

Temporary Pier in Gaza on Track to Be Operational in May



Pier-building begins Construction of the floating JL0TS pier in the Mediterranean is underway. The pier will support USAID and humanitarian partners to receive and deliver humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza. U.S. Transportation Command and U.S. European Command support the movement of humanitarian aid. (Courtesy Photo)

April 29, 2024 | By Matthew Olay, DoD News

A temporary pier the Defense Department is constructing off the Gazan coast to deliver humanitarian aid is on track to establish initial operations soon, the Pentagon announced today.

"We're scheduled on track to meet our goal of early May," said Deputy Pentagon Press Secretary Sabrina Singh during a news

media gathering.

DOD originally announced its mission to construct the Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore, or JLOTS, capability on [March 8](#), with a goal of beginning initial delivery operations about 60 days from that date.

DOD officials announced on [April 25](#) that construction of the pier had begun, and recent satellite imagery from Gaza's coastline has shown construction activity in the area.

The components of the JLOTS include a floating pier, an approximately 1,800-foot-long causeway that will be attached to the shore, and a group of logistic support vessels and barges that will transport the aid from the pier to the causeway.

"Right now, you're seeing construction of that floating, temporary pier, and then, you'll start to see construction of the causeway," Singh told reporters. "Eventually, that causeway will be ... pushed into the coastline and secured by the ."

Since announcing the temporary pier would be used in the humanitarian aid mission, DOD officials have repeatedly emphasized that the IDF will provide force protection on and around the JLOTS. No U.S. boots will be on the ground as part of pier operations in Gaza.

"There is an integrated cell with the IDF and our U.S. military to ensure that there is deconfliction happening," Singh said. "And that also helps with the coordination of JLOTS and the pier itself. So, we are confident that we are in a good place."

When the pier is completed, officials anticipate it will initially facilitate the delivery of an estimated 90 daily truckloads of humanitarian aid into Gaza. Once fully operational, that number should jump to about 150 truckloads,

or roughly 2,000,000 meals per day.

U.S. Army Awards Lockheed Martin \$483M JAGM, HELLFIRE Follow-on Production Contract



JAGM (Lockheed Martin)

ORLANDO, Fla., April 1, 2024 – The U.S. Army awarded Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) a follow-on production contract for [Joint-Air-to-Ground Missiles](#) (JAGM) and [HELLFIRE](#) missiles with a Program Year 3 (PY3) award total value of \$483 million.

This contract will provide JAGM and HELLFIRE procurement and production support for the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy and international customers. This contract is the third follow-on

award that is a part of a multiple-year award that was initially awarded in [March 2023](#). The total contract award value is for up to \$4.5 billion through 2025.

“This follow-on contract signals the Army’s continued confidence in both the JAGM and HELLFIRE systems as premier defense capabilities when it comes to ensuring customer readiness worldwide,” said Joey Drake, program management director of Multi-Domain Missile Systems at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control.

HELLFIRE currently has more than 30 FMS customers with new HELLFIRE international customer Poland included in the PY3 contract. This contract provides maximum flexibility to facilitate the procurement of both systems to multiple domestic and international customers, especially as the JAGM program anticipates a significant increase in international demand for the weapon system in coming years.

“We will be able to continue to provide procurement and production support for both systems, which is important because both are critical multi-domain combat solutions that protect and defend our armed forces and allies against ever-changing global threats,” said Drake.

Both the JAGM and HELLFIRE systems are designed and developed in Orlando, Florida. The weapon systems are manufactured across various Lockheed Martin facilities in Dallas, Texas; Orlando and Ocala, Florida; Archbald, Pennsylvania; and Troy, Alabama. With more than 140,000 missiles produced, JAGM and HELLFIRE continue to be the weapon of choice in critical, precision engagement opportunities.

Leidos-designed low-profile vessels participate in U.S. Army's Project Convergence Capstone 4 exercise



RESTON, Va. (March 29, 2024) – Two [Leidos](#)-designed uncrewed and autonomous-capable low-profile vessels (LPVs) recently participated in the Project Convergence Capstone 4 military exercises in California. Leidos (NYSE:LDOS), a Fortune 500 innovation company, delivered the vessels to the U.S. Marine Corps last year.

“Leidos once again designed and delivered innovative solutions with these LPVs, and it was great to see them participate in Project Convergence,” said Dave Lewis, Leidos senior vice president, Sea Systems Business Area. “The prototypes we’ve delivered will help create new disruptive logistics

capabilities for the Marine Corps. Its low profile and long range are intended to help the vessels achieve a higher mission success rate supporting dispersed Marine fire units than conventional methods.”

The LPV’s low-to-the-water visual profile helps to reduce probability of detection. The vessels are intended to transport a logistics payload of up to five tons over a range of 2,000 nautical miles, and have been built to experiment with different autonomous control systems. The two LPV prototypes were delivered last year to the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory for testing and technical assessment. Their participation in the joint and multi-national Project Convergence Capstone 4 exercises represents the next stage of testing and experimentation with the vessels’ capabilities alongside warfighters.

Leidos designed the LPVs under contract with MilTech, a Montana State University research lab and an authorized National Government Partnership Intermediary.

The delivery of the LPV prototypes complements Leidos’ extensive maritime autonomy portfolio. Leidos-designed and built autonomous vessels [recently completed joint naval exercises](#) in the western Pacific as part of the Navy’s Integrated Battle Problem 23.2. Last year, Leidos was [awarded](#) a U.S. Navy task order to manage, operate and maintain the Navy’s Overlord and medium unmanned surface vessels.

Kraken Forms PartnershipWith

Auterion to Boost Autonomous Capabilities in Security Boat Sector



LONDON, U.K., and ARLINGTON Va. – Kraken Technology Group, a maritime technology leader specialising in the disruptive design and manufacturing of high-performance platforms, and Auterion, the company building the software-defined future for mobile robotics and powering the world's leading drone manufacturers, have announced a strategic partnership to exponentially develop autonomous capabilities in the high-performance littoral security boat sector.

The partnership is focused around the development and implementation of modular, low-cost autonomy software and UxV systems for the maritime domain. The agreement will initially focus on integrated autonomy architecture for Kraken's K3

SCOUT and K4 MANTA uncrewed platforms.

Auterion's Skynode X, AuterionOS and numerous capability 'Apps' have already been developed and integrated into Kraken's K3 SCOUT USV, which is currently undergoing open water sea trials. AuterionOS' open software architecture unlocks the ability to create new apps as needed, continuously expanding Kraken's ability to serve the wide variety of use cases necessary in maritime domains.

"We are thrilled to be able to extend our expertise into the maritime domain alongside like-minded pioneers and littoral platform experts Kraken. The work done and the progress achieved to date on the development of K3's uncrewed capability has been impressive and visionary," said Lorenz Meier, CEO at Auterion.

Mal Crease, Founder and CEO of Kraken Technology Group, said: *"Collaborating with Auterion on the rapid development of the K3 SCOUT USV has opened our eyes to the size and scale of the technical transformation already underway and has already delivered unique capabilities in record time. We very much look forward to an exciting future transforming littoral manoeuvre with Auterion."*

Kraken Teams with Auterion to Boost Autonomous Capabilities for Security Boats



Kraken's K3 Scout USV. *Kraken Technology Group*
LONDON, UK, and ARLINGTON, Virginia – Kraken Technology Group and Auterion have announced a strategic partnership to exponentially develop autonomous capabilities in the high-performance littoral security boat sector.

The partnership is focused around the development and implementation of modular, low-cost autonomy software and UxV systems for the maritime domain. The agreement will initially focus on integrated autonomy architecture for Kraken's K3 Scout and K4 Manta uncrewed platforms.

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“Collaborating with Auterion on the rapid development of the K3 Scout USV has opened our eyes to the size and scale of the technical transformation already underway and has already delivered unique capabilities in record time,” said Kraken founder and CEO Mal Crease. “We very much look forward to an exciting future transforming littoral maneuver with Auterion.”

**UVision USA, SAIC to
Collaborate on Loitering
Munition Systems
Manufacturing in USA**



UVision's Hero 120 Loitering Munition will be built in South Carolina. *UVision*

UVision Inc. and SAIC (Science Applications International Corp). announced a collaboration agreement for manufacturing of the Hero 120 Loitering Munition system. This cutting-edge defense solution will be produced in Charleston, South Carolina, significantly enhancing rapid response capabilities for all UVisionUSA clients in the United States.

The collaboration with SAIC is aimed at establishing a fully independent domestic supply chain, ensuring that UVision's USA clients benefit from reduced dependency on international supply chains, faster delivery times, local training by expert teams, and comprehensive post-sale support and maintenance.

Major General (Ret.) Avi Mizrachi, Chairman of the board of directors of Uvision USA, said, "UVisionUSA Inc.'s business activity has expanded significantly in the second half of 2023, with several new contracts signed with the US military

and other government bodies. Our collaboration with SAIC stems from the need to provide a complete solution to our US clients, independent of the international supply chain. We are proud to announce that the manufacturing facility itself will commence operations in March 2024.”

The Hero 120 Loitering Munition System is a state-of-the-art, mid-range, anti-tank system designed to address the complexities of the modern battlefield. It offers high-precision strikes against anti-armor, anti-material, and anti-personnel targets, including tanks, vehicles, and soft targets in urban environments. With its ability to cause minimal collateral damage and equipped with a range of multi-purpose warheads, the Hero 120 provides operational users with an unparalleled effective engagement solution.

HII Celebrates 2023 Graduates of The Newport News Shipbuilding Apprentice School



From HII, Mar. 25, 2024

NEWPORT NEWS, Va., March 23, 2024 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) – HII (NYSE: HII) hosted commencement exercises today, celebrating 133 graduates of the company’s Newport News Shipbuilding Apprentice School. The ceremony was held at Liberty Live Church in Hampton with U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott, D-Va., NNS leadership, and local shipbuilding supporters, alongside family and friends of the graduates.

Thomasina Wright, NNS vice president of fleet support programs, and a 1986 graduate of The Apprentice School, delivered the keynote commencement address.

“Newport News Shipbuilding is the best place to be to support our national defense and become a leader,” Wright said. “Graduates, please focus on continuous learning, setting goals and priorities, and giving back to your community.”

NNS President Jennifer Boykin addressed the graduates as the shipyard’s newest leaders.

“You were chosen to complete a truly rigorous program – and you succeeded,” Boykin said. “Hold your head high, and

consider your impact on those around you. Our future is brighter with you in it.”

Photos accompanying this release are available at: <https://hii.com/news/hii-newport-news-shipbuilding-apprentice-school-graduation-2024/>.

The Newport News Shipbuilding Apprentice School has been accredited since 1982. Students can earn academic degrees through its partnerships with institutions of higher education. Certification to grant associate degrees and confer degrees on its own came in July 2020, after the school was approved by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to operate as a postsecondary institution.

This year’s commencement exercises marked the first time the school has conferred an associate’s degree in the field of applied science maritime technology. Adam Ryan West, a welding equipment repairer, is the first to earn the degree, which became an option at the same time he was accepted to the school.

West initially chose welding equipment repair for his apprenticeship, but through his shipyard work and classroom study, he was able to expand his scope of skills to earn the degree.

“There is a satisfaction in fixing something that wasn’t working,” West shared. “It is an honor to be the first to earn this degree from The Apprentice School and I am thankful I get to apply what I learned every day while working in the shipyard.”

Scott Sinowitz received the Homer L. Ferguson Award, which recognizes the apprentice graduating with the highest average in combined required academic and craft grades.

Sinowitz joined NNS in 2020 with a bachelor’s degree in health sciences from James Madison University and currently serves as

an electrician supporting the refueling and complex overhaul of the aircraft carrier USS *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74).

During his address, Sinowitz asked graduates to reflect on the knowledge and craftsmanship learned in their apprenticeships that set them up for success as shipyard leaders.

“Those skills take time to develop and even longer to refine. So, while we continue to improve ourselves, I can’t emphasize enough the importance of a strong work ethic, good attitude, desire to learn, and preparedness,” Sinowitz shared. “With one another’s support, we create the culture Newport News Shipbuilding deserves.”

Replay coverage of the ceremony is available at: <https://hii.com/events/apprentice-school-graduation/>

- The following is a profile of the graduating class:
- Fourteen graduates completed an optional advanced program, earning an associate or bachelor’s degree. The program includes coursework in subjects such as marine design, modeling and simulation, production planning and marine engineering.
- Fifty-nine graduates earned honors, a combination of academic and craft grades that determine overall performance.
- Two graduates completed the Advanced Shipyard Operations Program, allowing them to continue their postsecondary education, expand their experience in waterfront operations and develop leadership skills to improve the quality and efficiency of production, manufacturing and maintenance processes.
- Forty-five graduates completed Frontline FAST, an accelerated skills training program for potential foremen.
- Twenty-seven graduates were inducted into The National

Society of Leadership Success.

- Nine graduates completed the World Class Shipbuilder Curriculum and advance optional program with a perfect 4.0 grade point average.
- Seven graduates are military veterans or are currently serving in the armed services as reservists and guardsmen.
- Twelve graduates earned Gold Athletic Awards. One graduate, Logan David Mize, earned a Gold Athletic Award in two sports.

The Apprentice School accepts more than 200 apprentices per year. The school offers four- to eight-year, tuition-free apprenticeships in 19 trades and eight optional advanced programs. Apprentices work a 40-hour week and are paid for all work, including time spent in academic classes.

Through partnerships with Virginia Peninsula Community College, Tidewater Community College and Old Dominion University, The Apprentice School's academic program provides the opportunity to earn associate degrees in business administration, engineering and engineering technology and bachelor's degrees in mechanical or electrical engineering.

USF Opens Cutting-Edge Lab Aimed at Rapidly Providing Military Solutions



The state-of-the-art facility is part of a five-year, \$85 million contract with the Department of Defense

TAMPA, Fla. (March 25, 2024) – The University of South Florida has opened a cutting-edge lab aimed at providing quick, innovative solutions to the different challenges facing the U.S. Department of Defense. Managed by USF's Institute of Applied Engineering, the new Rapid Experimentation Lab (REL) provides a unique, collaborative space to rapidly test concepts.

As one of nation's [most research-intensive universities](#), USF is helping to solve problems throughout society, and the facility is a key part of those efforts.

"Our new lab will further enhance the University of South Florida's focus on developing technologies and providing innovative solutions that address critical global and national security challenges," USF President Rhea Law said. "This facility will provide research opportunities for our faculty, hands-on learning experiences for our students and help grow

important partnerships with governmental agencies and private industry.”

The state-of-the-art facility is part of a five-year, \$85 million contract with the Department of Defense. It aims to streamline the prototyping process by bringing together engineers from a wide range of disciplines under one roof, significantly reducing development timelines.

“The lab provides the necessary infrastructure, tools and collaborative environment to enable the curious and inspired to design, build and test technologies for today and tomorrow,” said Peter Jorgensen, the associate director of engineering for the IAE. “More than just a makerspace, the REL is a playground for mechanical, electronics, sensors, communications, and software teams to quickly iterate on designs to solve problems, invent new products and rapidly deliver cutting-edge capabilities.”

The new 8,000-square-foot facility will be utilized not just by USF faculty and student engineers, but also partners in the Department of Defense and private industry, who are working to support missions ranging from the battlefield, to the oceans and to space. The lab houses various equipment, including electrical and mechanical computer design and analysis tools, communications networks to support testing, electronics and circuit boards, as well as manufacturing technology. It will allow multiple engineers to collaborate, test and retest an idea or product before presenting it to the Department of Defense for consideration.

The IAE also plans to work with the USF Technology Transfer Office to identify start-up companies interested in utilizing the lab for development of their own inventions.

Partners who would like more information can email info-iae@usf.edu.

MV Roy P. Benavidez Departs in Support of JLOTS Mission



From Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. (March 21, 2024)—The Bob Hope-class MV Roy P. Benavidez (T-AKR 306), a large, medium speed roaying heavy equipment and material needed to construct a temporary pier to support the flow of multinational humanitarian aid into Gaza.

The ship will anchor in the area to receive fuel prior to proceeding to the Mediterranean Sea.

MV Roy P. Benavidez, part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, U.S. Maritime Administration's (MARAD) Ready

Reserve Fleet, is transporting components for a floating modular pier system which will be delivered to the U.S. Army's 7th Transportation Brigade who will construct the temporary pier in the Mediterranean.

This capability is known as Joint Logistics-Over-the-Shore, or JLOTS.

"JLOTS is a critical capability that allows ship-to-shore cargo distribution in the absence of a usable pier," said Army Lt. Gen. John P. Sullivan, deputy commander, U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM). "It can be used to augment an established port or to create a pier where one is needed, and allows us to support areas where large populations are isolated from food, water, and other forms of humanitarian aid."

JLOTS operations are part of USTRANSCOM's strategic sealift mission.

Operated by Military Sealift Command for the current JLOTS mission, MV Roy P. Benavidez is crewed by contracted merchant mariners and is dry cargo surge sealift carrier capable of transporting up to 380,000 square feet of containerized cargo and rolling stock between developed ports.

"MARAD's ability to activate the Ready Reserve Force vessel MV Roy P. Benavidez is a hallmark of our strategic sealift capability," said Maritime Administrator Ann C. Phillips. "Missions like this – supporting the Armed Forces, highlight the cornerstone capabilities MARAD delivers in support of interagency operations."

Poland Joins Combined Maritime Forces in Middle East as 42nd Member



By Combined Maritime Forces Public Affairs | March 20, 2024

MANAMA, Bahrain – Combined Maritime Forces welcomed the Republic of Poland as the 42nd member of the world's largest maritime security partnership, March 17.

"We're thrilled to welcome Poland as a member of CMF," said Vice Adm. George Wikoff, CMF commander. "We greatly benefit from Poland's participation in this coalition of nations committed to regional maritime security. I look forward to being 'Ready Together' with our new partners as CMF continues to set the global standard for maritime cooperation."

CMF is comprised of a headquarters staff and five combined task forces focusing on defeating terrorism, preventing piracy, encouraging regional cooperation, and promoting a safe maritime environment. The naval partnership upholds the international rules-based order by supporting security and stability across 3.2 million square miles of water

encompassing some of the world's most important shipping lanes.

With 42 nations, CMF is the largest naval partnership in the world. Other task forces include CTF 150, focused on maritime security in the Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea and eastern Gulf of Aden; CTF 151, which leads regional anti-piracy efforts; CTF 152, dedicated to maritime security in the Arabian Gulf; CTF 153, responsible for maritime security in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandeb, and western Gulf of Aden; and CTF 154, established in May to enhance maritime security training throughout the region.