The Department of the Navy is Establishing a Naval Strategic Studies Group (NSSG) Program

From the U.S. Navy Office of Information, 31 October 2024

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The NSSG will be modeled after the Strategic Studies Group created during the Cold War, which had a twofold mission to train future flag officers in strategic thinking and to conduct research on some of the DON's most vexing strategic challenges.

The first cohort will include uniformed and civilian members from the Navy and Marine Corps. These plank-owners will conduct a capstone research project that advances Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro's strategic maritime statecraft initiative.

"I expect my seasoned, mid-grade officers to be brilliant on naval tactics and operations by the time they report for graduate education," Del Toro said. "I need future flag and general officers who will think strategically about how to lead naval forces in an increasingly contested maritime domain and amidst intense economic, technological and military competition."

The education in strategic studies the NSSG members will receive supports DON's focus on reinvigorating the strategic workforce, under the Secretary's enduring priority of building a culture of warfighting excellence.

Members' research – focused on broad strategic challenges, rather than narrower problems already addressed by fleet experimentation on specific tactics or technologies – will support DON's aim of strengthening maritime dominance.

"The Department of the Navy meets our nation's maritime needs, both today and into the future. As the Office of Strategic Assessment builds a net assessment capability for the DON to understand the complex challenges we face, the Naval Strategic Studies Group will bring together a cohort of rising leaders who will address these challenges and build the strategic leadership skills to guide our Navy and Marine Corps in a dynamic and shifting global environment," OSA Director Dr. Cara LaPointe said.

The chief of naval operations created the previous SSG in 1981 to tackle key strategic challenges related to the Cold War. Over time, the SSG's focus evolved to reflect the needs of the Navy until 2016, when it was sundowned.

As the Department of the Navy returns to an era of competition, stakeholders have agreed on the need to amplify strategic leader education as the United States faces an increasingly complex web of threats that includes China, Russia, Iran and North Korea. In 2023 Secretary Del Toro released a Naval Education Strategy to guide investments to modernize naval schools and professional military education. The NSSG will focus students' strategic leadership studies on DON's most pressing strategic challenges for greater effect.

"Today we face a comprehensive maritime power in the Indo-

Pacific, Russian aggression in Ukraine, and Houthi attacks in the Red Sea – all of which will shape our security environment for several decades," Del Toro said. "A revitalized, Naval SSG will help the Department of the Navy engage with and look ahead of these trends with sufficient access, resources, and guidance from leadership."

The first cohort will also tackle questions that will help shape the enduring NSSG program, including working with the Naval University System to deliver a world-class curriculum, and will be located in Washington, D.C.

Lt. Gen. Benjamin Watson, the commanding general of the Marine Corps Training and Education Command, said recent conflicts have reinforced the importance of having Marine Corps leaders at all levels who can outthink the enemy.

"Domains like information and cyber, along with the rise of non-state actors, don't fit neatly into old frameworks. Our current operating environment demands nothing less than a renaissance in strategic thinking," said Watson. "To stay ahead of our adversaries, we need to keep evolving—updating our training, sharpening our minds, and learning – not just observing – the lessons of contemporary conflict. The fight isn't just on the battlefield anymore, and we need every Marine to possess the training, education, and intellectual agility to adapt and overcome."

Vice Adm. Daniel Dwyer, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans, Strategy and Warfighting Development, agreed the Navy needs Sailors and civilians "with superb education and training, who are able to think, act and operate differently to ensure we can defeat our adversaries."
"The establishment of the NSSG will enhance our culture of warfighting excellence and strengthen our maritime dominance by developing strategically minded warfighters who will be the future senior leaders of the service and will lead our Navy

through uncertain times," said Dwyer.

Del Toro established the Office of Strategic Assessment in October 2023 and tasked the office to reconstitute the strategic studies program to help rebuild the naval strategist community.

Lockheed Martin Makes First International SEWIP Sale to Japan

From Lockheed Martin

SYRACUSE, N.Y., Oct. 29, 2024 – Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT)

was awarded a $113 million contract by Naval Sea Systems Command for full rate production of Surface Electronic Warfare Improvement Program (SEWIP) Block 2 AN/SLQ-32(V)6 and AN/SLQ-32C(V)6 systems.

This contract combines purchases for the U.S. Navy and the government of Japan under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program. It serves as a modification to a previously awarded SEWIP full rate production contract, that allowed for additional production based on need.

The purchase for Japan marks the first international sale of the premier shipboard electronic warfare system in the world. Japan is a critical ally in the Western Pacific. Having SEWIP provides the same state-of-the-art system for detecting and identifying threats that the U.S. Navy uses, enhancing shipboard capabilities, and increasing interoperability with the U.S. Navy.

“The SEWIP program has proven critical for the U.S. Navy in the early detection of threats,” said Deon Viergutz, vice president of Spectrum Convergence, Lockheed Martin Rotary & Mission Systems. “With this first purchase in Japan, we are setting the stage to continue to expand this key technology around the globe for an improved network of electronic surveillance, enabling U.S., allied and partner forces to continue to evolve and outpace modern threats.”

For more than 13 years, Lockheed Martin has partnered with the U.S. Navy to develop and produce SEWIP Block 2, producing over 130 units. Work on this new contract will be performed in Liverpool, New York and Lansdale, Pennsylvania, and is expected to be completed by October 2026.

Leidos Awarded $93M Contract to Support Navy and Marine Corps Weapons Systems

SEAPOWER
The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

From Leidos

RESTON, Va. (Oct. 30, 2024) – Leidos (NYSE:LDOS) announced today a new contract to provide critical supply support for weapons systems that keep the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps forces mission-ready. The Technical Assistance for Repairables Processing (TARP) contract was awarded by the Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) Fleet Logistics Center, supporting NAVSUP's Weapon Systems Support (WSS). The contract has a base period of performance of one year with four one-year options and one six-month option.

"Leidos' solutions in advanced traceability and control support our Navy and Marine forces in moving, controlling, and tracking depot-level repairables worldwide – ultimately helping to reduce repair pipeline time and the cost of future investment," said Jason McCarthy, Leidos senior vice president, Engineering, Integration & Operations. "We are

proud to continue to deliver mission-enabling technology and data-driven logistics to our long-time customer.”

New under this contract, Leidos plans to develop a business intelligence dashboard with live data and reporting to put a powerful decision support system at the fingertips of the NAVSUP WSS customer, including in offline environments.

Under the TARP program, global field representatives train and assist the U.S. Navy field and fleet on all aspects of the Reverse Supply Chain (RSC). The training covers the proper packaging of expensive military assets as well as use of the electronic Retrograde Management System (eRMS), an IT system that provides visibility and accountability for repairables moved through RSC transportation channels.

This is the seventh TARP program contract awarded to Leidos. Since 2000, the Leidos team has consistently delivered innovations, including automated reporting and multi-platform mobile applications to capture project data.

Amentum Awarded $490M to Modernize Navy’s Multi-Engine Training Aircraft Fleet

A T-54 multi-engine aircraft sits on the flightline of Naval Air Station (NAS) Corpus Christi, April 18, 2024 (U.S. Navy Photo by Anne Owens/Released)

From Amentum

CHANTILLY, Va., October 28, 2024 – The U.S. Navy awarded Amentum (NYSE: AMTM) a $490 million contract to deliver comprehensive contractor logistics support (CLS) of the state-of-the-art T-54A Multi Engine Training System (METS). This innovative system will supersede the aging T-44C aircraft, as Amentum collaborates with the Navy and Textron, the original equipment manufacturer, to modernize the Navy's training aircraft fleet.

Amentum's expert fleet management support to the METS program strategically positions the U.S. Navy's pilot training for unparalleled success. By offering its services to the Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) for the cutting-edge multi-engine platform, Amentum will be instrumental in shaping the future of naval aviation. The METS program will seamlessly enable future Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and select U.S. allied

pilots to transition into advanced multi-engine and tilt-rotor fleet aircraft such as the V-22 Osprey, E-2D Hawkeye, C-130 Hercules, and P-8 Poseidon ensuring operational readiness through 2055.

“Amentum’s extensive experience delivering comprehensive fleet management—encompassing modifications and engineering to sustainment and logistics—makes us the premier partner for modernizing the Navy’s training aircraft fleet,” said Dr. Karl Spinnenweber, President of the Mission Solutions Group. “Our team, understanding the critical nature of our mission, excels in the accelerated pilot training environment and is fully committed to providing ready-to-train aircraft every single day.”

Amentum’s dynamic, highly skilled workforce consistently delivers ready-for-production (RFP) aircraft for daily training missions, ensuring excellence through both scheduled or un-scheduled maintenance and modifications in a highly demanding student training environment. These aircraft systems provide the foundation for advanced fleet aircraft training syllabi. Amentum delivers critical training on full system maintenance, service, and repair of avionics, airframes, and power plants, as well as overhaul of aircraft engines, propellers, and avionics components, enabling continuous flight operations.

“Our partnership with the U.S. Navy and CNATRA strengthens as Amentum delivers innovative engineering, modification and sustainment solutions to maximize aircraft availability for naval aviator training,” said Joe Kelly, Senior Vice President for Sustainment and Analytics.

The task order transition phase in began June 1, 2024, and full performance started Sept. 1 under the CMMARS Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity Multiple Award Contract. It has a one-year base period and four additional one-year option periods and is contracted through Naval Air Systems Command

(NAVAIR). Operations will be conducted at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi, Texas supporting the phase-out and divestiture of all T-44C aircraft and the introduction of all T-54A fleet over the next three years.

About Amentum

CNO Franchetti and MCPON Honea Visit NSWC Panama City Division

CNO Adm. Lisa Franchetti addresses attendees at an all hands call at Naval Support Activity Panama City, Fla. (Eddie Green)
29 October 2024

From Cierra Burch, Shauna Love-vonKnoblauch, Katherine Mapp and Jeremy Roman

PANAMA CITY, Florida – Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Lisa Franchetti and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy (MCPON) James Honea visited Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division (NSWC PCD), Oct. 24.

Franchetti and Honea's visit provided the opportunity for them to see firsthand how NSWC PCD, one of the Navy's premiere research, development, test and evaluation laboratories, supports the fleet through capabilities including mine

warfare, expeditionary warfare, robotics, autonomous systems, and naval special warfare.

“It was really exciting to see all the amazing work that is going on all around here. I got to walk around and talk with many [people from this workforce], the commands here and the service members,” said Franchetti. “I’m very excited about the future. It is a very bright future thanks to all the great work that you’re doing here today and have been doing for quite some time.”

Franchetti and Honea spent the first part of their visit engaging with sailors and civilians, while learning more about capabilities to ensure wartime readiness.

“NSWC PCD continues to meet mission readiness by ensuring alignment to the CNO’s Navigation Plan, which poises our Navy to enhance the Navy’s long-term advantage,” said Capt. David Back, NSWC PCD commanding officer. “It is an honor to host the CNO and MCPON.”

Dr. Peter Adair, SES, NSWC PCD technical director, emphasized the significance of getting NSWC PCD’s capabilities to the fleet rapidly.

“Taking sailors and marines out of harm’s way and reducing the operational timeline is imperative. Unmanned technologies are how we are going to get there,” said Adair. “It is our role to ensure the fleet has the capabilities they need for today, tomorrow and the Navy after next.”

The visit concluded with a CNO and MCPON-led All Hands Call with sailors and civilians across Naval Support Activity Panama City.

The warfighter is the Navy’s asymmetric advantage. Franchetti’s Navigation Plan 2024 America’s Warfighting Navy

outlines the need to build our unmatched warfighting teams—active and reserve Sailors, with Navy civilians—through a relentless focus on training and learning.

“When I am asked ‘who is the warfighter’ many groups of people come to mind. There are our sailors, on the frontline, but there are also those in the behind the scenes that contribute significantly to Project 33 and to the Navy getting real, getting better,” said Franchetti during her All-Hands address. “I am incredibly grateful for the hard work each of you put into ensuring our mission not only advances operationally, but processes continue to improve so we can support the frontline more efficiently and safely.”

Fourteen individuals were recognized for their significant contributions to the Navy, including 13 sailor recognitions for achievements.

CNO and MCPON presented a Meritorious Civilian Service Award to Andrea Perles, leader in mine warfare for the U.S. Navy. NSWC PCD also announced Hospital Corpsman Second Class Nicholas Harburckak from Chambers, Neb., as the Junior Sailor of the Year and Aviation Ordnanceman First Class Kevin Rodriguez from Smithfield, Va., as the Sailor of the Year at this installation.

The visit provided Franchetti and Honea with a richer understanding of NSWC PCD’s mission to support the America’s Warfighting Navy.

“It is your efforts, your dedication, and your expertise that provides us with the capabilities and enablement of manned and unmanned vessels in the fleet,” said Honea. “Whether you are wearing a uniform or intricately in the behind the scenes, the work you do matters.”

This was Franchetti and Honea’s first visit to NSWC PCD as

Chief of Naval Operations and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy.

BAE Systems Ship Repair Begins Production of Submarine Components

From BAE Systems, Oct. 28, 2024

BAE Systems has been awarded a contract by General Dynamics Electric Boat for deck module fabrication in support of U.S. Navy submarine programs. The contract between the companies will cover the production and shipment of structural steel components for both Columbia- and Virginia-class submarines from BAE Systems' facility in Jacksonville, Florida.

BAE Systems currently provides support to the U.S. Navy Submarine Industrial Base through various business operations, particularly the company's Louisville, Kentucky facility. Earlier this year, Jacksonville shipyard employees began supporting submarine fabrication at multiple sites across the industrial base. For its upcoming work, the shipyard has also drawn upon the expertise of the company's business unit that fabricates other submarine components.

"BAE Systems has a long history of manufacturing components for U.S. Navy submarines, and we are committed to continuing our company's service in this area," said Paul Smith, vice president and general manager of BAE Systems Ship Repair. "We have been adding capability and resources at our Jacksonville shipyard and are ready now to start executing this important work of building high-quality, reliable structures for

Electric Boat and the U.S. Navy.”

BAE Systems’ 101-acre shipyard in Jacksonville currently sustains and provides fabrication services for a wide variety of surface vessels. Concurrent with its submarine production work, the shipyard is undergoing a significant transformation with a new 25,000-ton lifting capacity shiplift and four-acre land-level repair facility coming online in spring 2025.

Across its facilities, BAE Systems is ready to support the submarine production requirements of the U.S. shipbuilding community to meet the needs of the U.S. Navy and its allies.

USS Mobile Returns to Homeport San Diego

USS Mobile (LCS 26) returns to Naval Base San Diego following a 19-month rotational deployment. (MC1 Vance Hand)
From Petty Officer 1st Class Vance Hand, 28 October 2024

SAN DIEGO – The Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Mobile (LCS 26) returned to its San Diego homeport Oct. 25, following a 19-month deployment.

“Mobile’s maiden deployment to 7th fleet was incredibly successful, and we are extremely proud of the accomplishments of both crews,” said Capt. Douglas Meagher, commodore, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron One. “Mobile operated alongside other U.S. Navy assets as well as international allies and partners to not only strengthen our relationships but to demonstrate the tactical capabilities and strategic value of littoral combat ships.”

Mobile participated in freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea, maritime domain awareness and patrol alongside the Philippine Navy, Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) Thailand 2023, Malaysia’s Langkawi

International Maritime Aerospace Exhibition 2023 (LIMA 2023), and Noble Dingo with the Royal Australian Navy. Mobile also participated in trilateral exercises alongside the French Navy and Royal Australian Navy, multinational maritime cooperative activity exercises with Philippine Navy, Royal Australian Navy and Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, and bilateral operations with the Royal Netherlands Navy and Italian Navy.

“I am particularly proud of the resiliency and self-sufficiency that our Sailors demonstrated throughout the deployment,” said Cmdr. David Gardner, commanding officer of Mobile Gold crew. “Mobile operated for extensive periods of time outside of the normal U.S. Navy logistics umbrella, which necessitated deliberate planning and at times time-critical actions to ensure that Mobile was fully mission-ready despite the prolonged operations and distance from shore-based support. The man-hours and money saved through Mobile’s self-sufficiency and can-do attitude was a key to our success.”

Mobile was showcased at the International Maritime Defense Exhibition (IMDEX) Asia 2023 at Changi Naval Base in Singapore. The exhibition included displays and tours of 22 warships from 13 countries.

Mobile participated in CARAT Thailand 2023, a bilateral exercise between Thailand and the United States designed to promote regional security cooperation, maintain and strengthen maritime partnerships, and enhance maritime interoperability.
Mobile was an active participant in LIMA 2023, which included industry stakeholders, government, and military officials from more than a dozen countries dedicated to the maritime and aerospace sectors for defense, civil, and commercial applications. Apart from exhibits, forums and conferences, LIMA 23 also organized various activities such as cultural exchanges, flight simulators, technology talks, and career fairs for participants.
Mobile conducted bilateral operations with the Royal Netherlands Navy in the South China Sea to improve allied

interoperability and conduct complex scenarios to improve combined readiness. The operation was followed by a separate bilateral operation with the Italian Navy that was also held in the South China Sea.

“These Sailors are returning home to their families with significant operational experience. Given the nature of our minimally manned crew each of these Sailors has amassed hundreds of hours of experience in specialized evolutions, both in real-world events and through training while deployed,” said Gardner. “The result is Mobile Sailors are highly qualified within rate and rapidly advancing in their careers. Mobile flies both the Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist and Surface Warfare Officer pennants as a visual indication of our highly warfare-qualified team.”

Mobile is homeported in San Diego as a part of Littoral Combat Ship Squadron One. Littoral combat ships are fast, optimally-manned, mission-tailored surface combatants that operate in near-shore and open-ocean environments, winning against 21st-century threats. LCS integrate with joint, combined, manned and unmanned teams to support forward-presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence missions around the globe.
For more news from Commander, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron One, visit https://www.surfpac.navy.mil/comlcsron1/ or follow on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/COMLCSRONONE/.

Navy, Industry Launch Program to Bolster Welders at

Critical Nuclear Supplier

SEAPOWER
The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

By Team Submarine Public Affairs, Oct. 25, 2024

MOUNT VERNON, Ind. – The Navy Submarine Industrial Base (SIB) program announced the grand opening of the John D. Haynes School of Welding Technology at Mount Vernon High School, Oct. 24. The initiative, a collaboration between BWX Technologies (BWXT) and non-profit integrator BlueForge Alliance, seeks to address the critical shortage of skilled workers needed to build the Navy's next generation of submarines.

The welding school offers students a unique dual-track educational opportunity to complete their high school diploma and a welding certification. Graduates will have direct entry into BWXT's Nuclear Operations Group, positioning them to work on projects vital to U.S. national defense.

"This program isn't just about filling jobs—it's about creating pathways for more people to support a critical national security mission, and to do so while building a vital, family-sustaining career as a highly skilled and valued member of our team," said Matt Sermon, Executive Director of Program Executive Office Strategic Submarines, in a video

message played during the ribbon-cutting ceremony. “The skills learned here are critical to building and maintaining the submarines that will safeguard our shores for generations to come, and the men and women who pass through these doors will be the backbone of our national security efforts.”

Highlighting the broader implications, Sermon added, “As we scale up submarine production, programs like the Haynes School of Welding Technology will ensure we have the skilled tradespeople needed to meet our goals. This type of focused collaboration between the Navy, industry, and educational institutions is essential in keeping America at the forefront of innovation and defense.”

The state-of-the-art facility, featuring cutting-edge training technologies, can accommodate up to 60 students annually. It’s part of a broader Navy SIB program initiative to strengthen the submarine industrial base, which faces the challenging task of hiring 140,000 skilled workers over the next decade.

Sermon ended his comments highlighting that as submarines continue to play a pivotal role in global security, this high school in Indiana may be shaping the future of America’s undersea capabilities.

The event included remarks from other key figures, such as BWXT CEO Rex Geveden, school officials and welding students, and concluded with tours of the new facility.

Viewed as a potential blueprint for similar programs nationwide, the John D. Haynes School of Welding Technology represents an innovative approach across government, industry, and academia to meet the demand for welders crucial to national defense priorities. Likewise, this model and partnership serves as a benchmark as Navy expands industrial base efforts across the broader maritime enterprise of surface, subsurface, and mission systems.

Carrier Strike Group Conducts Second Multi-Large Deck Event with Italian ITS Cavour CSG

U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY (Oct. 18, 2024) Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group and the Italian Carrier Strike Group leadership pose for a group photo aboard the Italian aircraft carrier ITS Cavour (CVH 550). (Official U.S. Navy photo)

By Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group & Cavour Carrier Strike Group Public Affairs | October 24, 2024

U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY – The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group (CSG) conducted a Multi-Large Deck Event (MLDE) with the Italian Navy's ITS Cavour CSG, Oct. 18.

MLDE provide the ships and aircrafts of the two naval forces, comprised of more than 7,500 U.S. and Italian Sailors and Marines, an opportunity to advance interoperability by carrying out integrated planning and coordination, communications, cross-deck leadership exchanges, a fast-roping exercise, and an air defense exercise to strengthen combined maritime operations and combat readiness.

“The opportunity to exercise our interoperability with our Cavour CSG counterparts for a second time in our deployment, highlights our strategic advantage inherent to our network of strong alliances,” said Rear Adm. Adan Cruz, commander, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 3. “We have seized every opportunity to fly and sail with our Italian counterparts to deepen our combined operational capacity anywhere in international waters.”

During the event, Rear Adm. Giancarlo Ciappina, commander, Cavour Carrier Strike Group, hosted Cruz, aboard the ITS Cavour for a visit focused on building relationships.

”We are proud to work once again alongside Lincoln Carrier Strike Group, after almost two months from our first interaction in the Pacific Ocean,” said Ciappina. “[It] has represented another precious opportunity to train together and to exchange experiences and knowledge, highlighting the versatility and flexibility of Navies operating on a global scale, wherever a presence is required to keep maritime lines of communication open and safe to strengthen our bonds and to enhance levels of cooperation with commitment to security.”

This marks the second time the Abraham Lincoln CSG participated in an MLDE with the Italian Navy during the 2024 deployment. The previous event in August marked the first-ever MLDE between U.S. and Italian Navies in the Indo-Pacific.

Participating ships in the MLDE included Nimitz-Class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), Integrated Air

and Missile Defense Commander (IAMDC) USS Frank E. Petersen, Jr. (DDG 121), Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS O'Kane (DDG 77) & USS Michael Murphy (DDG 111), assigned to Destroyer Squadron 21, Italian aircraft carrier ITS Cavour (CVH 550), Italian Frigate ITS Alpino (F 594), and Italian Multipurpose Combat Ship Raimondo Montecuccoli (P 432).

Participating aircraft included MH-60S and MH-60R Sea Hawks, F/A-18E & F Super Hornets, E/A-18G Growlers, F-35C Lightning II, and E-2D Hawkeye, all assigned to Carrier Air Wing 9; and Italian F-35B Lightning II and AV-8B Harrier II assigned to Cavour CSG.

Cruz and Ciappina conducted a conditions check via virtual teleconference prior to the commencement to ensure all participants were ready, Oct. 17. The exercise started with personnel exchanges where key Abraham Lincoln CSG leadership toured Cavour and Italian officers toured the USS Abraham Lincoln. USS O'Kane and ITS Raimondo Montecuccoli conducted a joint live-fire exercise, while the embarked U.S. explosive ordnance disposal team conducted a subject matter expert exchange and fast rope exercise with Italian counterparts. The event concluded with a complex air defense exercise involving both CSG's tactical aircraft.

"It is an honor to once again have the opportunity to work jointly with our NATO Allies," said Cruz. "I am grateful to Rear Adm. Ciappina and his entire crew of the ITS Cavour for their gracious hospitality aboard their ship. I am also grateful to continue training and operating together to drive interoperability forward."

Ciappina responded with his reflection on the MLDE.

"I am very grateful to Adm. Cruz and to the whole crew of ABE CSG for their great effort and professionalism continuously shown during these challenging times for peace and international stability and that clearly confirm their strong

commitment towards own common values, which are shared within the allied and partner Navies on a global scale," concluded Ciappina.

The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group stands ready to successfully conduct any mission essential to U.S. National security, spanning combat operations to integrated maritime operations with our allies and partners to maritime security and stability in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. It also operates postured to deliver unfaltering maritime force to deter, defend, and if necessary, defeat coercive behavior from those who seek to challenge the rules-based international order.

The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group consists of USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), embarked staffs of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) Three and Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 21, squadrons of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) Nine, IAMDC USS Frank E. Petersen Jr. (DDG 121), and USS O'Kane (DDG 77), USS Spruance (DDG 111), and USS Michael Murphy (DDG 112).

CVW-9 consists of an F-35C squadron, the "Black Knights" of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314; three F/A-18E/F Super Hornet squadrons, the "Tophatters" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 14; "Black Aces" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 41, the "Vigilantes" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 151; "Wizards" of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 133, operating the EA-18G Growler; "Wallbangers" of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 117, operating the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye; "Chargers" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 14 operating the MH-60S Sea Hawk; and "Raptors" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 71, operating the MH-60R Sea Hawk.

U.S. Navy Awards MEDUSA Contract to Advance Innovative Unmanned Technology

SEAPOWER
The Official Publication of the Navy League of the United States

By Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC) Public Affairs, Oct. 25, 2024

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy competitively awarded a contract to General Dynamics Mission Systems Inc., to develop the Mining Expendable Delivery Unmanned Submarine Asset (MEDUSA) System. The contract underscores the Navy's commitment to developing a manned-unmanned hybrid fleet to enhance operational effectiveness and mission agility across all maritime environments.

MEDUSA is a mining system utilizing an expendable Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (UUV) that can be deployed from a submarine. It is a cutting-edge unmanned system designed to meet the Navy's requirement for an advanced maritime mining system. The tasks under this contract include program

management, design, systems engineering, fabrication, and testing and integration of the MEDUSA system for employment from Navy submarines.

“The award of the MEDUSA contract represents our commitment to advancing unmanned technology and integrating it into Navy operations,” said Capt. Matthew Lewis, program manager of the unmanned maritime systems program office. “Innovation is critical to our national security and directly contributes to the readiness of our fleet. This contract enables us to invest in future operational capabilities and to push the boundaries of what we thought possible.”

The base contract, currently valued at $15.9 million, will provide for program management, design, systems engineering, fabrication, testing and integration activities through September 2026. However, if contract options are exercised, work will continue through 2032 and the total contract value could reach $58 million. This strategic investment in unmanned technology is vital for maintaining maritime superiority and ensuring the readiness of our naval forces in an evolving security landscape.

“MEDUSA is an exciting leap forward for our Navy, aligning with CNO’s updated NAVPLAN and the evolving nature of warfare,” said Rear. Adm. Kevin Smith, Program Executive Officer, Unmanned and Small Combatants. “This innovative mining system enhances our capabilities, allowing us to stay one step ahead in a rapidly changing environment. By empowering our warfighters with cutting-edge unmanned technology like MEDUSA, we’re ensuring they have the tools they need to thrive in complex situations and protect our interests at sea.”

The Navy’s unmanned maritime systems program office is a part of the Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants portfolio, which designs, develops, builds, and delivers the Navy’s unmanned maritime systems; mine warfare systems;

special warfare systems; expeditionary warfare systems; and small surface combatants.