

# 68th Annual Tailhook Symposium Concludes



Rear Adm. Doug Verissimo, commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic, speaks during the 2024 Tailhook Symposium in Reno, Nevada. The symposium brought together Navy and Marine Corps aviators and industry partners to discuss significant issues impacting the Naval Aviation Enterprise. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Ryan J. Batchelder)  
By [Petty Officer 1st Class Aron Montan](#), [Commander, Naval Air Forces](#)

RENO, Nev. – U.S. Navy and Marine Corps aviators, veterans, industry partners and supporters attended the 2024 Tailhook Association symposium, Aug. 22-24, at the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, Nevada. The symposium consisted of various speaking panels, junior officer engagements, an awards luncheon, winging ceremony and a banquet.

Guest speakers included Adm. Sam Paparo, commander U.S. Indo-Pacific Command; Adm. Daryl Caudle, commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command; Vice Adm. Dan Cheever, commander Naval Air Forces; Rear Adm. Michael Donnelly, director, Air Warfare Division; Rear Adm. Daniel P. Martin, commander, Naval Safety Command; and Rear Adm. Marc Miguez, commander, Carrier Strike Group Two.

The 68th Tailhook Symposium focused on today's warfighters and topics relevant to the modern landscape of the Naval Aviation Enterprise (NAE). This year's theme of "Be Ready" emphasized the importance of alignment and teamwork between warfighters and industry partners to ensure mission readiness.

"Naval aviation is essential to our maritime nation," said Cheever. "Sea control requires air superiority, and air superiority is what naval aviation provides. The U.S. Navy's indispensable aircraft carriers, carrier air wings and the Tailhookers who operate on them are key to our ability to win."

The three-day event kicked off with an integrated air dominance panel and NAE update to industry partners, emphasizing their contributions to naval aviation. On the second day of the event, Cheever moderated a flag officer panel facilitated discussion between flag officers and Navy and Marine Corps attendees.

"The Navy, enabled by naval aviation, provides credible capability for deterrence, sea control, preservation of peace, response in crisis and power projection to win decisively in combat," said Cheever. "When coupled with our expeditionary forces, USMC, joint forces, allies and partners and industry partners, we are a formidable and key part of distributed maritime operations."

Additionally, a panel of junior officers from Carrier Air Wing

Three, embarked on the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69), shared their experiences of operating in a combat zone, emphasizing the intense coordination required during missions and the personal growth they gained facing unprecedented challenges. They highlighted the camaraderie among the crew and the critical role their training played in ensuring successful operations under high-pressure conditions.

Tailhook 2024 concluded with a winging ceremony where student naval aviators received their “Wings of Gold,” marking their transition to fully qualified naval aviators.

The Tailhook Association is an independent, nonprofit organization supporting aircraft carrier and other sea-based aviation.

The NAE benefits national security by improving the operational readiness of Naval Aviation. The NAE provides a collaborative forum for leaders to deliberate and resolve interdependent issues affecting multiple stakeholders across the whole of naval aviation.


As the type commander for naval aviation, Commander, Naval Air Forces’ mission is to “man, train and equip deployable, combat-ready Naval Aviation forces that win in combat.”

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## **SECNAV Del Toro and Mayor Adams Announce International**

# Naval Review 250

From SECNAV Public Affairs, 29 August 2024

Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro and New York City Mayor Eric Adams announced on August 29th that the Navy and the City of New York will host International Naval Review 250 (INR 250) from July 3rd through July 8th in 2026. 

Washington, D.C., New York City, NY – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro and New York City Mayor Eric Adams announced on August 29th that the Navy and the City of New York will host International Naval Review 250 (INR 250) from July 3rd through July 8th in 2026,

“There’s no better place to celebrate 250 years of American history than in New York City’s harbor,” said New York City Mayor Eric Adams. “From the early days of our country to the present day, New York City has been an unmatched international port, welcoming every corner of the globe to our shores and remaining a leading economic hub. In 2026, our city looks forward to hosting the globe to celebrate and commemorate our nation’s past, present, and future.”

As part of the Semiquincentennial (250th) celebration of the United States, INR 250 will showcase America’s unwavering support to maritime security, economic prosperity, and freedom of the seas for all nations. It will connect Americans with the Navy’s longstanding role, as set forth in the U.S. Constitution, to protect American shores from foreign predation and preserve access to international trade. This extraordinary gathering will also pay tribute to countless generations of Americans who have served, sacrificed and continue to serve in defense of our nation and national maritime interests.

“New York City has always been and remains a historic maritime powerhouse,” said NYC Department of Veterans’ Services’ Commissioner James W. Hendon. “From the Brooklyn Navy Yard, where iconic ships like the USS Arizona were built, to its ongoing significance in fostering international naval partnerships, New York City has been and will always remain a gateway to global trade and maritime innovation. Hosting the International Naval Review on the nation’s 250th birthday, yet again proves that New York City is the most Veteran and military friendly city in the world.”

From the early days of exploration and independence to the present era of global maritime commerce and strategic competition, the United States has always recognized its vital connection to the sea. INR 250 will offer a unique opportunity to reflect on the proud heritage, achievements and sacrifices that have shaped our nation’s maritime legacy.

“For 250 years, our Navy and Marine Corps Team – composed of our Sailors, Marines, Navy Civilians, Merchant Mariners, and supported by America’s shipyard workforce – have built, crewed and sailed across the globe, defending liberty, promoting freedom and advancing maritime statecraft on behalf of our nation,” said Secretary Del Toro. “Our naval heritage is intertwined with the earliest days of American independence, and INR 250 speaks to our longstanding connection with New York City and its harbor.”

The U.S. Navy is inviting international navies, maritime forces and coast guards from over 130 Allied and partner nations to join INR250 and celebrations throughout the week from July 3-8. Scores of foreign warships, aircraft, and delegations will join the U.S. Fleet in the Port of New York and New Jersey. Like previous reviews, warships and vessels from federal, state, City of New York, and other partners will anchor as far south as the Verrazano Bridge and as far north as the George Washington Bridge.

An aerial review and flyover for INR250 will include all types of military, historic, and other aircraft and will likely be among the largest gathering of aircraft for a review in decades. The U.S. Navy and the City of New York will showcase one of the largest gatherings of Tall Sailing ships from around the world for the International Parade of Tall Ships coinciding with INR250.

In addition to INR 250, Sail4th 250, working alongside the U.S. Navy, will oversee what promises to be the greatest gathering of international tall ships in celebration of America's 250th birthday on July 4, 2026 in the Port of New York and New Jersey. The International Parade of Tall Ships will feature 30 international Tall Ships accompanied by hundreds of other historic, leisure, and sailing vessels. The "Parade of Sail" will span from the Verrazzano Bridge to the George Washington Bridge.

"Sail4th 250 is proud to be working with the U.S. Navy, the City of New York, the US Coast Guard, and countless others to continue the long tradition of bringing the international Tall Ships to the world's most famous harbor for this historic milestone event – America's Semiquincentennial," added Sail4th 250 President Chris O'Brien.

The International Parade of Tall Ships started with the 1964 World's Fair led by Operation Sail. For America's 250th celebration, Sail4th 250 will build on this maritime spectacle, not seen since July 4, 2000 during the millennium celebration.

Mayor Adams and Secretary Del Toro also announced the shift of the annual Fleet Week New York to coincide with INR 250. It will include events featuring the Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, large-scale outreach events, public engagements for U.S. and international Sailors, static

displays, and other engagements throughout the Tri-State area. These events will be open to the public and international visitors.

INR 250 will display the strength and capabilities of the modern U.S. Navy, which continues to play a critical role in ensuring our nation's security as well as global maritime security alongside Allies and partners. By gathering like-minded navies and maritime forces from around the globe, INR 250 will demonstrate the United States' commitment to international cooperation and maritime security.

INR 250 will be the 7th international naval review hosted in the United States and the 4th held in the Port of New York and New Jersey, following 1976, 1986, and 2000 reviews. With New York as its centerpiece, INR 250 will commence a series of events with U.S. Navy and international Tall Sailing ship participation, to include Fleet Weeks, and port visits in East Coast and Gulf port cities of New Orleans, Norfolk, Baltimore, and Boston.

Secretary Del Toro and Mayor Adams look forward to collaboration with the federal partners, the States of New York and New Jersey, and City of New York leadership, and the American people as we countdown to America's Semiquincentennial and the International Naval Review 250.

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## **USS Cowpens Decommissioned After 33 Years of Service**



NAVAL BASE SAN DIEGO (Aug. 27, 2024) – Retired Vice Adm. Edward Moore delivers remarks at the decommissioning ceremony for the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Cowpens (CG 63) at Naval Base San Diego Aug. 27, 2024. Cowpens was commissioned in 1991, marking 33 years as a United States Ship. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Claire M. DuBois)

From Chief Petty Officer Mark Faram, 28 August 2024

SAN DIEGO – Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Cowpens (CG 63) was recognized for more than 33 years of naval service during the decommissioning ceremony at Naval Base San Diego on August 27.

Hundreds gathered to celebrate the ship's distinguished history of naval service. Cowpens's Commanding Officer, Cmdr. Jac O. Ullman III spoke of the ship's legacy and its crew.

“A guiding principle in the last chapter onboard, has been to honor the legacy of Cowpens”, said Ullman. “To honor the grit, determination, and creativity of the Continental Army and

Militiamen from that cold battlefield. To honor the service of those on the first USS Cowpens – CVL 25 – and to honor the legacy of those who served before us during Mighty Moo's 33 year career... We have done just that."

USS Cowpens participated in many operations and exercises, contributing significantly to U.S. naval power projection and security. From enforcing no-fly zones to conducting maritime security operations, the ship demonstrated versatility and capability across a range of mission profiles.

One of the notable milestones in Cowpens's history was its participation in Operation Enduring Freedom. Tasked with providing air defense and maritime security. The ship played a vital role in the early stages of the global war on terror, showcasing the Navy's ability to respond swiftly to emerging threats.

The ship's prowess was further demonstrated during Operation Iraqi Freedom, providing crucial support for coalition forces in the Persian Gulf region. From conducting surveillance to launching precision strikes, USS Cowpens contributed to the success of coalition efforts to stabilize Iraq.

"From 1983 onward, these ships [Cowpens] defended our nation's interests, supported critical combat operations, and ensured freedom of the seas; more than that, they brought AEGIS and VLS, revolutionary technologies into the hands of our warfighters", said Rear Adm. Ted LeClair, Deputy Commander of Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet.

"Cowpens, the seventeenth AEGIS ship built, provided the value of these advancements. As AEGIS and VLS have evolved in both the Cruiser and Destroyer variants, Cowpens continuously demonstrated their effectiveness and lethality."

Also in attendance was Cowpens sponsor, Mrs. Lucy Mustin and

the first commanding officer of Cowpens, Vice Adm. Edward Moore (Ret.).

“At the end of this day, no matter when we were crewmembers, we can all agree we served on the best ship, the most formidable warship, in the best Navy, and in the best country in the world”, said Moore. “I know in my heart that long after we leave this pier today, we will, from time to time, continue to reflect on our service to country, ship, and each other.”

Additionally, the ship played a key role in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations, providing aid to regions devastated by natural disasters such as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan. These operations underscored the Navy’s commitment to global stability and humanitarian values.

The second ship to bear the name, Cowpens was built in Bath, Maine, and commissioned March 9, 1991, in Charleston, South Carolina. Named after the pivotal Battle of Cowpens during the American Revolutionary War, the ship has faithfully served the nation for more than three decades, embodying the valor and resilience of its namesake.

After the decommissioning and inactivation, the ship will be towed to the Navy’s Inactive Ship facility in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii where it will be in a Logistic Support Asset (LSA) status.

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.

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# The U.S. Navy Collaborates with Colleges and Universities to Transition Cutting-Edge Capabilities to the Fleet

*New “Investment Horizons” Framework Accelerates Technology Transitions from Academia to Defense*

ARLINGTON, Va., August 27, 2024 – As the world grapples with increasing geopolitical tensions and the race for technological dominance intensifies, the Office of Naval Research (ONR), led by Corey Love, PhD, is partnering with Stanford University’s [Technology Transfer for Defense \(TT4D\)](#) program, led by Jeff Decker, PhD, to take decisive action to ensure the U.S. military remains at the forefront of innovation. The partnership between the two institutions is accelerating the transfer of technologies from dozens of academic labs around the country to military application. The [“Investment Horizons”](#) framework, recently developed under the guidance of Acting Chief Technology Officer Justin Fanelli, is a groundbreaking initiative designed to streamline and fastrack the transition of emerging technologies from academic research to military application.

The new framework used by the ONR-Stanford partnership, is redefining how the U.S. Navy identifies, develops, and integrates innovative solutions, ensuring technological superiority in an increasingly competitive global landscape. Transitioning these cutting-edge technologies addresses national security threats in an era defined by rapid change and strategic competition. The results are already tangible. Technologies developed in university labs are being scaled and

deployed across the military, enhancing the operational readiness of U.S. forces and strengthening the defense industrial base. "Investment Horizons" categorizes technologies into four strategic stages:

- Horizon 3 (Evaluating): Technologies that offer new capabilities, such as advanced energy storage solutions, are identified and assessed for potential military application. For instance, Nickel-Zinc battery research by Prof. Chris Rhodes and Dr. Debra Rolison at Texas State University, is currently under evaluation for use in Undersea Underwater Vehicles, with funding from ONR. The NiZn technology has already been fully vetted and is commercially scalable and now its military use is under evaluation.
- Horizon 2 (Emerging): Promising technologies undergo pilot programs to evaluate their scalability and integration into military operations. An example of Horizon 2 under the ONR NEPTUNE program, is the work of Prof. Steve Leeb at MIT who is testing new methods of energy management and monitoring on shipboard systems. These methods utilize AI-assisted electrical load-balancing technologies, which already exist, but these technologies must be assessed for their potential to be integrated and scaled across the U.S. Navy's fleet in such a way that maintains the operational effectiveness of U.S. naval vessels.
- Horizon 1 (Investing/Extracting): Proven technologies are scaled for widespread deployment across the Navy, ensuring sustained operational effectiveness. Many university labs across the country conduct pilot tests of basic science applications which may or may not yield meaningful solutions to current and anticipated Navy

challenges. The U.S. Navy invests in new potential technologies at institutions around the country to ensure the future of the US industrial base.

- Horizon 0 (Retiring): Outdated technologies are phased out, allowing resources to be reallocated to more promising innovations aligned with the Navy's strategic goals.

"The urgency of what is currently going on in our world in terms of conflict, demands that we accelerate the transition of game-changing technologies into the military, ensuring our forces are equipped with the most advanced tools available," said Justin Fanelli, acting chief technology officer with the United States Department of the Navy. "Through collaboration with institutions like Stanford University, we're now able to move from research to deployment faster than ever, which is essential given today's global challenges."

ONR's NEPTUNE program and Stanford's Technology Transition for Defense program play a pivotal role in this effort. Dr. Decker emphasizes the strategic importance of aligning academic research with military needs.

"The collaboration between Stanford University and the U.S. Navy is a powerful example of how academia can drive significant advancements in defense technology," said Dr. Decker, managing director of the Technology Transfer for Defense program at Stanford University and with the Precourt Institute for Energy and a Social Science research scholar at Stanford. "The Investment Horizons framework is not just about adopting new technologies – it's about ensuring that these innovations are strategically aligned with the long-term needs of the military at a time when global competition is at its fiercest."

With ongoing global conflicts in Africa, Middle East, Europe,

and the Indo-Pacific, the need for rapid and effective technology transitions has never been more critical. The Investment Horizons framework, supported by the innovative efforts of ONR programs like NEPTUNE and NURP and academic partnerships, is positioning the U.S. Navy military to maintain its edge in this new era of Great Power Competition.

To learn more about the ONR Investment Horizons framework, visit [onr.navy.mil](https://onr.navy.mil); for more information on the Technology Transfer for Defense program at Stanford University, visit [techtransferfordefense.stanford.edu](https://techtransferfordefense.stanford.edu).

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## **National Call to Maritime Service Website launched**

27 August 2024

WASHINGTON – Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), the Hon. Franklin R. Parker today announced the launch of the National Call to Maritime Service (NCTMS) and Naval Civilian Careers (NCC) websites in Syracuse, New York.

During a joint Navy Week Proclamation with Onondaga County Executive, Ryan McMahon, and Syracuse Mayor Ben Walsh, the Hon. Parker highlighted the broad range of opportunities to serve in the Department of the Navy, both in and out of uniform, and appealed to the audience to explore how they might answer the call.

“Service to country looks different for everyone—it might be in a uniform or public service or as a volunteer in your local

community, but as a life path, it carries profound personal and national significance," said Hon. Parker. "We need every generation to understand the important role service plays in the fabric of our Nation, and we are encouraging the next generation to take part in building the Nation's maritime defense and, ultimately, protecting our national security."

In May 2024, the Secretary of the Navy, Carlos Del Toro, issued the NCTMS to emphasize the benefits and importance of service to country. NCTMS is a call to our Nation's youth, educators, veterans and leaders, as well as every citizen who values freedom, to consider how they might contribute. NCTMS encourages everyone to explore the different career paths within the DON at [www.secnav.mil/calltomaritimeservice](http://www.secnav.mil/calltomaritimeservice).

Developed as a portal, the website allows individuals to embrace their curiosity around service and explore areas they may never have considered. It helps determine what best resonates with the individual and directs them to adjoining sites where they can learn more about the wealth of opportunities offered with the Navy and Marine Corps, as well as other jobs in support of maritime service – both military and civilian.

"We are grateful to have Secretary Parker here to officially kick off Syracuse Navy Week and make such an important announcement about the National Call to Maritime Service," said Mayor Walsh. "Syracuse, and the hard-working, service-oriented nature of our citizens, is the perfect backdrop for this announcement, and we are standing by to answer the call."

The Navy Week program has served as the Navy's principal outreach effort into areas of the nation without a significant Navy presence, with over 300 Navy Weeks held in 95 different U.S. cities. The program is designed to share with Americans how their Navy is deployed around the world and around the clock, and why a strong Navy is vital to protecting the

American way of life.

To learn more about the NCTMS and the various ways that you can serve your country, please visit <https://www.secnav.navy.mil/calltomaritimeservice/Pages/default.aspx>.

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## **Navy Awards Contract For Continued AN/UPX-50 Interrogator Redesign**



Operations Specialist 3rd Class Rikisha Cormier, assigned to the amphibious assault ship USS Boxer (LHD 4), identifies air contacts from the combat information center during a previous

underway in the eastern Pacific Ocean. The new contract enhances the combat information center with the continued redesign of the AN/UPX-50(C) digital interrogator assemblies.

Aug 28, 2024

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, Patuxent River, Md.—The U.S. Navy awarded a \$24 million contract to BAE Systems for the continued redesign of the AN/UPX-50(C) digital interrogator assemblies.

The cost-plus-fixed-fee contract is a modification to a previously issued basic ordering agreement to address parts obsolescence and implement solutions to achieve compliance with the latest specifications, qualification and certification standards for the Navy. Additionally, this order adds tasking for the integration of Target Report Processing capabilities into the Common Core DI, formerly hosted in the Interrogator Set, AN/UPX-24(V).

The redesigned interrogator features a common modular design and systems architecture that allows for customized configurations and performance optimization. The design of this next generation interrogator allows for faster updates to Identification Friend or Foe technology in air defense, weapon systems, air traffic control and range instrumentation for several decades.

Work is scheduled to be complete in late 2026.

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## **Navy Partners with Shield AI to Enhance Autonomy in Naval**

# Aviation



A BQM-177 aerial target conducts test flight from China Lake, Calif. The Navy integrating artificial intelligence software into the BQM-177 to test capability for future autonomous operations. (U.S. Navy photo)

Aug 27, 2024

Naval Air Systems Command, Patuxent River, Md. – The Navy’s Strike Planning and Execution program (PMA-281) and Aerial Targets program (PMA-208) recently partnered with Shield AI to integrate autonomy and artificial intelligence software into the BQM-177A sub-sonic aerial target, marking a significant milestone in furthering autonomous systems for real-world applications in naval aviation.

The Navy competitively awarded this effort to Shield AI, an industry leader in autonomous command and control of aviation platforms, Aug. 16, under an Other Transaction Authority (OTA) agreement facilitated by the Naval Aviation Systems Consortium (NASC).

“This collaborative effort between PMA-281, PMA-208, and

Shield AI not only expands and improves the existing spectrum of validation but also offers a scalable solution that benefits the entire naval aviation community,” said Capt. Jerick Black, PMA-281 program manager. “By laying the groundwork for future advancements, this initiative ensures that the Navy remains at the forefront of technological innovation and operational excellence in naval aviation.”

Under the agreement Shield AI will integrate its Hivemind AI pilot software and deliver a robust prototype test bed using the BQM-177.

“This configuration of the aerial target facilitates rapid iteration by continuously refining and updating AI algorithms through real-world feedback, ensuring that the systems are robust, reliable, and ready for operational deployment,” said Johann Soto, PMA-281 software modernization team lead.

This test approach creates a seamless connection between simulation-based testing and live testing, allowing for a comprehensive and continuous feedback loop that enhances the effectiveness of the AI systems being developed, Soto said. A technical demonstration is planned for late 2025.

“By leveraging the BQM-177A’s lower unit cost and cost per flight hour, this initiative provides a flexible and cost-effective testing environment that drives innovation at an accelerated pace,” said Greg Crewse, PMA-208 program manager.

The BQM-177A replicates modern subsonic anti-ship cruise missile threats in support of fleet training for both developmental and operational tests. It can support a variety of mission requirement by carrying a wide array of internal and external payloads.

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# USS Kingsville Commissioned in Corpus Christi



Corpus Christi, Texas (August 24, 2024) The crew of the Navy's newest littoral combat ship USS Kingsville (LCS 36) brings the ship to life during its commissioning ceremony in Corpus Christi, Texas. (U.S. Navy photo by MC2 Nicholas V. Huynh)  
Release from [U.S. Pacific Fleet](#)

By Lt. Brinn Hefron of Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

CORPUS CHRISTI, Texas – The U.S. Navy commissioned Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Kingsville (LCS 36) at the Solomon P. Ortiz Center, August 24.

In the week preceding the ceremony, the crew built ties with their namesake city and visited the King Ranch for a luncheon at the Henrietta Memorial Museum and a tour of the historic ranch. The crew visited with the mayor of Kingsville, the

ship's sponsor, Ms. Katherine Kline, and her parents Dr. Rich and Mrs. Sue Sugden. The U.S. Navy prides itself on a strong tradition of the relationship between a ship and their namesake community or family. These enduring ties at the beginning of Kingsville's service will strengthen bonds between the ship and the communities of Kingsville and its commissioning location of Corpus Christi.

Leaders and distinguished guests wished the crew of Kingsville fair winds and following seas as they brought the ship to life and began its commissioned service.

Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Financial Management and Comptroller, the Honorable Russell Rumbaugh, delivered the commissioning ceremony's principal address. The ceremony also featured remarks from Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Integration and Capabilities and Resources, Vice Adm. Brad Skillman, United States Representatives, the Honorable Vicente Gonzalez, Jr. and the Honorable Michael Cloud, the Mayor of Kingsville, the Honorable Sam Fugate and the Mayor of Corpus Christi, the Honorable Paulette Guajardo.

"A ship commissioning is one of the ways the U.S. Navy keeps itself tied to the nation it serves. It's why we name ships after cities and states. And what better moment to celebrate our long and intimate relationship than commissioning a ship named after Kingsville," said Rumbaugh. "This ship will provide maritime security in each of our fleet operations. We in the Department of the Navy are proud of the Littoral Combat Ships."

During the ceremony, Kingsville's commanding officer Cmdr. Ludwig Mann III, reported the ship manned and ready, and ship sponsor, gave the traditional order to "Man our ship and bring her to life!" Helping to welcome the ship to the fleet, T-45C aircraft assigned to VT-21 at Naval Air Station Kingsville flew over the ship as the crew ran aboard the ship – bringing

her to life.

“This experience is a unique one and should be cherished. You will create a culture that I am sure will last as the Kingsville way for decades to come,” said Skillman. “To the triad, Cmdr. Mann, Cmdr. Kavanaugh, Command Senior Chief Moran, I also know you and the crew are ready to get out there and do the Navy and the nation’s business around the globe. Tough and confident, go get them.”

The night prior to commissioning, the Kingsville Commissioning Committee held an evening reception onboard the USS Lexington Museum where the committee recognized the crew of Kingsville for their service and dedication that ended with a fireworks display.

Kingsville, the 18th Independence-variant LCS, is the first to bear this name and pays homage to the city of Kingsville and the King Ranch. The ship’s sponsor is a member of the sixth generation of the King Ranch family, descendants of steamboat captain Richard King who founded in the King Ranch in Kingsville in 1853. The King Ranch continues to foster a relationship with Naval Air Station Kingsville which was founded in 1942 and is located three miles from the city’s center.

Independence-variant littoral combat ships are fast, optimally manned, mission-tailored surface combatants that operate in near-shore and open-ocean environments, winning against 21st-century coastal threats. LCS integrate with joint combined, manned and unmanned teams to support forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence missions around the globe.

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.

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# USS Hawaii in First Australian Nuclear-Powered Attack Sub Maintenance Availability



HMAS STIRLING, Western Australia, Australia (Aug. 22, 2024) – Sailors assigned to the Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS Hawaii (SSN 776) prepare to moor at HMAS Stirling, Western Australia, Australia, as part of a scheduled port visit before conducting a submarine tendered maintenance period (STMP) with the submarine tender USS Emory S. Land (AS 39), Aug. 22. (U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Victoria Mejicanos)

By Lt.Cmdr. Rick Moore Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

HMAS STIRLING, Western Australia, Australia (Aug. 22, 2024) – In a historic first, Australian personnel will work alongside with their U.S. counterparts to conduct maintenance on USS Hawaii (SSN 776) in Australia as part of a Submarine Tendered Maintenance Period (STMP) at HMAS Stirling in Western Australia. The STMP marks a significant step forward in the Australia, United Kingdom, United States (AUKUS) Pillar 1 program, which is paving the way for Australia to acquire a sovereign, conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability.

Over the coming weeks, submarine tender USS Emory S. Land (AS 39) will execute several maintenance activities aboard Hawaii. This is the first time Australians have participated in a U.S. submarine maintenance period in Australia. More than 30 Australian personnel who participated in a knowledge exchange period that began in January 2024 aboard Emory S. Land will execute the majority of planned maintenance work with U.S. support and oversight.

The Emory S. Land crew will execute planned and emergent maintenance activities including the removal and reinstallation of an antenna located in Hawaii's sail, divers visually inspecting the underwater towed array and torpedo tube muzzles, and simulating the removal and installation of a trim pump, to include full rigging and preparations.

"This is an important moment for the Royal Australian Navy," said Rear Adm. Matthew Buckley, the Australian Submarine Agency's Head of Submarine Capability. "For the first time, we have Australians who were trained and certified aboard Emory S. Land using their skills on a U.S. SSN in Australian waters."

AUKUS Pillar 1 is an enhanced trilateral security agreement designed to assist Australia in acquiring sovereign, conventionally armed, nuclear-powered attack submarines. The

current port visit is part of a years-long effort to grow the Royal Australian Navy's ability to maintain SSNs before establishing Submarine Rotational Force – West (SRF-W) as early as 2027. Known as Phase 1, SRF-W will see up to four U.S. SSNs and one U.K. SSN have a rotational presence in Western Australia to grow Australia's ability to sustain, operate and maintain a sovereign fleet of SSNs.

The second phase of the AUKUS Optimal Pathway begins in the early 2030s, with the United States selling Australia three Virginia-class submarines, with the potential to sell up to two more if needed. Phase Three sees the combination of the next-generation UK submarine design and advanced United States and Australian technology to deliver SSN-AUKUS, the future attack submarine for both Australia and the United Kingdom. Australia plans to deliver the first Australian-built SSN-AUKUS in the early 2040s.

“The groundwork being laid with the STMP will help the Royal Navy when we conduct our future port visits,” said Rear Adm. Chris Shepherd, the UK's Defence Nuclear Organisation AUKUS Director. “We, like our Australian counterparts, are observing how the U.S. operates so we can help bridge the gap between their system and our Astute-class SSN and, in the near future, SSN-AUKUS.”

“Having Royal Australian Navy Sailors working on our submarine at HMAS Stirling has been something they, and we, have been working toward for months,” said Rear Adm. Lincoln Reifsteck, the U.S. AUKUS Integration and Acquisition Program Manager. “They represent the future of Australia's sovereign SSN fleet – Australians should be proud of what these professionals have accomplished, and will accomplish, to protect their homeland and help deter aggression in the region.”

“Partnering so closely with the Royal Australian Navy has been a fantastic experience,” said Capt. Brent Spillner, Emory S.

Land's commanding officer. "Their Fleet Support Unit sailors integrated rapidly into our crew and have excelled at every task. It's truly been a two-way knowledge exchange; we've learned as much from them as they have from us, and it's exciting to see how that's opened new opportunities to support each other's forward-deployed ships in the future."

"It is both personally and professionally rewarding to know that the work we do over the coming weeks will set our Australian partners on the path toward a sovereign SSN capability," shared Cmdr. Dan Jones, USS Hawaii commanding officer.

The STMP is similar to a planned maintenance period generally conducted in U.S. submarine ports with support from shore-based or tender-based maintenance personnel. Generally lasting up to three weeks, this type of maintenance availability does not require dry-docking the submarine and serves to ensure submarines receive planned and emergent maintenance to remain ready for tasking.

The STMP will support Australia's nuclear stewardship growth through the planning and execution of simulated radiological training evolutions that will not involve the use of radiological material. These training evolutions will allow Australian radiological controls policy makers to observe how the U.S. Navy safely handles simulated low-level radiological material as a means to increase their knowledge and develop Australian policy and radiation safety practices that are protective of the workforce, the public, and the environment.

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# August 22-23 U.S. Central Command Update

From U.S. Central Command

## **Aug. 23, 2024**

TAMPA, Fla. – In the past 24 hours, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed one Iranian-backed Houthi missile system in a Houthi-controlled area of Yemen.

It was determined this system presented a clear and imminent threat to U.S. and coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. This action was taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S., coalition, and merchant vessels.

## **Aug. 22, 2024**

TAMPA, Fla. – In the past 24 hours, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) forces successfully destroyed two Iranian-backed Houthi uncrewed aerial vehicles (UAV) over the Red Sea and one UAV in a Houthi-controlled area of Yemen.

It was determined these UAVs presented a clear and imminent threat to U.S. and coalition forces, and merchant vessels in the region. This action was taken to protect freedom of navigation and make international waters safer and more secure for U.S., coalition, and merchant vessels.