USS Philippine Sea Departs Naval Station Norfolk On Final Scheduled Deployment

NORFOLK, Va. (January 20, 2025) The Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea (CG 58), departs from Naval Station Norfolk, January 20th, 2024. Philippine Sea will deploy to the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility (USSOUTHCOM AOR) to support maritime operations with partners in the region, conduct Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) port visits, and support Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South) to deter illicit activity along Caribbean and Central American shipping routes. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Evan Thompson/Released)
From U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Jan. 20, 2025

NORFOLK, Va. - The Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea (CG 58) departed Naval Station Norfolk for a scheduled deployment to the U.S. 4th Fleet area of operations, Jan. 20.

Philippine Sea will deploy to the U.S. Southern Command Area

of Responsibility (USSOUTHCOM AOR) to support maritime operations with partners in the region, conduct Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) port visits, and support Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-South) to deter illicit activity along Caribbean and Central American shipping routes.

“The deployment of Philippine Sea to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility highlights the Navy’s ability to generate and certify out of cycle combat-ready forces in order to execute critical missions,” said Adm. Daryl Caudle, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command. “The ship and crew will play a pivotal role in enhancing regional security and supporting bilateral and multinational efforts to counter challenges unique to Fourth Fleet. This deployment also underscores our commitment to building a resilient and adaptable force that meets global demands while fostering trust and interoperability with our global maritime partners.”

This is scheduled to be Philippine Sea’s final deployment after more than 35 years in service.

The ship previously deployed on October 14, 2023 as part of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group (IKECSG) to U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet area of operations in support of maritime security operations, theater security cooperation efforts, and enhanced vigilance activities operations with NATO Allies and Partners.

“My sailors have received the highest level of training and are fully prepared to meet the challenges of our deployment,” said Capt. Steven Liberty, commanding officer of Philippine Sea. “The vigilant and hard work of the War Dogs is a testament to the level of pride, professionalism, and resiliency in all of them.”

U.S. 4th Fleet employs maritime forces in cooperative maritime security operations in order to maintain access, enhance interoperability, and build enduring partnerships that foster regional security in the USSOUTHCOM AOR.

USSOUTHCOM AOR encompasses 31 countries and 16 dependencies and areas of special sovereignty, including the land mass of Latin America south of Mexico, waters adjacent to Central and South America, and the Caribbean Sea. The region represents about one-sixth of the landmass of the world assigned to regional unified commands.

U.S. Fleet Forces Command is responsible for manning, training, equipping, and providing combat-ready forces forward to numbered fleets and combatant commanders around the globe.

Navy, Industry Working to Surge Capability as 2027 Draws Closer

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti participates in a Q&A session moderated by retired Vice Adm. Richard Hunt at the Surface Navy Association National Symposium in Arlington, Virginia, Jan. 14, 2025. *Photo credit: U.S. Navy | Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist Elliott Fabrizio*

As the U.S. military braces for a potential conflict with China in 2027, maritime defense and industry leaders alike are trying to get the most out of the existing fleet while planning for a more capable future fleet with a mix of manned and uncrewed platforms.

“The countdown clock in my office continues to tick away and it tells me when I walked in today that there are 716 days left until 1 January, 2027. There is no time to waste,” Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Lisa M. Franchetti said this week at the Surface Navy Association’s annual symposium, referring to a year when Chinese President Xi Jinping has reportedly told his generals to be ready for war.

“The People’s Republic of China is our pacing challenge and presents a complex multi-domain and multi access threat,”

Franchetti said. “And I’m eyes wide open that the challenge posed by the PRC to our Navy goes well beyond just the size of the PLAN [People’s Liberation Army Navy] fleet. It includes gray zone and economic campaigns, expansion of dual use infrastructure like airfield and dual use forces like the Chinese maritime militia and a growing nuclear arsenal.”

To counter that, and guard against the expected threat to Taiwan, Franchetti said she needs a larger fleet and one with more robotic and automated systems from programs such as the Replicator initiative, the rapid development effort NavalX and the Disruptive Capabilities Office.

From the Russian invasion of Ukraine to the Houthis in the Red Sea, “we are seeing the increase in use and effective adaptation of robotic and autonomous systems in every domain,” she said. “It’s abundantly clear that we need to both have these capabilities and have the capability to defeat ’em kinetically and non kinetically … the future of war at sea is neither fully robotic nor fully manned.”

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro, in his last address as SECNAV to the Surface Navy Association, agreed.

“…Our challenge is not only about maintaining naval superiority, but also ensuring that the U.S. military is prepared to confront the evolving threats that are opposed by the People’s Republic of China, especially in the realms of advanced technology, maritime claims, and military modernization,” he said. “Much like President Kennedy’s recognition of the need for modernized nuclear deterrent, today’s Navy and Marine Corps must continue to adopt, leveraging both man and unmanned capabilities to counter the PRC’s growing naval and technological advances.”

Admiral Daryl Caudle, commander of Fleet Forces Command, has the job of training and equipping the fleets that will need to contain China’s potential military expansion.

“The speed of modern warfare, combined with ever-shrinking indications and warnings windows, means we won’t have the luxury of long lead times to bring the full capabilities of our fleet to bear,” Caudle said in his keynote address to the SNA.

“Every day, about 100 [U.S. Navy] ships are deployed around the globe. Furthermore, about 100 ships are in lengthy depot maintenance availabilities that would take weeks, if not months, to close out just by buttoning up all the existing work and returning systems to service. This leaves the last 100 ships that are not deployed nor in depot, and the question – can we do more with those ships to make them ready to flow into combat? The answer is hell yes, and we are,” Caudle said.

That includes making use of the Combat Surge Ready certification for ships, a formal process and designation for getting ships on the Response Plan watchbill.

Efforts like the ongoing Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program, or SIOP, won’t add a lot of ship mass to the Navy by 2027, Caudle said, but the combat surge effort can up those numbers in the short term.

“When we sustain 80% Combat Surge Ready or better for all ships not in depot maintenance, the number of platforms ready to surge and flow into combat step-increases from around 100 to 180,” Caudle said. “…The goal of sustaining 80% Combat Surge Ready will require some new ways of thinking and may be uncomfortable for some, but we know our force structure will certainly not change between now and 2027 and will not significantly change over the next decade. Bottom Line: We must be constantly making ready ships not in depot or currently deployed.”

Industry Efforts

Getting more ships to the fleet requires having a large, well-trained workforce, something the maritime industry has been

struggling with in recent years.

Christopher Kastner, CEO of shipbuilding giant HII, sat down with reporters on the eve of the SNA symposium to discuss how his company is trying to attract more workers, particularly more experienced ones, and dealing with an “almost arthritic” supply chain.

One way is by buying relevant suppliers. HII announced in December it has agreed to buy W International SC and Vivid Empire SC, South Carolina metal fabricators specializing in building structures, modules and assemblies for shipbuilders.

“We did that simply to increase capacity and increase throughput,” Kastner said. “We’re going to where the labor is, right? … We’re expanding into Texas, Louisiana, we’ve expanded in Norfolk, Virginia. You see this expansion in South Carolina. We’re going to where the labor is.”

Paying better wages for the shipbuilding workforce is also key, he said, and the Navy has taken steps to help do that for the submarine industrial base. It’s a key effort at a time when the gap between shipbuilding work and less demanding retail work has narrowed, making it harder to attract new workers.

“I definitely think there’s momentum, there’s recognition by the Navy, as you saw on the [defense budget] supplemental, that they want to address wages in the submarine industrial base. I don’t think it should be limited at the submarine industrial base, and it should be all of shipbuilding, [we] should be able to adjust wages to attract and increase talent into the industry.”

Raytheon is Cranking Out SPY-6 Radars for the Fleet

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. — Raytheon, a sector of RTX, is humming with production of its SPY-6 family of four naval radars as the first three variants are either operational or installed on ships and the fourth variant enters production.

Scott Spence, Raytheon's vice president for Naval Integrated Solutions, told Seapower that the company is "now really cranking them out" — referring to production and delivery of shipsets of the radars from its Andover, Massachusetts, facility.

The SPY-6(V)1 Air and Missile Defense Radar, which became operational in 2024 on the Flight III Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer (DDG)USS Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125), is

succeeding the SPY-1 as a sensor in new-production the Aegis Combat System and is the main sensor for the Flight III Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers (DDGs). Spence said that the flat-face fixed array(V)1 is in full-rate production and that Raytheon had delivered nine or ten shipsets so far for installation on the Flight III DDGs.

Spence said the Jack H. Lucas's (V)6 has been going through integrated combat testing with the Aegis Baseline.

The SPY-6(V)2 Enterprise Air Search Radar (EASR) is the rotating version of the radar that will be installed on amphibious platform dock ships, amphibious assault ships, and Nimitz-class aircraft carriers, replacing the SPS-48 and SPS-49 radars. The radar has been installed on future San Antonio-class amphibious platform dock ship USS Richard M. McCool Jr. (LPD 29) and has been accepted by the Navy following the ship's builder's and acceptance trials.

The first SPY-6(V)3 EASR – which included three fixed-face arrays – has been installed on the future Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy (CVN 79), which is scheduled for delivery to the fleet in 2025. The (V)3 was selected in lieu of the SPY-3 Dual Band Radar that is installed on the Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78).

The SPY-6(V)4 is on contract by the Navy for backfit onto Flight IIA Arleigh Burke-class DDGs. The (V)4 features four flat-face fixed arrays. The modularity of the system will ease the retrofit as the ships will have the same cooling and power systems of the (V)1. The Navy plans to equip 15 Flight IIA DDGs with the (V)4, the first being the USS Pinckney (DDG 91). Arrays are now being built for the (V)4.

Although unable to release details, Spence said that Raytheon continues to work "hand in glove" with the Navy to tweak the SPY-6 radars to be able to counter the latest threats. The lessons from the Navy's combat with Houthi missiles and drones

over the Red Sea over the last 14 months are being studied by Raytheon.

The SPY-6 “is clearly designed for that environment,” Spence said.

He also said that Raytheon has expand its supply chain to include companies in Japan to ensure reliable sources of some SPY-6 components.

Last summer year Raytheon entered contracts with MELCO (Mitsubishi Electric) and Sampa Kogyo to supply components of the SPY-6 for U.S. Navy ships and any potential future SPY-6(V) customers, said Briana Gabrys, a Raytheon spokeswoman.

SECNAV Del Toro Names Future John Lewis-class Oilers T-AO 215 and T-AO 216

From SECNAV Public Affairs, Jan. 16, 2025

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced the names of two future John Lewis-class fleet replenishment oilers, T-AO 205-class, to be the future USNS Joshua L. Goldberg (T-AO 215), the future USNS Thomas D. Parham Jr. (T-AO 216).

Secretary Del Toro detailed the announcement Jan. 16 during video remarks directed to the Department of Navy’s (DoN) chaplain corps.

“Our Navy Chaplains are more than just religious figures—they are beacons of hope, resilience, and unwavering support in the

demanding world of naval service," said Secretary Del Toro. "These ships will carry forward their spirit of selfless service and will forever be a recognition of the invaluable contributions of Navy Chaplains."

The naming selection of the future T-AO 215 and T-AO 216 follows the tradition of naming John Lewis-class oilers after civil rights leaders and will be the first to bear her name. Secretary Del Toro previously named USNS Thurgood Marshall (T-AO 211), USNS Ruth Bader Ginsberg (T-AO 212), USNS Harriet Tubman (T-AO 213), and USNS Dolores Huerta (T-AO 214).

There have been no Navy vessels previously named for Captain Joshua L. Goldberg or for Thomas D. Parham, Jr.

"The heart of the Navy Chaplain Corps mission is to care for Sailors, Marines, Coast Guardsmen, and their families, always focused on serving them. Naming these ships after a couple of heroic chaplains is both humbling and reassuring that we have the support of our military leaders in building the Spiritual Readiness of our flock," said Navy's Chief of Chaplains Rear Adm. Gregory N. Todd. "Chaplains Goldberg and Parham were model servant leaders and shone with the inner strength that comes from higher purpose, facing numerous challenges of their time strengthened by their connection to the Divine. Their example inspires all of us."

The naming of the future T-AO 215 honors Captain Joshua L. Goldberg, USN (1896-1994), the first Jewish rabbi to volunteer for naval service in World War II and the first to be promoted to O-6.

Born in the Russian Empire in present-day Belarus, Goldberg was drafted into the Imperial Russian Army during World War I. Deserting in 1916 and emigrating to the U.S., he subsequently enlisted in the U.S. Army, serving in Europe.

After leaving the service in 1920, he became a rabbi in 1926. Commissioning in the U.S. Naval Reserve in December 1941 and

called to active duty in 1942, Goldberg actively ministered to Sailors with an inter-faith team, designed and wore the first prescribed Jewish prayer tallith, helped develop the radio program, “The Navy Goes to Church,” and wrote Ministering to Jews in the Navy, which was intended to guide non-Jewish chaplains in ministering to the needs of Jewish Sailors ashore and afloat. He also served, in an unofficial capacity, as the Chief of Chaplain’s consultant on Jewish affairs. He remained in the Navy following the end of the war, serving as District Chaplain to the Third District, and then as special consultant on Jewish matters to Armed Forces Chaplains Board in 1950.

He retired in 1960, receiving the Legion of Merit in recognition of his myriad contributions. The Goldberg Award, which is given to the O-3 or O-4 chaplain who has shown excellency in facilitating the religious needs of their Sailors, is named in his honor.

Secretary Del Toro named Teresa Todd, spouse of the Rear Adm. Todd and Debbie Anderson, spouse of the Navy’s Program Executive Officer (PEO) Ships, Rear Adm. Thomas J. Anderson to serve as sponsors of the future USNS Joshua L. Goldberg.

They, in their role as the ship’s sponsor, will represent a lifelong relationship with the ship and crew. The following individuals were identified as sponsors.

T-AO 216 is named to honor Navy Chaplain, Captain Thomas David Parham Jr., USN (1920-2007), the Navy’s first African American Sailor promoted to O-6.

A daughter of the late Capt. Parham, Capt Mae Pouget, USN (Ret), expressed the family’s gratitude to the Navy on the naming selection.

“Daddy served sailors and Marines with humility, empathy, and respect, showing love for all from his Heavenly Father. Chaplain Parham’s legacy of military service lasted from 1944 to 2021, through himself, his children and his son-in-law,”

said, Capt. Pouget. “The family would like to thank Secretary Del Toro, U.S. Senate Chaplain Barry Black, Chaplain of the Marine Corps Rear Adm. Carey Cash, and Rabbi Arnold Resnicoff.”

Ordained into the Presbytery of Mahoning (Youngstown, Ohio) in 1944, Parham commissioned as a Lieutenant (junior grade) in the U.S. Naval Reserve Chaplain Corps in September that same year. After a string of shore assignments in which he was mainly assigned to minister to Black units, he sought release from active duty in 1946.

With the onset of the Korean War, he returned to active naval service in 1951. Though he still faced discrimination, Rear Admiral Stanton Salisbury, then Chief of Chaplains, made it clear that the Chaplains Division had no plans to assign Parham to “segregated duty.” After serving overseas in Japan from 1953-1955 and transferring to the U.S. Navy in 1955, he was assigned to the First Marine Division as Chaplain in 1956. Following other assignments with the Marine Corps, he had duty afloat on-board Valley Forge (LPH 8) and subsequently served at Naval Air Station Newport, where he advanced to O-6 in 1966. Assigned to the Bureau of Personnel as Assistant Chief of Chaplain for Plans in 1967, Parham was actively involved in efforts to boost minority recruitment and address the Navy’s recurring drug problems. He continued to undertake shore assignments in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia until his retirement in 1982.

Secretary Del Toro named Capt. Mae Pouget to serve as the sponsor of T-AO 216. Capt. Pouget served in the Navy as a medical officer.

“Having served on a submarine tender with sailors and civilian mariners, I have the utmost respect for the Military Sealift Command,” said Capt. Pouget. “I will advocate for and attend to the USNS Thomas J. Parham Jr. (T-AO 216) and pray for her divine protection.”

Fleet replenishment oilers are designed to supply fuel to the Navy’s operating carrier strike groups. The oilers have the ability to carry a load of 162,000 barrels of oil and maintain significant dry cargo capacity

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SECNAV Del Toro Names Future Medium Landing Ship LSM 1

From SECNAV Public Affairs, Jan.16, 2025

From SECNAV Public Affairs, Jan.16, 2025

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced Jan. 16, USS McClung (LSM 1) as the name for the first ship in the new McClung-class of medium landing ships.

“The Landing Ship Medium (LSM) will be an asset to the Marine Corps’ amphibious capabilities, designed to greatly enhance operational flexibility and combat readiness,” said Del Toro. “I am honored to name the first ship in this class after Major McClung, a selfless leader and hero who embodied the highest ideals of service, honor, and loyalty to our nation.”

Honors U.S. Naval Academy graduate and Public Affairs Officer Major Megan M.L. McClung, USMC, who was killed in action while serving in Iraq. This will be the first Navy vessel to bear her name.

“When the McClung family spoke with Secretary of the Navy, Carlos Del Toro, and learned of his intent to name a ship for Megan, our emotions ran high. In our discussion, Secretary Del Toro shared the support of General Eric Smith, Commandant of the Marine Corps, in the naming selection, he spoke of Megan’s

commitment to the Navy and Marine Corps. Our family is incredibly honored that Megan's service to her country is being honored in this way," said Mike McClung. "Megan lived a life of bringing the stories of mission and brave commitment to the world but never needed to be that story. As a family we sometimes discuss how Megan would have felt being the center of that story, but we know that she would have found the greater story she has become a part of. With this great honor of naming this ship after her, Megan would remind us all that the greatest duty of this ship is to get others to their story, and to Be Bold, Be Brief, and Be Gone. The United States Navy again remembers Megan today and this ship and all who serve on it, will continue to tell her story as they bravely create their own legacy."

Commissioned in 1995 after graduation from the United States Naval Academy (USNA), McClung served on active duty until 2004 when she joined the Marine Corps Reserve. Recalled to active duty in 2005, McClung deployed to Al Anbar Province, Iraq, as the media relations officer for I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward).

On 6 December 2006, she was killed alongside two U.S. Army Soldiers, Captain Travis Patriquin and Specialist Vincent Pomante III, by a roadside improvised explosive device in Ramadi. McClung was the first female Marine officer to be killed in the Iraq war and the first female graduate of the USNA to be killed in the line of duty.

In 2007, the broadcast studio at Camp Victory, Iraq, was named in her honor. The Defense Information School (DINFOS) presents a leadership award in her name to one graduating member of the Public Affairs & Communication Strategy Qualification Course. She was inducted into the DINFOS Hall of Fame in 2024. The Marine Corps presents the Major Megan McClung Leadership Award, in recognition of the recipients' leadership skills and their contributions towards the tenets of equal opportunity, human relations, and public service, annually at the Joint

Women’s Leadership Symposium. Major McClung is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

Along with announcing the ship’s name, Secretary Del Toro announced the sponsors for the future USS McClung (LSM 1) will be her mother, Dr. Re McClung and her niece, Gabrielle McClung. They, in their role as the ship’s sponsor will represent a lifelong relationship with the ship and crew.

The Navy’s Medium Landing Ship (LSM) program, previously called the Light Amphibious Warship (LAW) program, envisions procuring a class of 18 to 35 new amphibious ships to support the Marine Corps, particularly in implementing a new Marine Corps operational concept called Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations (EABO).

Mechanized and utility landing craft are rugged, steel displacement vessels used by amphibious forces to transport equipment and troops from ship to the shore, along the shore, and from shore back to the amphibious warships. Landing craft are also used to support civilian humanitarian/maritime operations.

Status of the Surface Force

ARLINGTON, Va. (Jan. 14, 2025) Vice Adm. Brendan McLane, commander, Naval Surface Forces, delivers a status of the force update at the Surface Navy Association's (SNA) 37th National Symposium. The symposium brings together joint experts and decision-makers in the military, industry, and Congress to discuss how the Surface Force is a critical element of national defense and security. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Claire M. Alfaro)
Surface Navy Association National Symposium, Jan. 14, 2025

Status of the Surface Force Address as delivered by Vice Admiral Brendan McLane:

I am very thankful and grateful to you the Surface Navy Association for all of the hard work that goes into making this phenomenal symposium a success. Every year, I walk away from this week in January thinking that the event could not have been better, and every year it just keeps getting better. This is a credit to the entire SNA staff. Thanks to Admiral Hunt, Admiral Dave Hart, Captain Chris Bushnell, Julie Howard, Debbie Gary, and the entire SNA team for all the effort,

planning, time, and energy it takes to put on such a fantastic event. Please join me thanking them.

Before I get started, I also want to thank Bryan McGrath…he has been our strategic advisor, he's been our corporate memory, if you think back how long that has been, and he's been my personal executive coach on the staff. I am very, very grateful to everything Bryan has done for SURFOR. He has been our center of gravity in the update to our strategy that I'll be talking to you about today. This is going to be his last SNA as part of the SURFPAC team, and I'm really gonna miss him. Please give him a big round of applause!

It does my heart good to look out into the audience and see so many uniforms. There is no better opportunity for conversation and exchange between industry and the fleet than SNA. I encourage all of you to, just like Admiral Hunt said, hit the booths, ask questions, talk to each other, gain more understanding by doing so. As an example, last year, I talked to Paul Smith, and he recommended I include industry in my weekly maintenance meetings. It's like a 90-minute meeting on Wednesday afternoon where we go through every maintenance availability that's going on West Coast, Hawaii, and Japan. My staff howled at this, and it took a bit to work out the legalities and logistics but we're doing exactly that, what Paul Smith suggested. I have to say the frequent interaction of industry to get that perspective is refreshing and good for team building. At the end of the day, we all want the same thing: maintenance finished on time and a more ready Surface Force. Thank you very much to Paul Smith.

I'm particularly excited to see so many Sailors from the fleet here, something we began intentionally encouraging several years ago, and now has become standard. I am excited to meet you and hear from you this week.

In 1775, 250 years ago, the Second Continental Congress

established what is now the United States Navy with “a swift vessel, to carry ten carriage guns, and a proportionable number of swivels, with eighty men, be fitted, with all possible dispatch, for a cruise of three months…” With this declaration, the Congress established the Navy with which we gained our independence. Now some of you within industry might argue that they weren’t really good at defining requirements! You might say that nothing has changed since then. Since then, our mission has certainly expanded and evolved significantly. But at the core, our mission and our spirit are the same, and at the heart of our warfighting spirit is the Surface Warfare Enterprise. So, it’s fitting that we kick off the 250th year here at SNA, and this year’s theme, Sharpen the Sword, challenges us to celebrate the momentous occasion by energizing ourselves like never before to be prepared to fight and win at sea.

CNO, in her NAVPLAN, charged us to ensure that 80% of our Force is Combat Surge Ready by 2027. Combat Surge Ready is defined as a ship that’s complete with Surface Warfare Advanced Tactical Training, or “SWATT,” and is ready to go. We have two years to achieve and sustain this into the future. Our 250 years of naval experience have passed on to us a treasure of massive accomplishments both to reassure us of what’s possible and to inspire us to achieve even greater goals.

Thanks to the vision of Roy Kitchener, we are already well on our way to increasing readiness. When he released our Competitive Edge strategy, he set our North Star to 75 Mission Capable ships. We have learned much in the pursuit of that for the last 3 years. We’ve learned a lot from the last year in the Red Sea, and from recent years of fleet experiments with directed energy weapons and with unmanned surface vessels, and from our recent study of amphibious ship maintenance. All of this rapid learning has been applied to our update of the Competitive Edge strategy. Thanks to the hard work and

collaboration with our Flags, retired and active, especially NAVSEA, SURFLANT, N96, and SWMDC, we have revised our roadmap to achieve and sustain 80% of our warships in a combat surge ready state by 2027.

You will see our Competitive Edge 2.0, copies on the floor there, maintain the original framework and its five Lines of Effort, the identification of accountable officers, and the assignment of completion dates. Like any organization competing at the highest level, we update our strategy with the times and as we learn. This strategy provides the demand signal to our enterprise to think and act differently, taking advantage of our opportunities, and accelerating our quest for a more ready Surface Force.

So before we dive headlong into those important matters, I want to play a short video, a video appropriate to kick off 2025, the 250th Anniversary of our Warfighting Navy!

Our Sailors are the key to our warfighting advantage—our competitive edge. One of the shortcomings of the original Competitive Edge strategy was its insufficient emphasis on our Sailors, we are turning this around by concentrating on them as our key to sustained success at sea. Starting with Enlisted Leadership Development, we are moving out with a cultural renovation that produces a Surface Force with leaders who can assess, problem solve, innovate, and execute better than any strategic competitor. We've achieved much here already with Warrior Toughness and Get Real, Get Better and that fires me up for the work ahead.

One of our continued Get Real, Get Better moments is the 8,179 apprentice gaps that we have in our Surface Force. While we as a whole Navy have improved manning by making our recruiting mission in 2024, and a big thanks here to Navy Recruiting and the Fleet's Every Sailor is A Recruiter program. It's going to take more years of this to fill all of our gaps at sea,

especially gaps with Chief Petty Officers. What we're going to do is maximize the most of what we have is twofold. First, we get to peak personnel on a ship earlier because the bulk of our training comes through learning as teams during Basic, Advanced, and Integrated Phase events. So rather than wait to plus up manning before deployment, we will mass force at the beginning of Basic Phase.

The second way we're getting after our gaps at sea is with our Reserve Component to Sea Initiative, RC2SEA. This is our only way to bring in Sailors laterally. Yes, it takes on average 10 years to make a Chief! Unless, you bring one in from the Reserves. Thanks to my Deputy, Admiral Ted LeClair, who has energized RC2SEA by aligning volunteer Reserve Sailors to empty billets on surface ships. In FY24, 167 Reserve Sailors force-wide have filled long term orders on ships. More work to do in 2027 and beyond. Both of these efforts are big parts of our Competitive Edge 2.0 First Line if Effort strategy: develop the leader, warrior, mariner, and manager.

To make better managers, we are operationalizing our Get Real, Get Better mindset, skillsets, and toolsets in our Wardrooms, Chief's Messes, and into our work centers to methodically improve our standards with a bias for root cause analysis and transparency.

To make better warriors, SMWDC is refining our Surface Warfare Combat Training Continuum, or SWCTC. Think of what we've done for Mariner skills and apply that to warfighting. We are creating warfighting training paths that span the professional life of every tactical watch-stander from E1 to O6. This provides the ability to allow data-driven career insights to predict key insertion points for refresher training and updates.

To make better leaders, we are starting a new Command Master Chief coaching program, running a Chief Petty Officer Academy

pilot program, and we have begun developing advanced engineering instructors—think Engineering WTIs—our first 8 AEIs graduated last month. I want to personally thank Force Master Chief Larry Lynch for spearheading these efforts and his continued leadership of our Force.

Retaining our talent is key to our readiness. PERS-4, led by Admiral Jeff Heames, are conducting data-informed engagements with every ship's triad. We started doing this in the Wardrooms to get after more department heads. What Jeff is doing now is providing a "punch list," by name, of Sailors our triads can engage with a pathway for a direct Detailer access which speeds up getting to 'yes' to stay Navy. Retaining talented SWO JOs is just as important. Officers like those on the screen – LT Scott Harris (ASWO and WTI) and LTJG Colton Grossheim (Single Longer Tour and COMMO) are signing their Department Head Retention Bonuses in the CO's Cabin of USS O'Kane with proud Strike Group Commander Adan Cruz looking on.

Those two Divos plus 273 more signed up for Department Head in 2024, representing a 98% increase over 2022. Please join me in applauding the efforts of our Chief of Navy Personnel Admiral Cheeseman, Admiral Heames, and Captain Francis and his PERS-41 Team to really improve things.

As we get after our personnel gaps, I couldn't be prouder of how the Sailors that we do have on board, are accomplishing the mission.

On the morning of 11 November 2024, Commander Matt Adams, Captain of USS Spruance—you saw him and his team in the video. Matt and his ship were transiting south through the strait of Bab-el-Mandeb. His team defended against one of the most complex attacks on Navy warships in decades. Matt and his team successfully engaged 3x ASBMs that were shot at a depressed trajectory, 3x ASCMs, and 7x one-way attack UAVs. Matt had

prepared his team through endless drills to act decisively in the moment, just like Paul Rinn described.

Something that I think that gets lost in after action reports, news stories, and post-deployment briefs is the whole ship effort required in combat. On Spruance, it wasn't just the Sailors on the controlling stations on the Bridge and in CIC. Supply was on hand bringing everyone food on station. The Chaplain was roving, offering spiritual strength. Sailors literally did not want to turn over the watch, because they wanted to be in the seat to defend the ship. Even once off watch, they would come back to check on the next section. Truly a whole ship effort, everyone involved in the fight from the bottom of their hearts.

And Spruance wasn't content to just stop there. Their motto of "Launch the Attack," commits them to an excellence built on the solid foundation of constant improvement. That's why every tactician in the fleet can read their war diary on SMWDC's Collaboration at Sea site. Now every warship can learn and improve their own combat effectiveness from Spruance's experience.

This is what you can expect from a warship literally stacked with WTIs, to include the CO and the XO. Because this is the winning readiness model: the right leadership, stellar tacticians, and a warship built and sustained to fight and win at sea. This is our Sailors embodying the centuries-old legacy of Navy wins. This is sharpening the sword in action. And our sharp swords become our legacy.

We've had 26 ships so far operate in the Red Sea Weapons Engagement Zone, and thanks to the efforts of many in this room, we've rapidly learned a tremendous amount, allowing us to better prepare the next deploying warships like the ones in NIMITZ CSG starting C2X next week. Last year, I told you the story of USS Carney. What it took our enterprise to bring her

back from Rota, modernize her in Mayport, and prepare for employment in the Basic, Advanced, and Integrated Training Phases. And how on deployment not a minute was ever wasted, training and self-assessment continued everyday. CNY returned home safely this past Spring and all told, after a 235-day deployment, the ship was in 55 engagements and fired 71 missiles. The CO, Jeremy Robertson is now at SMWDC and working on SWATTs to advance our competitive edge of tactical development. He is truly investing his battle experience into our Sailors and Warships.

The fight in the Red Sea has tactically evolved. The first phase from the early outset of hostilities in October ’23, saw largely inexpensive drones and cruise missiles shot at irregular intervals. Beginning in late Jan ’24, we observed a marked escalation in the scale and complexity of enemy techniques and capabilities, with the employment of anti-ship ballistic missiles, and roving, one-way UAVs in pre-assigned kill boxes. We’ve sped-up our own learning and teaching so that our deploying ships are always prepared with the latest TTPs before they go over the horizon.

All of this is possible because SMWDC and our industry partners created a robust operational feedback loop. This used to require a ship to be pierside, physically removing the tapes and shipping them to Dahlgren. Now, after a battle, a warship sends off a large data package containing their detect to engage sequence over-the-air. This rapid data transfer is followed by expedient analysis at NSWC, Dahlgren, which is now running 24/7. Within 48 hours, they provide our Warfighters with rapid feedback on their engagement and actionable information for the whole Force on how to best counter the tactics and threats that we’re having. This rapid learning is reinforced and spread by leaders like CDR Robertson, who incorporate it into tactical education for our warships during SWATT and C2X. Our ships practice scenarios involving threat-profiles and kinematics informed by the latest real-world

action. This operational, fully informed feedback loop continues to drive our competitive edge beyond the exercises, all the way into our schoolhouses at Surface Combat Systems Training Command and Surface Warfare Schools Command.

I'd like to spend a moment with you on what is often referred to as the "cost curve," or the relationship between the cost of the weapons the Houthis are firing and the cost of the missiles we are intercepting them with. There are several points worth making here.

First, none of our Commanding Officers are worried about the cost curve, nor should they be. They have other things to worry about, like what's for breakfast. The cost of the missile that they are going to shoot is not one of them.

Second, increasingly, more modest threats are being engaged with guns and electronic countermeasures and aircraft, both fixed wing and rotary. Proper threat assessment and operational feedback allow our Commanders to make the best tactical decisions. As an example of engaging with guns, take USS O'Kane for instance. O'Kane protected a merchant convoy against hostile UAVs and employed their 5-inch gun to successfully defeat the threat. This is their fo'c'sle on the morning after. I love this story because it was a whole ship effort. Off watch personnel, including 4 cross-trained Sonar Technicians and 3 junior Machinist Mates who happened to be lifting weights in Forward Pallet staging when shooting began, took the initiative and worked the early hours of the morning moving 5-inch shells from Deep Mag to refill the loader-drum. Volunteers pitching in on a working party led by a junior GM2 kept O'Kane seamlessly in the fight. Those are America's Warfighting Sailors.

Also on the topic of the cost curve, in collaboration with our teammates at Integrated Warfare Systems and the Rapid Capabilities Office, our destroyers have tested several new C-

UAS systems, each bringing unique tactical capabilities to the fight. Through an accelerated capability introduction process, to include onboard testing and training alongside development of enhanced tactics, techniques and procedures, I expect several of these systems to be deployed soon. As technical maturity increases, I'm confident we'll have even more cost-effective systems available in the counter unmanned systems fight across the entire force.

I stood here last year and said that I was not satisfied with our progress on directed energy. And after a year of repairs, fleet experiments, site visits, and lots of learning, I am still dissatisfied. I want to instill a greater sense of urgency and I intend to continue to advocate strongly for the resources necessary to overcome some of these hard, technical challenges like atmospheric turbulence, track targeting, clutter conditions, saturation attacks, and beam control. All of which Preble, here in the picture you can see her HELIOS. Lasers like this, high powered microwaves are the way of the future because they will augment a ship defense with an unlimited magazine.

One lesson we've learned here is that we need to remove the burden that at-sea testing on our operational warships. Perhaps this is counter-intuitive but, we can move faster in fleet introduction with land-based testing. High-Powered Microwave is showing promise in development at Dahlgren, where we can test without synchronizing a ship's schedule. Containerized launchers and virtualized combat systems also enable rapid testing with minimal impact to operational warships. To this end, I would like to see dedicated investment in more land-based testing infrastructure. This would allow system maturation and would absorb the lion's share of development prior to at-sea testing requirements.

Equally as important as the Red Sea, our Sailors are standing

the watch in the eastern Mediterranean ready to defend Israel against ballistic missile threat. First in April, Carney and Arleigh Burke combined to destroy more than 80 one-way attack UAVs and at least six ballistic missiles, which include the first employment of the SM-3 in combat. Then in October, Bulkeley and Cole fired interceptors against a barrage of more than 200 Iranian ballistic missiles. This is a mission that the Navy has been rehearsing for over a decade. When I think of how many crews and how many ships it has taken to be prepared for that moment—literally hitting a bullet with a bullet—I realize that even though probably to everybody here it has become a routine thing, it is no less impressive. I'm proud that all that hard work by so many ships and crews and how it paid off when the moment came.

When not in combat, our Surface Warriors are leading the way in safety of life at sea and humanitarian assistance. In August, William P Lawrence DDG 110, headed directly into the path of Hurricane Gilma in order to save a mother and her 7 year-old daughter adrift in a sailboat 925 miles off the coast of Hawaii. The sailing vessel's master, who was the only one aboard who knew how to sail, had passed away in an accident. The Coast Guard had received a distress alert from the boat's emergency position beacon and asked the Navy to help. Willy P was ready to go and raced for 36 hours at 24kts directly towards the hurricane to close the speed of the sailboat. When they got there, the seas were already up to 8 to 10 ft, the ship could see that the hurricane was not far off. They courageously launched their RHIB and thanks to the great proficiency of the Coxswain, Seaman Michael Hunter, whom you can almost see in this picture, they saved both on board plus their cat and turtle[BM1] . They had only a short window before the seas and the hurricane would swallow them up, so I applaud the great engineers on William P Lawrence, answering all bells to make best speed back to the safe harbor of Hawaii. Thanks to the quick action of those courageous Sailors, two people were saved…and their pets, too.

One story that did not get the attention it deserved in ’24 was our Naval Beach Group One Sailors in the Gaza Relief Mission, Operation Neptune Solace. They employed the Joint Logistics Over-The-Shore capability—think floating pier, to flow humanitarian aid to Gaza. Heavy weather presented many challenges, and the pier was repaired and redeployed multiple times. Our Sailors delivered 28,884,843 pounds of food and aid. This was the second largest humanitarian mission conducted by the US military, exceeded only by the Berlin Airlift in 1948. This was a truly remarkable accomplishment!

On the other side of the globe, USS Boxer with embarked Marines from the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit provided tons of American aid to the Northern Philippines. With their MV-22 Ospreys, they helped access Basco, an island on the north side of the Luzon Strait that had been ravaged by a typhoon. These stories highlight the exceptional work our Sailors and Marines are accomplishing and are truly illustrative of the world-wide coverage of our warfighting team.

In support of these efforts, we’ve had considerable success from the ADCON side of the Surface Warfare Enterprise. Our goal is clear- generate the warships, crews, concepts, and capabilities to fight and win at sea. Admiral Downey and I are committed to significantly reducing the Days of Maintenance Delay across the force. Considerable learning, discipline, and partnership with industry have already contributed to raising maintenance on-time completion rates to 65% in FY24. This has reduced days of maintenance delay down to 2,633 days. This is a 62% drop since 2019! Significant and impressive but we still have lots of work to do to drive it down to zero by 2027.

Especially with Amphibious Warship maintenance availabilities. Since 2018, of the 25 Amphibious Ready Groups/Marine Expeditionary Units who deployed, 38% were delayed due to amphib maintenance availabilities not finishing on time. Those

availability delays resulted in the loss of 400 operational days at sea.

In response to this, I launched a 90-day amphibious maintenance review with Vice Admiral Jim Downey last Spring. The learning from this process has been significant and we are executing the recommendations which include the designation of Signature Availabilities for Big Decks that will accelerate our planning and contract award milestones, which will improve procurement timelines, strengthen partnerships throughout the enterprise, and lead to workload stability for our industrial base. Initiatives like that reinforce efforts codified in our Competitive Edge strategy second LOE, Produce More Ready Ships.

Also, on the material front of Competitive Edge's LOE 2 are more data-driven initiatives to improve our readiness. NAVSUP has been laser focused on shifting our logistics approach from "just in time" to "just in case." This "just in case" approach is not a luxury, it's about having the parts onboard we know we will need to maintain full redundancy for sustained operations at sea; as well as the parts critical to self-sustain in a fight to overcome battle damage. NAVSUP has invested $1.4B in surface material and removed COSAL modeling constraints. This is paving the way for targeted investments in critical system materials, making sure we can get more ready players on the field and sustain them over the horizon. Ships combat surge ready works best when it's at full redundancy.

One capability that we have significantly advanced in our 3rd LOE of our strategy is the integration of unmanned vessels into the fleet. Bill Daly will spend a good bit of time on this in his speech later, but as far as Type Commander concerns go, I am very optimistic that the things we've already started have put us on an excellent position to integrate this incredible capability rapidly into the fleet.

Standing up USVRON-3 out of hide last May was a big win for us. You'd think the automation would be the hardest part—and that's hard, no doubt, but launching USVs from an Independence Class Mission Bay isn't exactly easy either, especially the first time you try it. BZ to USS Manchester and USS Comstock for being the first ships to experiment with this.

Over the past year alone, Fleet Operators have worked hand-in-hand with the Program Office, Warfare Centers, and Industry partners conducting rapid testing and experimentation as we drive to develop and operationalize Surface Force Robotics Autonomous Systems. Sailors participated in War Games, conducted on-the-water testing, and incorporated USVs into experiments.

Through the work of our exceptional Sailors, our future force is coming into greater focus and clarity. Hybrid and autonomous, coupled with some of the most advanced combat systems in the history of warfare, championed by America's Warfighting Sailors, Surface Warfare provides the competitive edge needed to deliver warfighting advantage whenever and wherever needed. Look no further than some of our advances with DDG FLT IIIs joining the Fleet with SPY-6, SEWIP BLK III, and AEGIS Baseline 10. As you can see USS Chosin here successfully testing our new transferable re-load at sea method.

250 years of our Navy is a major milestone and like many waypoints that mark our history, they occur at a moment of change, conflict, and crisis. These waypoints reassure us that we've navigated shoal water in the past but also warm us up for the hard work ahead, hard work that demands we leverage our enterprise fully, generating combat ready warships who will lead in the future fight. There is no substitute for combat effectiveness on the first day of combat or the thousandth day.

An effective force is a ready force, predicated on full redundancy, self-sufficiency, and brilliant execution of our tactics. We must carry forward the spirit of 250 years of rich naval legacy. Many things have changed since the early days of our Nation but the centrality of the maritime domain in the American and Global conscious remains. Protecting our sea lanes globally remains a ubiquitous and enduring challenge. The sun never sets on our Force. Our readiness is the firmament that will enable our Surface Force to fight and win at sea. Competitive Edge 2.0 is how we will be more ready. Let’s all re-commit to sharpening our swords for the next 250 years.

Thank you for your time this afternoon and I look forward to hearing your questions.

SWOBOSS Highlights Competitive Edge 2.0 at 2025 SNA National Symposium

(Jan. 14, 2025) Vice Adm. Brendan McLane, commander, Naval Surface Forces, delivers a status of the force update at the Surface Navy Association's (SNA) 37th National Symposium. The symposium brings together joint experts and decision-makers in the military, industry, and Congress to discuss how the Surface Force is a critical element of national defense and security. (U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Claire M. Alfaro)
by Joseph Millar, Jan. 14, 2025

ARLINGTON, Va.— Vice Adm. Brendan McLane, commander, Naval Surface Force, emphasized the Competitive Edge 2.0 strategy and 250 years of the U.S. Navy's ability to fight and win during his keynote remarks at the 37th Annual Surface Navy Association National Symposium in Arlington, Va., Jan. 14.

McLane outlined his vision for the Surface Force centered on the new Competitive Edge 2.0 strategy and alignment of his efforts with the Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Lisa Franchetti's NAVPLAN initiatives to achieve 80% combat surge ready warships.

“CNO, in her NAVPLAN, charged us to ensure 80% of our Force is combat surge ready by 2027,” said McLane. “Combat surge ready is defined as a ship that’s complete with Surface Warfare Advanced Tactical Training, or ‘SWATT,’ and is ready to go.”

Competitive Edge 2.0 builds on the original by acknowledging what we have accomplished, what we have not accomplished, what we have learned, and where we need to change course. We retain the five Lines of Effort (LOE), as they are elemental to our approach to success for the Force.

“We’ve learned a lot from the last year in the Red Sea, and from recent years of fleet experiments with directed energy weapons and with unmanned surface vessels, and from our recent study of amphibious ship maintenance,” said McLane. “All of this rapid learning has been applied to our update of the Competitive Edge strategy. Thanks to the hard work and collaboration with our Flags, retired and active, especially NAVSEA, SURFLANT, N96, and SMWDC, we have revised our roadmap to achieve and sustain 80% of our warships in a combat surge ready state by 2027.”

The Competitive Edge 2.0 strategy details five broad lines of effort, assigning accountability, responsibility, and leadership roles while providing action items with prescribed timelines. Those lines of effort are:
– Develop the Leader, Warrior, Mariner, and Manager
– Produce More, Ready Ships
– Achieve Excellence in Capability Introduction
– Create Clear and Innovative Operational Operational Concepts
– Strengthen the Foundation for the Future Force

“Like any organization competing at the highest level, we update our strategy with the times and as we learn,” said McLane. “This strategy provides the demand signal to our enterprise to think and act differently, taking advantage of

our opportunities, and accelerating our quest for a more ready Surface Force."

For the U.S. Navy to maintain and extend its warfighting advantage in the decade ahead, the Surface Navy must achieve higher fleet readiness while simultaneously integrating new and upgraded platforms and capabilities, and most importantly, developing our warfighting Sailors.

"Our Sailors are the key to our warfighting advantage—our competitive edge," said McLane. "One of the shortcomings of the original Competitive Edge Strategy was its insufficient emphasis on our Sailors, we are turning this around by concentrating on them as our key to sustained success at sea. Starting with Enlisted Leadership Development, we are moving out with a cultural renovation that produces a Surface Force with leaders who can assess, problem solve, innovate, and execute better and than any strategic competitor. We've achieved much here already with Warrior Toughness and Get Real, Get Better and that fires me up for the work ahead."

McLane further emphasized line of effort 1 in the Competitive Edge 2.0 strategy – develop the leader, warrior, mariner and managers.

"To make better managers, we are operationalizing our Get Real, Get Better mindset, skillsets, and toolsets in our Wardrooms, Chief's Messes, and into our work centers to methodically improve our standards with a bias for root cause analysis and transparency," said McLane. "To make better warriors, SMWDC is refining our Surface Warfare Combat Training Continuum, or SWCTC. Think of what we've done for Mariner skills and apply that to warfighting. We are creating warfighting training paths that span the professional life of every tactical watchstander from E1 to O6. To make better leaders, we are starting a new Command Master Chief coaching program, running a Chief Petty Officer Academy pilot program,

and have begun developing advanced engineering instructors.”

McLane closed with acknowledging the significance of this momentous time for our Force, our Navy, and our Nation. 2025 represents the 250th anniversary of our Warfighting Navy and the 50th anniversary of our Surface Warfare TYCOMs.

SNA was incorporated in 1985 to promote greater coordination and communication among the military, business, and academic communities who share a common interest in naval surface warfare and to support the activities of surface naval forces. SNA is dedicated to recognizing the continuing contributions of the United States Navy and Coast Guard’s surface forces. It showcases professional excellence within the surface naval forces, deals with the challenges faced by surface naval forces, nurtures communication among military, academic, and business communities, enhances and preserves the heritage of surface naval forces, and provides forums on professional matters affecting the surface naval forces.

The mission of CNSP is to man, train, and equip the Surface Force to provide fleet commanders with credible naval power to control the sea and project power ashore.

For more news from Naval Surface Forces, visit https://www.surfpac.navy.mil/.

For a transcript of SWOBOSS’ keynote, his Competitive Edge 2.0 strategy and to view the Status of the force video, visit https://www.surfpac.navy.mil/sna-2025/.

USS Dwight D. Eisenhower Transits to Norfolk Naval Shipyard for a Planned Incremental Availability Following Historic Deployment

USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) gets underway from Naval Station Norfolk to begin a scheduled PIA at Norfolk Naval Shipyard. (MCSN Evan Antonisse)

From U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Jan. 15, 2025

PORTSMOUTH, Virginia – Dwight D. Eisenhower departed on its most recent deployment in Oct. 2023 and returned to Naval Station Norfolk in July 2024 having executed sustained operations in the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations. As the

ship transitions to its maintenance phase, the focus shifts to ensuring its long-term mission readiness and technical upgrades to maintain its edge as a forward-deployed force and extend its service life.

USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) gets underway from Naval Station Norfolk to begin a scheduled PIA at Norfolk Naval Shipyard. (MCSN Evan Antonisse)

“Our Sailors have demonstrated extraordinary resilience and operational excellence during our recent deployment,” said Capt. Chris Hill, commanding officer, Dwight D. Eisenhower. “We look forward to working with America’s finest shipyard workers to address necessary repairs and prepare the ship for a few more deployments.”

PIA 2025 will include comprehensive work on the carrier’s propulsion systems, crew habitability, combat systems, and aviation support capabilities. In addition to routine maintenance, upgrades to critical systems will ensure the carrier remains mission-ready and extends its operational effectiveness.

A PIA is part of the maintenance phase of the Navy’s Optimized Fleet Response Plan (OFRP). OFRP is a plan that helps the Navy balance operational requirements with time for training and maintenance, enabling readiness and ensuring deployability with the right skills and equipment.

“This maintenance period is a crucial opportunity to reset and upgrade the IKE after an exceptional deployment,” said Lt. Cmdr. Nicholas Meadors, ship’s maintenance manager. “Our team, alongside the skilled workforce at NNSY, will ensure that IKE is prepared to meet the Navy’s evolving mission requirements. This effort reflects a strong partnership and a shared commitment to excellence.”

The maintenance period also marks a significant opportunity for the crew to focus on professional development, family reintegration, and personal readiness after a demanding deployment.

“While our ship undergoes maintenance, our Sailors will continue to exemplify the same dedication they’ve shown throughout the deployment,” added Hill. “We will emerge from this phase stronger, ready, and more capable than ever before.”

For more information about USS Dwight D. Eisenhower, head to Facebook (/TheCVN69) or Instagram (@TheCVN69). For inquiries, email pao@cvn69.navy.mil.

Groundbreaking Ceremony Launches Construction of Nuclear Regional Maintenance Facility at Kings Bay

From left: Joseph Singer, production facilities and equipment manager at Norfolk Naval Shipyard; Sherri Eriksen, project manager for AECOM; Capt. Juan Hines, commanding officer of Strategic Weapons Facility, Atlantic (SWFLANT); Capt. Miguel Dieguez, commanding officer of Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) Southeast; Jeremy Pipkin, vice president of BL Harbert International; Brian Logan, deputy director of the Nuclear Regional Maintenance Department (NRMD); and Capt. Michael Paisant, commanding officer of the TRIDENT Refit Facility at Kings Bay, break ground with ceremonial shovels during the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Nuclear Regional Maintenance facility at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia. The facility will enhance maintenance capabilities for Trident-equipped submarines. (U.S. Navy photo by Keith Boydston)

From Jeffrey Hamlin, Jan. 16, 2025

NAVAL SUBMARINE BASE KINGS BAY, Ga. – Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC) Southeast hosted a groundbreaking ceremony Tuesday for the construction of a new facility for the Nuclear Regional Maintenance Department (NRMD) at Naval Submarine Base (NSB) Kings Bay, Georgia. The

facility will serve as a centralized, state-of-the-art hub for NRMD, enabling critical maintenance and repair operations for Trident-equipped submarines.

The event brought together senior Navy leaders, local officials, and project stakeholders to celebrate the milestone.

“This groundbreaking represents NAVFAC Southeast’s commitment to providing state-of-the-art facilities that directly enhance the fleet’s operational readiness,” said Capt. Miguel Dieguez, NAVFAC Southeast commanding officer. “This new Nuclear Regional Maintenance facility will consolidate resources, improve collaboration, and ensure that our submarine force has the maintenance infrastructure it needs to remain at the forefront of our national defense.”

The NRMD plays a vital role in supporting the operational readiness of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet’s ballistic missile submarine force. It provides intermediate-level repair and maintenance of propulsion plant systems and components, ensuring submarines remain mission-ready for both rapid 28-day overhauls and extended 270-day major maintenance periods.

Currently, NRMD operations are dispersed across NSB Kings Bay in temporary trailers, CONEX boxes, and facilities shared with the TRIDENT Refit Facility at Kings Bay (TRF-KB). This project will consolidate these functions into a single, purpose-built structure, enhancing communication and collaboration between engineers and mechanics on the waterfront.

“There has been a tremendous amount of effort to get us to this point, and from our perspective, it has been a collaborative and satisfying experience,” said Brian Logan, deputy director, Naval Regional Maintenance Department, Kings Bay. “The final design turned out to be spectacular…and today it is satisfying to take pause…and reflect on what all has

been accomplished and what is coming.”

The new low-rise facility will feature a reinforced concrete slab-on-grade with a steel and precast concrete superstructure supported by a pile foundation. The building will include nuclear repair shops, ship services support areas, applied instruction spaces, and a parking facility accommodating up to 300 employees.

The contract for this $136 million project was awarded to BL Harbert International on Dec. 13, 2023.

“BL Harbert is profoundly grateful and humbled by the opportunity to contribute our construction expertise to execute this project with the Navy,” said Jeremy Pipkin, senior vice president at BL Harbert International. “Over the next few years, we look forward to integrating into the Kings Bay community as we work diligently to deliver a facility that embodies the highest standards of craftsmanship and reflects the immense importance of the work that will occur within its walls.”

The company will oversee the design and construction of the facility, which is scheduled for completion by Dec. 15, 2028.

The Nuclear Regional Maintenance facility at Kings Bay underscores the Navy’s commitment to maintaining its strategic deterrence capabilities by providing cutting-edge infrastructure to support its submarine fleet.

NAVFAC Southeast, headquartered in Jacksonville, Florida, provides planning, design, construction, contracting, environmental services, public works, real estate, and facility maintenance for the U.S. Navy, Marine Corps, Army, Air Force, Space Force, and other federal agencies across the Southeast. Its area of responsibility covers installations from Charleston, South Carolina, to Corpus Christi, Texas, and

extends south to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

SECNAV Del Toro Names Future Virginia-class Submarines SSN 814, SSN 815, and SSN 816

From SECNAV Public Affairs, Jan. 13, 2025

WASHINGTON – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced the names of three Virginia-class submarines to be the future USS Potomac (SSN 814), the future USS Norfolk (SSN 815), and the future USS Brooklyn (SSN 816)

Secretary Del Toro detailed the announcement Jan. 13 during video remarks directed to the Department of Navy's (DoN)

submarine community.

“Today’s submarine force is the most capable force in the world and in the history of U.S. Navy,” said Secretary Del Toro. “It is my honor and privilege to announce the names of the future submarines which will protect us from deep below the ocean’s waves.”

Secretary Del Toro previously named USS Long Island (SSN 809), USS San Francisco (SSN 810), USS Miami (SSN 811), USS Baltimore (SSN 812), and USS Atlanta (SSN 813).

The naming of the future USS Potomac (SSN 814) honors a river on the Eastern seaboard of the United States and six prior ships so named. Rising in West Virginia and emptying into Chesapeake Bay, the Potomac’s banks are home to Washington, District of Columbia, and running through three states.

The first Potomac was a frigate laid down in the Washington Navy Yard in 1819. She served in the Pacific, the Mexican-American War, and the Civil War. The second Potomac was part of the “Stone Fleet” to block the entrances to Confederate harbors. The third Potomac (AT-50) was acquired for service in the Spanish-American War, later serving as a fleet and submarine tender, as well as supporting Marine Corps operations in the West Indies. The fourth Potomac (AG-125) was launched as the Coast Guard ship Electra, but taken into Navy service in 1935 to serve as President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s yacht. She is preserved as a museum ship in Oakland, California. The fifth Potomac (T-AO-150) was wrecked by a fatal fire at a refueling pier in 1961, after which the forward part of the ship was declared a total loss. Rebuilt, she served in the Military Sea Transportation Service as Shenandoah. She became the sixth Potomac (T-AO-181) in 1976 when accepted back into Navy service as part of Military Sealift Command. In 1990 she joined the Maritime Administration’s Maritime Prepositioning Force. She took part in the Persian Gulf War, provided humanitarian relief during

the Rwandan Genocide, supported military operations in Bosnia, and assisted Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

The future USS Norfolk (SSN 815) honors the city of Norfolk, VA (2023 pop. 230,930) and three previous U.S. Navy vessels: a brigantine (1798–1800); destroyer leader DL-1 (1953–1970); and Los Angeles-Class nuclear attack submarine SSN-714 (1983–2015). The first Norfolk undertook convoy duty during the Quasi-War with France to protect American commerce. The second Norfolk served as an antisubmarine hunter-killer ship in the Atlantic. The third and most recent Norfolk spent her time in the silent service conducting operations in the Atlantic during both the Cold War and the Global War on Terror.

Founded in 1682, the city grew into a major center of trade and shipbuilding, with Gosport Shipyard (present-day Norfolk Naval Shipyard) in particular playing a critical role in both the city and the Navy's development. The shipyard completed construction of Chesapeake, one of the original six frigates, in 1799. The Federal Government subsequently purchased the shipyard in 1801. From this point on, the Navy's presence would only continue to grow, leading to the eventual establishment of Naval Operating Base Hampton Roads (present-day Naval Station Norfolk) in 1917. As of 2024, Norfolk and the surrounding area hosts over 82,000 active-duty military personnel and multiple installations including Naval Station Norfolk, which is now the world's largest naval station, and Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads, which serves as headquarters for U.S. Fleet Forces and NATO Allied Command Transformation.

The future USS Brooklyn (SSN 816) is named to honor the New York City borough of Brooklyn (2020 pop. 2,736,074) and three previous Navy vessels: a screw sloop of war (1859–1889), armored cruiser CA-3 (1896–1921), and light cruiser CL-40 (1937–1947). The first Brooklyn participated in the U.S. Navy blockade of the Confederacy and fought at both the Battle of

Mobile Bay and Fort Fisher. CA-3 also proved her mettle in battle, playing an important role at the Battle of Santiago de Cuba in 1898 during the Spanish-American War. Finally, CL-40 participated in antisubmarine warfare operations in the Caribbean during WWII, as well as the Allied invasions of North Africa, Sicily, Anzio, and southern France, earning four battle stars in the process.

Founded by Dutch settlers in the 17th century on the western edge of Long Island on lands inhabited by the Lenape tribe, Brooklyn was incorporated as a city in 1834 and subsequently consolidated into New York City in 1898 as one of its five boroughs. Critical to Brookyln's growth and development was the Brooklyn Navy Yard, which was established in 1801. During its 165-year history, the navy yard constructed some of the Navy's most famous vessels, including second-class battleship Maine, battleship Arizona (Battleship No. 39), and battleship Missouri (BB-63). Although it closed in 1966, the Navy Yard continues to serve as an industrial park, playing a vital role in Brookyln's ongoing economic development.

Along with the ship names, Del Toro has also selected the sponsors for the three newly named submarines. The sponsor plays an important role in the life of each ship and is typically selected because of a relationship to the namesake or to the ship's current mission. In their role as the ship's sponsor, they will represent a lifelong relationship with the ship and crew. The following individuals were identified as sponsors:

Lisa Collis, spouse of Sen. Warner, will sponsor the future USS Potomac (SSN 814).

Ann Holton, spouse of Sen. Kaine, will sponsor the future USS Norfolk (SSN 815).

Dorothy McAuliffe, spouse of former Virginia Gov. McAuliffe, will sponsor the future USS Brooklyn (SSN 816).

Attack submarines are designed to seek and destroy enemy submarines and surface ships; project power ashore with Tomahawk cruise missiles and Special Operation Forces (SOF); carry out Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) missions; support battle group operations; and engage in mine warfare.