

# **Last of the Sea Dragons to Qualify on the MH-53E**



Lt. Jack Griffin, one of the last two naval aviators to qualify to operate the MH-53E Sea Dragon, stands next to an aircraft. Griffin and Lt. Keven Humphreys and Lt. Jack Griffin are completing the final phases of their training while

assigned to training squadron Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 12 in Norfolk. (U.S. Navy photo)



Lt. Keven Humphreys, one of the last two naval aviators to qualify to operate the MH-53E Sea Dragon, stands next to an

aircraft. Humphreys and Lt. Jack Griffin are completing the final phases of their training while assigned to training squadron Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 12 in Norfolk. (U.S. Navy photo)

[by Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic Public Affairs](#)

22 November 2024

NORFOLK, Va. – The last two naval aviators to qualify to operate the MH-53E Sea Dragon are completing the final phases of their training while assigned to training squadron Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 12 in Norfolk.

Lt. Jack Griffin and Lt. Keven Humphreys are set to close the chapter on the aircraft's 42-year history of qualifying pilots to operate the storied MH-53E Sea Dragon.

This specialized helicopter, renowned for its Airborne Mine Countermeasures (AMCM) capabilities, is drawing close to the end of its operational life with a sunset ceremony planned for March 2025. The MH-53E, introduced to the U.S. Navy in 1982, has long served as a critical asset in mine hunting, sweeping, and neutralization, as well as a heavy-lift aircraft transporting troops and equipment.

Since 1986, HM-12 has qualified over 580 naval aviators to operate the MH-53E spanning nearly five generations.

As the Navy phases out this iconic aircraft, Griffin and Humphreys will be the last pilots to master its unique skill set while the last two remaining squadrons – HM-12 and HM-15 – prepare for the sundown of this aircraft type model series. Both men originally set their sights on serving as naval officers but did not initially envision becoming naval aviators.

Humphreys credits his inspiration to join the aviation

community from experiences a close friend of his brothers shared after joining the U.S. Marine Corps to serve as a fighter pilot.

“Growing up, I looked up to my best friend’s brother,” Humphreys recalled. “I knew I wanted to serve and become a leader in the military, but becoming a pilot wasn’t initially part of my plan. Seeing him as a leader and a pilot was pretty cool, though.”

Griffin emphasized what he likes best about serving in the MH-53E community.

“The MH-53E community is extremely tight-knit,” Griffin said. “There is a close relationship between pilots and aircrewmen. Everyone is down-to-earth and focused on the mission. I really appreciate how well the crews work together to get the job done.”

As the MH-53E nears its retirement, Griffin and Humphreys are still preparing for their final missions and upcoming overseas deployment and will continue to enhance their proficiency with the aircraft.

“We are excited to be here,” Griffin said. “We love what we do and where we are right now.”

A special ceremony will be held to honor Griffin and Humphreys as they mark the end of an era and their place in history as preparations are being made to sundown the MH-53E Sea Dragon. This event will celebrate their contributions and the legacy of an aircraft that has played a pivotal role in Naval Aviation history.

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# Gulfstream Again Selected for C-20, C-37 Fleet Support



*Gulfstream Special Missions Awarded Significant Contract to Service U.S. Military Aircraft*

From Gulfstream Aerospace Corp.

SAVANNAH, Ga., November 22, 2024 – Gulfstream Aerospace Corp., a business unit of General Dynamics (NYSE:GD), has been [awarded](#) a contractor logistics support services (CLS) contract from the U.S. Air Force Life Cycle Management Center for C-20 and C-37 fleets. This contract extends over a seven-year period and provides services to the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Army and U.S. Coast Guard.

“For nearly 60 years, Gulfstream has been a trusted partner to governments and military organizations worldwide, and we are honored that the U.S. Air Force has once again selected our

company to support the U.S. military's fleet," said Mark Burns, president, Gulfstream. "This demonstrates the strength of our world-class Customer Support network and its ability to support all of our customers' missions. Gulfstream's Special Missions business delivers cutting-edge aircraft expertly engineered for a wide range of critical operations and is currently experiencing unprecedented activity with customers around the world."

The latest CLS contract is valued at \$991 million and includes a wide variety of support such as global maintenance, component overhaul, repair and modification services. Gulfstream Customer Support will perform the work at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland; Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii; Ramstein Air Base, Germany; Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Kaneohe Bay; and Naval Base Ventura County, California.

To date, Gulfstream has delivered more than 200 special missions aircraft to over 40 countries, including all branches of the U.S. military and key U.S. government agencies.

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## **George Washington Returns to Yokosuka**



Sailors man the rails as USS George Washington (CVN 73) returns to Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan. (MC3 Lucas Hastings)

By Ensign Kenadall Hill, Nov. 22, 2024

YOKOSUKA, Japan - The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) returned to Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan as the United States' only forward-deployed aircraft carrier, Nov. 22.

This marks the second time George Washington has served as the forward-deployed naval forces-Japan (FDFN-J) aircraft carrier. In 2008, it became the first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to be forward-deployed to Japan before being relieved by USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) in 2015.

“A US carrier represents the most advanced maritime capability we have, and it’s the most advanced investment we can make in the security of Japan and of the Western Pacific,” said Vice Adm. Fred Kacher, Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet. “The George Washington returns with modernized, cutting-edge technology that represents our investment in deterrence and security in this region.”

During George Washington's transit from Norfolk, Virginia to Japan, the crew completed Exercise Southern Seas in U.S. 4th Fleet and a seven-week transit from San Diego.

"Arriving here in Yokosuka has been a milestone for this crew for many months, and for some the journey started in April when we departed from Virginia," said Capt. Tim Waits, commanding officer of George Washington. "I could not be more proud of this team. Not only have we arrived safely and on time, but from day one of deployment we have met every goal, exceeded all expectations, and were ready for tasking the day we arrived in the 7th Fleet area of operations."

George Washington, with embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5, recently participated in the multi-domain exercise Freedom Edge with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and Republic of Korea Navy in the East China Sea. U.S. participation included Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 147, the first F-35C Lightning II squadron to join FDNF-J, adding fifth generation strike fighter jets to the roster of forward-deployed carrier-based aircraft in the Indo-Pacific region.

"We are proud to bring George Washington back to Yokosuka and back to the location of the most meaningful time in the ship's history," said Rear Adm. Greg Newkirk, Commander, Task Force 70 and the George Washington Carrier Strike Group. "Her crew is made up of both returning friends and many new to Japan, where they and their families will create lifelong memories and friendships in this magnificent Japanese city. Together, the combined community – back dropped by the JMSDF fleet and America's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier – represents a shared vision of peace and prosperity across the region. We are truly allies, friends and family."

George Washington recently hosted distinguished visitors at sea, including U.S. Ambassador to Japan, Rahm Emanuel; Japan's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. OKANO Masataka; and the

mayor of Iwakuni City, Mr. FUKUDA Yoshihiko.

CVW-5 includes VFA 147 "Argonauts," VFA-102 "Diamondbacks," VFA-27 "Royal Maces," VFA-195 "Dambusters," Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 141 "Shadowhawks," Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRM) 30 Detachment 5 "Titans," Airborne Command & Control Squadron (VAW) 125 "Tigertails," Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 12 "Golden Falcons," and Helicopter maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 77 "Saberhawks," operating F/A-18F Super Hornets, F/A-18E Super Hornets, F-35C Joint Strike Fighters, EA-18G Growlers, CMV-22 Ospreys, E-2D Hawkeyes, MH-60S, and MH-60R Helicopters.

George Washington is 7th Fleet's premiere forward-deployed aircraft carrier, a long-standing symbol of the United States' commitment to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific region, and operates alongside allies and partners across the U.S. Navy's largest numbered fleet.

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## **USS Jefferson City Returns Home to Naval Base Guam Following Successful Indo-Pacific Deployment**



Sailors moor USS Jefferson City (SSN 759) as it arrives at Naval Base Guam. (MC1 Justin Wolpert)  
From U.S. Pacific Fleet, Nov. 21, 2024

NAVAL BASE GUAM - The Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS Jefferson City (SSN 759) returned to its homeport of Naval Base Guam after a successful deployment in the Indo-Pacific region, Oct. 27, 2024.

“USS Jefferson City exceeded all expectations on this short deployment,” said Capt. Neil Steinhagen, Commander, Submarine Squadron 15. “The crew’s unwavering dedication to theater security and operational excellence reflects the strength of our forward-deployed forces. Standing true to their motto, ‘When Any Exigence Calls,’ the crew met every challenge with distinction, directly supporting our mission in the Pacific. Job well done team – welcome home!”

During this deployment, Jefferson City undertook critical missions that strengthened national security, elevated operational maritime capabilities, and bolstered deterrence

within the Indo-Pacific, underscoring the strategic importance of a forward-deployed submarine force.

“No matter the mission or task, my crew rose to every occasion,” said Cmdr. Alexander (AJ) Franz, commanding officer of USS Jefferson City. “Their focus, determination, and relentless pursuit of excellence shaped an extraordinary deployment. I couldn’t be prouder of their accomplishments, as each Sailor’s dedication and resilience shone brightly in our mission’s success.”

During the deployment, 38 Jefferson City Sailors earned their submarine warfare insignia, the distinguished ‘dolphins’ or ‘fish,’ symbolizing their qualification to operate at the highest standards. This emblem represents their mastery and commitment to the submarine force’s tradition of excellence.

“The strength of our Navy lies in its true source of power—our Sailors,” said Jefferson City Chief of the Boat Master Chief Machinist Mate (Auxiliary) Chris Halamoutis. “The dedication these Sailors have shown to achieve this honor is truly commendable. Their perseverance, hard work, and commitment to our mission reflect the spirit of those who came before them, as they join the ranks of a distinguished community with the privilege of wearing this insignia.”

As part of Jefferson City’s homecoming celebration, the Navy’s cherished “first kiss” and “first hug” traditions took place. The “first kiss” was awarded to Lt. j.g Jonathan Lopez and the “first hug” was awarded to Senior Chief Machinist Mate (Auxiliary) Timothy Murphy.

Commissioned on February 29, 1992, USS Jefferson City is the only U.S. Navy vessel named for Jefferson City, Missouri. Assigned to Commander, Submarine Squadron 15 at Polaris Point, Naval Base Guam, Jefferson City is one of four Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarines forward-deployed in the Pacific.

Renowned for their unparalleled speed, endurance, stealth, and mobility, the Los Angeles-class submarine serves as the backbone of the Navy's submarine force, ensuring readiness and agility in safeguarding maritime interests around the world.

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# **Navy Launches Military Sealift Command Workforce Initiative**

The logo for SEAPOWER, with 'SEA' in light blue and 'POWER' in red, in a bold, sans-serif font.

The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

From Military Sealift Command Public Affairs, Nov. 21, 2024

WASHINGTON – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro approved a plan Oct. 30 to restore the health of the Military Sealift Command (MSC) workforce and generate more logistics support for fleet operations worldwide.

MSC consists of 5,500 civil service mariners and 1,500 contracted mariners operating 140 logistics supply ships that

support the replenishment and transport of military cargo and supplies for U.S. forces and partners. The command's new workforce initiative addresses civil service mariner recruitment and retention challenges by restoring the health of the MSC workforce for the next several decades.

The initiative will also include crew reassignments to higher priority vessels and the placement of some MSC logistics support ships into extended maintenance periods. Rotating crews to higher priority vessels will minimize overdue reliefs and provide a more predictable work environment for civil service mariners.

"Our civil service mariners play invaluable roles providing continuous logistics support to our deployed naval forces, and they are working overtime to sustain that mission globally," said Secretary Del Toro. "This initiative will not only address operational logistics challenges we face now, it will ensure that Military Sealift Command has policies, programs and incentives it needs to recruit and retain future generations of civil service mariners."

Nationally, the U.S. merchant marine workforce is facing a shortage of personnel to fill positions at sea, as it has become more challenging to attract interested Americans, impacting mariners employed by MSC. MSC has also assumed broader logistics responsibilities and experienced higher mission demand for Navy operations in recent years, increasing the strain on the workforce and contributing to recruiting and retention challenges.

"Addressing the recruiting and retention challenges in MSC's civil service mariner workforce will take time," said Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck, MSC's commander.

The types of ships for the workforce initiative include Fleet Replenishment Oilers (T-AO), Dry Cargo/Ammunition Ships (T-AKE), Expeditionary Fast Transports (T-EPF), and Expeditionary

Sea Bases (ESB).

The MSC workforce initiative advances Secretary Del Toro's vision for a new Maritime Statecraft to revitalize the naval, industrial and commercial aspects of America's maritime power in an era of strategic competition. These investments will increase MSC's operational readiness and support its civil service workforce, both of which strengthen maritime dominance

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**Mid-Atlantic Regional  
Maintenance Center Readies  
Gerald R. Ford CSG for Timely  
Departure**



The world's largest aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), sails in formation with the Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyers USS Winston Churchill (DDG 81), USS Mitscher (DDG 57), USS Mahan (DDG 72), USS Bainbridge (DDG 96), and USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98) in the Atlantic Ocean, Nov. 12, 2024. The Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group is underway in the Atlantic Ocean completing Group Sail. Group Sail is the first at-sea integrated phase training event during a routine deployment training cycle. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Maxwell Orlosky)

By Danielle Lofton, Mid-Atlantic Regional Maintenance Center Public Affairs

Nov. 20, 2024

NORFOLK Va. – Mid-Atlantic Regional Maintenance Center showcased its critical role in naval readiness after providing crucial technical support to the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group. The strike group, which includes USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), USS Mahan (DDG 72), USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98), USS Bainbridge (DDG 96), USS Mitscher (DDG 57), and USS Winston S. Churchill (DDG 81), received comprehensive

maintenance assistance from MARMC, allowing it to depart for training on time from Naval Station Norfolk.

While supporting the CSG, MARMC simultaneously extended its expertise to several other ships, providing Fleet Technical Assists to USS San Antonio (LPD 17), USS Fort Lauderdale (LPD 28), USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44), and USS Normandy (CG 60). In total, MARMC enabled 10 warships to depart on-schedule, fully mission capable.

“We are proud to work alongside our Fleet and our industry partners to deliver results and demonstrate MARMC’s commitment to ensuring our warships are ready to project power and uphold the U.S. Navy’s standing as the world’s premier fighting force,” said Capt. Jay Young, MARMC commanding officer. “This success highlights the capabilities of our team and our ability to provide simultaneous, high-priority support to multiple ships, getting them back to sea in record time.”

Preparing a Carrier Strike Group (CSG) for deployment is no small task. Behind the scenes, Regional Maintenance Centers (RMCs) play a vital role in ensuring that everything from the flight deck of the aircraft carrier to the propulsion systems of the escort ships is in optimal condition to meet the demands of modern naval warfare.

“The preparation for each group of ships is unique,” said Maintenance Operations Director Riccardo Cutruzzula. “Each ship’s schedule and maintenance need is different, and the maintenance team must be flexible. A continual assessment approach is taken based on the ship’s current material condition. Ultimate success is driven by identifying the potential problems before it becomes critical so there is adequate time to repair and address.”

While the immediate task of preparing for deployment is critical, RMCs also play a long-term role in shaping the Navy’s future readiness. Maintenance teams use real-time data,





(l to r) Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro; Senator Tammy Baldwin, D- Wisconsin; Representative Betty McCollum, D- Minnesota; and Representative Jen Kiggans, R-Virginia. Not pictured: Senator Joni Ernst, R-Iowa.

From SECNAV Public Affairs, 19 November 2024

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro highlighted the need for bipartisanship by announcing the sponsors of the future Constellation-class multi-mission guided-missile frigate USS Congress (FFG 63) will be four members of Congress: Sens. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisconsin) and Joni Ernst (R-Iowa) and Reps. Betty McCollum (D-Minnesota) and Jen Kiggans (R-Virginia).

Del Toro made the announcement during a reception amongst members of Congress and local civic leaders at the Dirksen Senate Office Building, in Washington DC, on Nov. 19.

“It is in the spirit of bipartisanship that I am honored to announce the sponsors of the future USS Congress (FFG 63) represent both institutions of Congress and both major political parties,” said Del Toro. “There is no one better than Senator Baldwin, Senator Ernst, Representative McCollum, and Representative Kiggans to connect Congress with the highly capable frigate that will bear its name.”

Sponsors are selected by the Secretary of the Navy and hold a unique role by maintaining a lifelong relationship with the ship and crew. Senator Ernst was previously invited to serve as sponsor by 77th Secretary of the Navy, Kenneth Braithwaite. The additional co-sponsors added by Secretary Del Toro enable the ship to be represented by sponsors from both congressional institutions.

“We honor the institution that has been at the heart of our Democracy,” said Senator Ernst. “I am humbled by the responsibility of standing as her sponsor, not just for the men and women who will serve on board, but for the country we are sworn to protect.”

Senator Tammy Baldwin, from Wisconsin, joined Secretary Del Toro for the announcement.

“I am truly honored to serve as one of the sponsors of the future USS Congress alongside a bipartisan group of my colleagues,” said Senator Baldwin. “I take great pride in representing Wisconsin’s shipbuilding industry in Washington because our workers have helped sustain America’s security for generations, boasting a successful history of building ships for our nation’s defense. The USS Congress will play a critical role in continuing that tradition. Wherever the USS Congress takes our flag, she will be a symbol of America’s strengths – strength of our brave service men and women who will assume command of the ship, but also the hard-working Wisconsinites that will make the USS Congress a reality.”

Providing remarks after Senator Baldwin, Representative McCollum shared her thoughts on the distinction of being named a sponsor alongside her fellow members of Congress.

“It is my honor to be asked alongside with three colleagues to serve as ship sponsor for the new USS Congress,” said Representative McCollum. “The USS Congress name is a long and proud lineage including one of the six original frigates of the US Navy.”

Representative Jen Kiggans, a Navy veteran, also participated in the announcement and highlighted the honor and meaning behind the naming of the ship.

“It is truly a privilege to be selected as a sponsor of the USS Congress,” said Representative Kiggans. “This ship, named in honor of one of the original six frigates of the U.S. Navy, will ensure our sailors can continue to fulfill their commitments to our citizens, our nation, and freedom around the globe.”

The U.S. Navy’s second Constellation-class frigate FFG 63, was named USS Congress by the 77th Secretary of the Navy Kenneth Braithwaite. The name honors the first six heavy frigates of the U.S. Navy.

The ship naming honors the rich history and legacy of the Navy. Congress was among the six original frigates authorized by Congress in the Naval Act of 1794, which established the U.S. Navy as an agile, lethal and ready force and cemented the enduring partnership between the sea service and our nation’s elected legislative officials.

The Constellation-class guided-missile frigate represents the Navy’s next generation small surface combatant. This ship class will be an agile, multi-mission warship, capable of operations in both blue-water and littoral environments, providing increased combat-credible forward presence that provides a military advantage at sea.

The Constellation-class will have multi-mission capability to conduct air warfare, anti-submarine warfare, surface warfare, electronic warfare, and information operations.

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## Flag Officer Nominations



From the U.S. Department of Defense, Nov. 20, 2024

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced today that the president has made the following nominations:

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Christopher D. Alexander for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Alexander is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group Nine, San Diego, California.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Bradley J. Andros for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Andros is currently serving as commander, Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Sean R. Bailey for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Bailey is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group Eight, Norfolk, Virginia.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Brian H. Bennett for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Bennett is currently serving as deputy director, Special Operations and Counter Terrorism, J-3, Joint Staff, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Adan G. Cruz for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Cruz is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group Three, Bremerton, Washington.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) John E. Dougherty IV for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Dougherty is currently serving as commander, Naval Air Warfare Center, Aircraft Division; and chief engineer, Naval Air Systems Command, Patuxent River, Maryland.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Thomas M. Henderschedt for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Henderschedt is currently serving as director of Integration, Associate Directorate of Military Affairs, Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, D.C.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Christopher A. Kijek for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Kijek is currently serving as director, Learning to Action Board, Pentagon, Washington, D.C.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Max G. McCoy Jr. for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. McCoy is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group Four, Norfolk, Virginia.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Thomas P. Moninger for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Moninger is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group Twelve, Norfolk, Virginia.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Martin J. Muckian for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Muckian is currently serving as commander, Submarine Group Two, Norfolk, Virginia.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Gregory D. Newkirk for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Newkirk is currently serving as commander, Task Force Seven Zero; and commander, Carrier Strike Group Five, Yokosuka, Japan.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Jonathan E. Rucker for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Rucker is currently serving as program executive officer, Attack Submarines, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Mark A. Schafer for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Schafer is currently serving as commander, Special Operations Command South, U.S. Southern Command, Doral, Florida.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Nicholas R. Tilbrook for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Tilbrook is currently serving as commander, Submarine Group Nine, Silverdale, Washington.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Douglas L. Williams for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Williams is currently serving as director for Test, Missile Defense Agency, Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Robert E. Wirth for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Wirth is currently serving as commander, Submarine Group Ten, Kings Bay, Georgia.

Navy Rear Adm. (lower half) Michael S. Wosje for appointment to the grade of rear admiral. Wosje is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group One, San Diego, California.

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# Navy Leader Highlights Shipyards' Vital Role in Fleet Readiness During Pacific Northwest Visit

From SECNAV Public Affairs, Nov. 18, 2024

ARLINGTON, Va. – Acting Under Secretary of the Navy Tom Mancinelli visited Puget Sound Naval Shipyard & Intermediate Maintenance Facility (PSNS & IMF) in Bremerton, Washington, Nov. 18, where he engaged with shipyard leadership, employees, and Sailors, emphasizing the critical role the Navy's public shipyards have in maintaining maritime readiness.

Mancinelli's visit focused on the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP), a long-term effort to modernize the Navy's four public shipyards, and also included a tour of the USS Jimmy Carter (SSN 23), a Seawolf-class submarine currently undergoing maintenance.

During his visit, Mancinelli met with Capt. JD Crinklaw, PSNS & IMF commander, and other senior leaders to discuss shipyard operations, infrastructure updates, and challenges. They also discussed programmatic improvements, technical innovations, and Quality of Service initiatives. As the Navy's largest public shipyard, and the only shipyard capable of servicing Nimitz-class carriers on the West Coast, PSNS & IMF is essential to help ensure fleet readiness.

"We must continue to build, maintain, and modernize ships, submarines and aircraft to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow," said Mancinelli. "What you do here matters deeply

to the Navy and to our nation's security. Your work is vital to defending our country and our way of life."

Mancinelli toured Dry Docks 3, 5, and 6, where he observed seismic upgrades and discussed planned improvements under SIOP.

"The Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Plan is a once-in-a-century investment that reflects the Department of Navy's commitment to ensuring our fleet remains ready for future challenges," said Mancinelli. "These upgrades are critical to the overall strength of the Navy and are critical to our effort to keep our fleet ready."

SIOP is an investment plan at the Navy's four public shipyards to meet nuclear fleet maintenance requirements and improve Navy maintenance capabilities by expanding shipyard capacity, optimizing shipyard configuration, creating resilient infrastructure, and modernizing industrial plant equipment. SIOP upgrades enable shipyard to improve efficiency and reduce the amount of time vessels spend in a maintenance period.

The Acting Under Secretary also visited the USS Jimmy Carter, the last and most advanced of the Seawolf-class attack submarines. The submarine features a unique 100-foot hull extension, known as the multi-mission platform, which enables it to carry advanced technology and enhanced warfighting capabilities.

On board, Mancinelli met with the submarine's leadership and crew, toured the vessel, and dined with Sailors while learning more about the submarine's capabilities.

"It is always inspiring to meet the extraordinary Sailors who bring our platforms to life," said Mancinelli. "The crew of the Jimmy Carter exemplifies the innovation, dedication, and selflessness that define our Navy. I have no doubt they will continue to do great things for our nation."

Throughout his visit, Mancinelli reinforced maritime statecraft and Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro's priorities: strengthening maritime dominance, building a culture of warfighting excellence, and enhancing strategic partnerships.

"Our shipyard workers here at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard directly support the strength and readiness of the fleet," said Mancinelli. "Your dedication and hard work ensure that our nation maintains the strongest Navy in the world. Thank you for your contributions to the security of our nation."

The visit marked Mancinelli's first trip to the Pacific Northwest, underscoring the Navy's focus on maintaining a ready and modern fleet capable of meeting global and strategic challenges.

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## **HII Moves Enterprise (CVN 80) for First Time, Enabling Construction of Two Aircraft Carriers at Once**



From HII, Nov. 19, 2024

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., Nov. 19, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII (NYSE: HII) announced today that its Newport News Shipbuilding division has successfully transferred the mid-body hull section of *Gerald R. Ford*-class aircraft carrier *Enterprise* (CVN 80), allowing the shipyard to begin the concurrent assembly of two *Gerald R. Ford*-class aircraft carriers in the same dry dock.

The evolution began Thursday, Oct. 31 with the controlled process of slowly filling the dry dock with more than 100 million gallons of water, marking the first time CVN 80 has been floated. It was then transferred to the west end of the dry dock, where construction on the ship will continue.

Early next year, the shipyard expects to commence assembling *Doris Miller* (CVN 81) in the east end of the dry dock, marking a historic first that two *Gerald R. Ford*-class aircraft carriers will be under construction in the dry dock at the same time. The dual construction of *Enterprise* (CVN 80) and *Doris Miller* (CVN 81) is enabled by the successful implementation of the CVN 80/81 two-ship contract modification

awarded in 2019 and modifications made to the dry dock by NNS with investment by HII and the U.S. Navy.

Photos and a video accompany this release are available at: <https://hii.com/news/hii-moves-enterprise-cvn-80-for-first-time-enabling-construction-of-two-aircraft-carriers-at-once/>.

“It is only fitting for this *Enterprise*, CVN 80, to be part of a historic first at NNS, considering the previous *Enterprise*, CVN 65, was the world’s first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, proudly built here at the shipyard,” said Les Smith, NNS vice president *Enterprise* (CVN 80), *Doris Miller* (CVN 81) and future aircraft carrier programs. “Thousands of dedicated shipbuilders are working with urgency on these aircraft carriers that we know will play a vital role in the Navy’s fleet.”

NNS is the only shipyard capable of designing, building and refueling nuclear-powered aircraft carriers for the Navy. *Enterprise* is the first aircraft carrier designed digitally and built digitally using visual work instructions on laptops and tablets rather than paper drawings.