alaska among US states. Many parts of the Florida coast remain unsurveyed, with existing nautical charts relying on outdated and low-resolution data. The goal of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) initiative is to provide updated mapping data of coastal systems, which is critical for protecting offshore infrastructure, habitat mapping, restoration projects, emergency response, coastal resilience, and hazard studies for the state's citizens.

"Saildrone is proud to support the Florida Seafloor Mapping Initiative with our unique and innovative Voyager USVs. As a member of the St. Petersburg community, we are excited to contribute to a project that seeks to improve our coastal resilience and enhance our ability to predict storm surge impacts by providing high-resolution bathymetry," said Brian Connon, Saildrone VP Ocean Mapping. "Saildrone USVs efficiently and safely collect high-resolution bathymetric data while minimizing environmental impact."

Saildrone has been tasked with collecting high-resolution multibeam data in a region known as Middle Grounds. The mission, valued at $1.66M, Saildrone will map 2,817 square kilometers of seafloor, approximately 130 kilometers northwest of St. Petersburg.

This is the first time that Saildrone has deployed Voyager USVs, equipped with NORBIT WINGHEAD i80s echo sounders for high-resolution mapping, and radar, AIS, and cameras for maritime domain awareness, out of Tampa Bay. In 2024,

Saildrone Voyagers were used to map a portion of the Gulf of Maine to identify deep-water coral habitat. In Florida, Saildrone has previously deployed Voyager USVs for the US 4th Fleet out of Key West and currently has a fleet of Voyager USVs operating in the Caribbean in support of Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S) and US Naval Forces Southern Command/US Navy Fourth Fleet (NAVSOUTH/FOURTHFLT).

FSMI builds on the efforts of the Florida Coastal Mapping Program (FCMaP), an initiative led by federal and Florida state agencies and other community stakeholders to promote the need for a comprehensive high-resolution seafloor data set of Florida's coastal waters by 2028. The data will be available to update navigational charts and identify navigation hazards, provide fundamental baseline data for scientific research, and provide information for use by emergency managers and responders.

The data Saildrone collects will help better understand Florida's coastal vulnerability and hurricane impact, evaluate the performance of restoration projects, and support ongoing coastal resilience efforts and flood risk mapping.