

# Austal USA Celebrates Opening of Steel Facility



Austal USA hosted a curtain drop ceremony to celebrate the opening of its steel facility. *AUSTAL USA*

MOBILE, Ala. – Austal USA hosted a curtain drop ceremony April 12 to celebrate the opening of the company's state-of-the-art steel facility in front of more than 200 guests, including representatives from the U.S. Navy, Coast Guard, federal, state and local government and the Embassy of Australia, the company said in a release.

The addition of steel shipbuilding capability complements the company's aluminum shipbuilding expertise.

"The opening of the new steel manufacturing line at Austal USA means south Alabama will be able to continue providing high-quality ships for the Navy," said Rep. Jerry Carl (R-Alabama). "This massive \$100 million investment will also create jobs

and spur economic growth throughout the region, while continuing to develop and grow our local workforce with the hiring of countless folks in the trades to meet the demands of the new line.”

“We are so excited to see our plans to add steel to our capabilities come to fruition,” said Austal USA President Rusty Murdaugh. “The addition of steel capability is a game changer as it opens up our capability to support the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard and other customers with high-quality ships. We appreciate the confidence the Department of Defense and the Department of the Navy have shown in us with the award of the DPA grant to get this project started and look forward to repaying that confidence with our future performance delivering high-quality steel ships.”

The 117,000 square foot manufacturing addition will house computerized and robotic steel processing equipment to handle all of the current and future demands of the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Coast Guard. A 60,000 square foot stock yard will be utilized for handling the raw steel and a 19,500 square foot paint facility will provide the ability to paint and blast simultaneously in two separate cells, or both cells can be combined providing the ability to paint super-modules.

Financing for the new steel production line was provided in part by a Defense Production Act Title III Agreement between the U.S. Department of Defense, in support of the U.S. Navy shipbuilding industrial base, and Austal USA. The agreement, valued at \$50 million, was announced in June 2020 and was part of the national response to COVID-19 to maintain, protect and expand critical domestic shipbuilding and maintenance capacity. Austal USA matched these funds and invested an additional \$50 million into the completion of the steel facility.

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# SENEDIA Marks National Submarine Day with Call for Next-Generation Workforce



Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard & Intermediate Maintenance Facility successfully undocked the Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS Topeka (SSN 754) on time commencing a two-day evolution on July 27, 2021. *U.S. NAVY / Amanda Urena*

MIDDLETOWN, R.I. – SENEDIA, a membership alliance for defense tech, talent, and innovation, celebrated National Submarine Day on Monday, April 11, with a call to action for the future submarine shipbuilding workforce. The industry is facing a critical worker shortage, and SENEDIA is ramping up training and career exploration efforts to engage the next generation workforce.

“Careers in submarine shipbuilding are high-wage, high-growth, high-demand, and those who choose this pathway gain a deep sense of fulfillment and patriotism knowing they are supporting our submarine sailors and protecting our country,” said Molly Donohue Magee, SENEDIA executive director. “Our current submarine shipbuilding workforce ranks are not sufficient to meet the extraordinary – and growing – demand, and SENEDIA is committed to engaging, training, and expanding the workforce to move our industry forward on a path to stability and growth.”

The Navy’s need for new submarines to add to their fleet is significant, with two Virginia-class submarines and one Columbia-class submarine being built every year for the foreseeable future. To help meet that demand, SENEDIA has a two-pronged approach that includes incumbent worker training for individuals already in the workforce and career exploration and on-the-job learning for future workers.

“The opportunities available in submarine shipbuilding are exciting and rewarding and can put people on a path to security and success,” said Rear Admiral Scott Pappano, Program Executive Officer – Strategic Submarines. “As individuals, those who work in the submarine shipbuilding industry find hands-on work that is constantly changing and have the ability to explore and advance innovative new technologies. We take great pride knowing that our work makes an important difference to our national security.”

Since launching their incumbent worker training program in August 2020, funded through the Department of Defense Industrial Base Analysis and Sustainment Office, SENEDIA has trained more than 1,200 people, 800 of whom completed the program in the last year alone. These individuals are employed throughout the supply chain, with a critical mass at General Dynamics Electric Boat, the epicenter of the submarine shipbuilding industry. Electric Boat alone plans to hire over 2,200 employees over the next year.

Being part of the submarine shipbuilding workforce requires only a high school diploma or equivalent and provides a career with strong wages and outstanding benefits.

Carla Hall, a Marine Corps veteran who received training at the Westerly Education Center, Rhode Island, and is now a pipefitter at Electric Boat, calls the training “a lifechanging experience.”

“You’re going to be able to find meaningful work; you’re going to be able to find a nice wage for you and your family; and you’re going to make lifelong friends,” she said.

To grow the pipeline of workers, SENEDIA continues to expand its high school and middle school outreach. SENEDIA currently works with career and technical education programs in Rhode Island and Connecticut, engaging more than 100 high school students each year to explore potential careers in advanced manufacturing and submarine shipbuilding. SENEDIA is expanding our outreach throughout New England.

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**Russia’s a ‘Threat,’ but  
China’s Still the Focus of  
New National Defense  
Strategy, 2023 Pentagon  
Budget**





Deputy Secretary of Defense Dr. Kathleen H. Hicks and Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff U.S. Navy Adm. Christopher W. Grady deliver opening remarks on the President's Fiscal Year 2023 Defense Budget, the Pentagon, Washington, D.C., March 28. *DOD / Air Force Staff Sgt. Brittany A. Chase*

ARLINGTON, Va. – More money for science and technology research, dealing with climate change, modernizing the nuclear triad and deterring Russia in Europe and China in the Indo-Pacific region are among the priorities outlined in President Joe Biden's fiscal 2023 defense budget request.

The \$813 billion national defense budget request released March 28 includes \$773 billion for the Defense Department and more than \$40 billion for defense-related activities at other agencies.

The request reflects the updated National Defense Strategy, which continues to focus on the pacing challenge of China, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin III said in a statement

accompanying the 2023 budget rollout. "It will help us prepare for other future challenges, as well, including those by climate change ... North Korea, Iran and violent extremist organizations."

While Russia's "brutal and unprovoked" invasion of Ukraine illustrates how Moscow "poses an acute threat to the world order," the 2022 NDS sees the People's Republic of China "as our most consequential strategic competitor and the pacing challenge for the department," Deputy Defense Secretary Kathleen Hicks told a March 28 livestreamed Pentagon press briefing on the budget request.

The same day, a classified version of the new strategy was delivered to Congress and a two-page unclassified fact sheet was released. It stated mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are "critical to achieving our objectives, as the unified response to Russia's further invasion of Ukraine has demonstrated."

### **Additional Investments**

The focus on China "required additional investments for both the Navy and the Air Force," said Undersecretary of Defense Michael McCord, the department's chief financial officer. While the U.S. Navy and Air Force are slated to receive more than \$230 billion each in the 2023 funding request, the Biden administration is seeking only \$173 billion for the Army.

The budget request is devoting \$134.7 billion to joint force readiness: Allocating \$29.4 billion to the Army, \$47.4 billion to the Navy, \$4.1 billion for the Marine Corps, \$35.5 billion for the Air Force, \$3 billion for Space Force and \$9.7 billion for Special Operations Command.

The proposed budget seeks \$6.1 billion for the Pacific Deterrence Initiative, including \$892 million for the defense of Guam including improved missile defense, command, and control capabilities, radar capacity and new construction. The

Indo-Pacific Command funding adds \$133 million for other base defense enhancements throughout the region. U.S. European Command would get \$4.2 billion for the European Deterrence Initiative, including \$300 million in security assistance for Ukraine.

To meet new technology challenges, the Pentagon is seeking \$130.1 billion for research, development, testing and evaluation – an all-time high, more than 9.5% above RTD&E funding in the enacted 2022 defense legislation – that includes artificial intelligence, machine learning and 5G wireless networks and investments in chemical production, bio-manufacturing and rare earth element supply chains.

Investments in the industrial base and supply chain include \$1.3 billion to improve critical naval infrastructure through the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program; \$3.3 billion for microelectronics; \$48 million for casting and forging; \$43 million for batteries and energy storage, including establishing safety and testing capacity for future weapon systems; \$605 million for kinetic capabilities, such as expanding the industrial base for hypersonic missiles and directed energy weapons.

Other plans include \$543 million to strengthen the submarine industrial base through expanding sub-tier suppliers, and \$207 million to train the submarine workforce.

The budget invests over \$11 billion to continue modernization of cyber network defense capabilities for a more resilient Defense Department information network and defense industrial base.

For the first time, the budget is committing \$3.1 billion exclusively to dealing with climate change, including \$2 billion for installation resiliency and adaptation and \$247 million for operational energy and buying power.

“We have to be resilient to cyber threats, we have to be



resilient to climate change,” said Hicks.

The 2023 budget request seeks \$34.4 billion to modernize the nuclear triad, including \$6.3 billion to fully fund the Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine, the Navy’s top platform priority; \$5 billion for the B-21 Raider, the Air Force’s long range strike bomber, and \$3.6 billion for the next generation intercontinental ballistic missile system, the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent; and \$1 billion for the Long-Range Stand-Off missile.

The 2023 request includes a 4.6% pay raise for civilian and military personnel, the largest pay raise for all Defense Department workers in 20 years.

### **Inflation Effects**

The \$773 billion 2023 budget request is a 4.1% increase, \$30.7 billion, over the fiscal 2022 budget passed by Congress in December and \$58 billion, or 8%, higher than the Biden administration’s initial \$715 billion fiscal 2022 request. However, taking inflation into account, McCord conceded the \$773 2023 request actually represents about 1.5% in real growth spending over the \$742 billion enacted in the fiscal 2022 budget.

Republican lawmakers say the increased budget request does not account for record high inflation. Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Oklahoma) and Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Alabama), the ranking members of the Senate and House Armed Services Committees, announced March 29 they have requested information on the effects of inflation on the Defense Department budget from Pentagon leadership and the military services.

Inhofe and Rogers noted that current inflation is “effectively a 5% to 8% cut to the department’s buying power, which could amount to between \$20-\$30 billion in unfunded costs in fiscal year 2022 alone, not to mention lost buying power in fiscal year 2021 and potential lost buying power in fiscal year

2023.”

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# Proposed Navy Aircraft Procurement Reduced for 2023



The new fiscal year will mark the sunset on new MV-22 Osprey purchases, according to new budget documents. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Lance Cpl. Andrew Skiver*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy plans to procure 96 aircraft in fiscal 2023, down from the 129 aircraft enacted in the fiscal 2022 appropriations law. The numbers are expected to go even lower over the years of the Future Years Defense Program.

The Department of the Navy has requested the following:

- 15 F-35B Lightning II strike fighters for the Marine

## Corps

- 13 F-35C Lightning II strike fighters (9 for the Navy, 4 for the Marine Corps)
- 5 E-2D Advanced Hawkeye command and control aircraft
- 5 KC-130J Super Hercules transport/refueling aircraft
- 10 new multi-engine training aircraft
- 10 CH-53K King Stallion heavy-lift helicopters
- 25 TH-73A Thrasher training helicopters
- 3 MQ-4C Triton unmanned surveillance aircraft
- 4 MQ-25A Stingray unmanned aerial refueling aircraft
- 5 MQ-9A Predator unmanned aerial surveillance aircraft

Assuming 10-plane squadron strength, the planned F-35C procurement does not even fill one Navy F-35C squadron or half of a Marine Corps F-35C squadron. But F-35C procurement is planned to increase significantly starting in 2024, to 15 per year for the Navy and four per year for the Marine Corp, except for three in 2027.

The Navy – again – is planning on ending F/A-18E/F Super Hornet strike fighter procurement with the 2022 batch of 12 mandated by Congress. It remains to be seen if Congress will again keep procurement of the Super Hornet alive.

As proposed, the new fiscal year would be the last year of procurement of the E-2D and the TH-73A. No more P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft or MV-22B or CMV-22B Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft are planned.

Procurement of the KC-130J would pause or stop after two are purchased in 2024. The Navy has been hoping to replace its C-130T/KC-130T organic airlift fleet with C-130Js, but that seems far in the future if it happens.

The new fiscal year will be the first for procurement of the MQ-25A as it heads for operational capability in 2025. The 2023 budget also resumes procurement of the MQ-4C after a year gap, and more MQ-9As for the Marine Corps as it fills its

unmanned squadrons with the Reaper to support expeditionary advance base operations.

The type aircraft to be procured to replace the T-44C multi-engine training aircraft has yet to be announced, but the 2023 budget plans to procure 10 Multi-Engine Training Systems, with a total of 58 in a three-year run.

The T45TS line in the Navy's budget graph shows procurement starting in 2025. The term T45TS is familiar as T-45 Training System, of which the Boeing T-45 Goshawk aircraft is the main component. However, *Seapower* understands this line item to be a surrogate for a yet-to-be solution for the Navy's need for a T-45C replacement.

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## **New National Defense Strategy Delivered to President**



An F/A-18E Super Hornet, attached to the “Blue Blasters” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 34, launches from the flight deck the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), Mar. 25. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Tate Cardinal*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Department of Defense delivered the new 2022 National Defense Strategy to the president March 28, the department said.

The NDS is classified, but DoD released a fact sheet to inform readers until an unclassified version is released.

“For the first time, the department conducted its strategic reviews in a fully integrated way – incorporating the Nuclear Posture Review and Missile Defense Review in the NDS – ensuring tight linkages between our strategy and our resources,” the fact sheet says. The unclassified NDS will be forthcoming.

Consistent with the president’s Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, the classified NDS sets out how the Department of Defense will contribute to advancing and

safeguarding vital U.S. national interests. The defense priorities are:

1. Defending the homeland, paced to the growing multi-domain threat posed by China
2. Deterring strategic attacks against the United States, allies and partners
3. Deterring aggression, while being prepared to prevail in conflict when necessary, prioritizing the challenge of China in the Indo-Pacific, then the Russia challenge in Europe
4. Building a resilient joint force and defense ecosystem.

“The department will act urgently to sustain and strengthen deterrence, with the People’s Republic of China [PRC] as our most consequential strategic competitor and the pacing challenge for the department.

“Russia poses acute threats, as illustrated by its brutal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. We will collaborate with our NATO allies and partners to reinforce robust deterrence in the face of Russian aggression.

“The department will remain capable of managing other persistent threats, including those from North Korea, Iran, and violent extremist organizations.

“Changes in global climate and other dangerous transboundary threats, including pandemics, are transforming the context in which the department operates. We will adapt to these challenges, which increasingly place pressure on the joint force and the systems that support it.

“Recognizing growing kinetic and non-kinetic threats to the United States’ homeland from our strategic competitors, the department will take necessary actions to increase resilience – our ability to withstand, fight through, and recover quickly



from disruption.

“Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are an enduring strength for the United States, and are critical to achieving our objectives, as the unified response to Russia’s further invasion of Ukraine has demonstrated. Answering this ‘call to action,’ the department will incorporate ally and partner perspectives, competencies, and advantages at every stage of defense planning.

“The Department will advance our goals through three primary ways: integrated deterrence, campaigning, and actions that build enduring advantages.

- Integrated deterrence entails developing and combining our strengths to maximum effect, by working seamlessly across warfighting domains, theaters, the spectrum of conflict, other instruments of U.S. national power and our unmatched network of alliances and partnerships. Integrated deterrence is enabled by combat-credible forces, backstopped by a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent.
- Campaigning will strengthen deterrence and enable us to gain advantages against the full range of competitors’ coercive actions. The United States will operate forces, synchronize broader department efforts, and align department activities with other instruments of national power, to undermine acute forms of competitor coercion, complicate competitors’ military preparations and develop our own warfighting capabilities together with allies and partners.
- Building enduring advantages for the future joint force involves undertaking reforms to accelerate force development, getting the technology we need more quickly, and making investments in the extraordinary people of the Department, who remain our most valuable resource.

“The department will develop, design, and manage our forces – linking our operational concepts and capabilities to achieve strategic objectives. This requires a joint force that is lethal, resilient, sustainable, survivable, agile, and responsive.”

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## **HII Christens Flight III Destroyer Jack H. Lucas**



HII christened the pre-commissioning unit Jack H. Lucas on March 26. *HII*

PASCAGOULA, Miss. – HII christened pre-commissioning unit Jack H. Lucas (DDG 125) on March 26 at the company’s Ingalls Shipbuilding division, the company said in a release.

Jack H. Lucas, a longtime resident of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, was the youngest Marine and youngest service member in World War II awarded the Medal of Honor. During a close firefight with Japanese soldiers, Lucas saved the lives of three Marines when he unhesitatingly placed himself on two

grenades.

"Jack H. Lucas made a selfless decision to choose others and country over self," Ingalls Shipbuilding President Kari Wilkinson said. "Our Ingalls shipbuilders have a deep appreciation and respect for what sailors and Marines do on behalf of our nation. We are proud to support them and to provide them this remarkable ship, our first Flight III destroyer."

Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Mike Gilday, was the keynote speaker.

"Jack H. Lucas is not only the most capable and sophisticated surface combatant ever built by man, but it also represents the bridge from the past to the future, as we bring a new radar, the Aegis Baseline 10, and a new electric plant onto an already highly capable platform," Gilday said. "Such an evolution would be impossible without the shipbuilders of Huntington Ingalls Industries and the Pascagoula community. Flight III represents the dedication and commitment of our Sailors and civilians – the skill and innovation of our shipyards and industry partners – and the commitment of the American people to keep the seas free and open for all."

"You have built the finest destroyer in the world," Gilday said.

Jack H. Lucas is cosponsored by Ruby Lucas, widow of the ship's namesake, and Catherine B. Reynolds, chairman and CEO of the Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation. Together, the two sponsors officially christened the ship and made remarks during the ceremony.

"May the Jack H. Lucas be indestructible, just like he was," Ruby Lucas said. "This first of its kind ship is advanced in integrity, courage and commitment to serve our great country. Jack never ran from a fight, and I'm certain that all aboard his namesake will represent Jack with honor. Just as I feel

his spirit with me, be assured that he will be with all of you all the time.”

U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker and U.S. Rep. Steven Palazzo, both of Mississippi, delivered remarks. Other speakers included Meredith Berger, performing the duties of undersecretary of the Navy, and Maj. Gen. Jason Bohm, commanding general, Marine Corps Recruiting Command.

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## Israeli Air Force Leader Takes Flight in CH-53K



Brig. Gen. Eyal Grinboim, Israeli air force chief of staff, along with his staff, discuss the capabilities of the CH-53K prior to flying on the aircraft. *U.S. NAVY*

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – Israeli air force Chief of Staff Brig. Gen. Eyal Grinboim visited Naval Air Station Patuxent River in February for a program update and flight on the CH-53K heavy

lift helicopter, Naval Air Systems Command said March 23.

Grinboim and his staff met with Maj. Gen. Gregory Masiello, program executive officer for air anti-submarine warfare, assault and special mission programs. Masiello and Col. Jack Perrin, program manager, Heavy Lift Program Office (PMA-261), gave the IAF group an overview of the CH-53K program and a status update on current tests and production.

The visit included an opportunity to co-pilot the aircraft. U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Col. Luke Frank, pilot and officer in charge of CH-53K detachment for Marine Operational Test and Evaluation Squadron 1, provided pre-flight safety instructions before leading the group in a flight. The flight demonstrated the power and capabilities of the CH-53K aircraft.

Grinboim's visit to the program office was the first since Israel's decision last year to purchase the CH-53K. The IAF signed a letter of offer and acceptance on Dec. 30, 2021, with the U.S. government. The agreement is for purchase of 12 CH-53K aircraft with first deliveries planned in 2025.

As the long-range logistic support backbone for the U.S. Marine Corps, the CH-53K will support Israeli special operations programs first, as well as provide the Israeli Defense Forces with a platform that has the speed, safety and gross weight capability to support all of its missions, including troop and cargo transport, and search and rescue.

The CH-53K program is on track to achieve Initial Operational Capability in 2022. VMX-1 completed all initial operational test and evaluation scheduled events, including a real-world, non-test event recovering a 14,000-pound downed Navy H-60 from a 12,000 feet high zone in the mountains of Northern California. The CH-53K will transport Marines, heavy equipment and supplies during ship-to-shore movement in support of amphibious assault and subsequent operations ashore.



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# SASC Chair Reed: Defense Budget Turmoil Fault 'Not in Our Stars, But in Ourselves'



Sen. Jack Reed (D-Rhode Island), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee during a hearing in review of the fiscal 2023 defense authorization request on March 8. *DOD / U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Jack Sanders*

WASHINGTON – The chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee quoted Shakespeare to lay the blame on Congress itself for the defense budget legislative turmoil over the last two decades of multiple continuing resolutions, and said budget delays are especially dangerous in the world's current geo-political climate.

"We've gotten into a very bad habit over the last several



years, but I hope we can get it done,” said Sen. Jack Reed (D-Rhode Island), when asked by *Seapower* if he foresaw a return to the regular defense budget legislative process in Congress. Reed spoke March 23 in a webinar with reporters of the Defense Writers Group.

Reed noted the fiscal 2022 budget was received late from the Defense Department, which pushed back deliberations. The 2023 president’s budget proposal is scheduled to be delivered to Congress March 28, almost two months later than the normal plan.

Reed said getting the defense budget out on time is “extremely helpful to the services. Most services don’t – regrettably – plan to do anything in the first quarter of the new fiscal year because they assume they won’t have a budget and, in some cases, even authorization acts. That’s a whole quarter of just standing around tapping your feet, and in this world, with these adversaries, and the speed of technology, that’s wasted time.”

Reed noted the services had to wait nearly six months before the 2022 defense budget finally was appropriated.

“It’s not an efficient way to spend money,” he said.

“The problem is, as Shakespeare said, is not in our stars but in ourselves,” Reed said. “In Congress we have been, for many reasons, distracted. It’s a complicated political environment and I hope we can refocus.”

Reed said he, ranking member Sen. James Inhofe (R-Oklahoma) and the Senate Appropriations Committee leaders would like to get their defense bills done on time.

“Sometimes we become hostage to other issues, unfortunately,” Reed said. “But our goal is very clearly to get it done and get it done on time.”

Reed also took the opportunity to say in the current world climate, the United States has to “reimagine how we fight. We have to develop new warfighting concepts. We have new equipment. We have new areas of space and cyber that have been around by every day are much more critical for what we have to do.”

Reed said tough choices have to be made about legacy systems, and that the U.S. has to look to its allies as a “major source of strength.”

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## **Boeing's Australian-Produced Unmanned Aircraft to be Named MQ-28A Ghost Bat**



The newly named MQ-28A during the second test flight series at Woomera Range Complex in South Australia. *BOEING*

AUSTRALIA – Australia has selected MQ-28A Ghost Bat as the military designator and name for the first Australian-produced military combat aircraft in over 50 years.

Australia's Defence Minister, Peter Dutton MP, announced the designator and name at a dedicated ceremony held at RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland.

"The introduction of the new popular name is a rare and special moment in aviation history for our RAAF [Royal Australian Air Force] partners and industry team of over 35 Australian suppliers," said Glen Ferguson, director of Boeing's Airpower Teaming System Australia and International.

"Selecting the Ghost Bat, an Australian native mammal known for teaming together in a pack to detect and hunt, reflects the unique characteristics of the aircraft's sensors and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance abilities, and is a fitting name for this pioneering capability," said Ferguson.

With a rapid development timetable of just three years from ideation to first flight, the development program leverages advancements in digital engineering, advanced manufacturing and unique Australian supply chain technologies.

While the RAAF Loyal Wingman development program name will phase out, Boeing's product name for global customers will remain the Airpower Teaming System.

"Our enduring partnership with Commonwealth of Australia and Australian Defence Force is fundamental to the successful development of MQ-28A's complex technologies and capabilities, and has global export potential for Australia," said Brendan Nelson AO, president, Boeing Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific.

During 2022, the program will continue to accelerate the development and testing of the MQ-28A Ghost Bat, with a focus

on sensor and missionization capabilities to deliver on RAAF commitments. These requirements will continue to expand as Boeing moves towards the aim of delivering an operational capability for the ADF.

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## HII Celebrates Centennial of U.S. Navy Aircraft Carriers



USS Ranger (CV-4), the first aircraft carrier built by Newport News Shipbuilding, shown off the coast of Oahu, Territory of Hawaii, April 1938. *U.S. NAVY*

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – HII, America's only builder of nuclear-powered aircraft carriers., will recognize the 100-year legacy

of aircraft carriers this week and celebrate the next century of U.S Navy aircraft carriers.

Brought into service 100 years ago on March 20, 1922, was USS Langley (CV 1), the U.S. Navy's first aircraft carrier. The ship wasn't constructed at HII's Newport News Shipbuilding division, however it began a century of thoughtful innovation, enabling nuclear-powered aircraft carriers today that provide the U.S. Navy a preeminent power projection platform and have served the nations interest in times of war and peace.

Newport News Shipbuilding's aircraft carrier legends began with USS Ranger (CV 4) in 1934. Since Ranger's delivery, the shipyard has delivered 31 aircraft carriers, including all 10 ships of the Nimitz class and the first of the Ford class that delivered in 2017.

"We are proud that all U.S. Navy aircraft carriers currently serving our nation and protecting our freedoms began their journey at Newport News Shipbuilding," said Jennifer Boykin, president of Newport News Shipbuilding. "The secret to the shipyard's success is its shipbuilding team. While the art and science of building ships has evolved over the last century, two things have remained constant: the pioneering and patriotic spirit of NNS' shipbuilders and the network of shipbuilding suppliers that spans all 50 states, and our strong partnership with the Navy."

Today's Ford-class aircraft carriers, the air wing, and weapons system evolve together as the latest technologies are developed for future missions and to counter emerging threats. Ford-class carriers are twice as long and weigh eight times as much as their 1922 counterpart, yet they are twice as fast and carry nearly three times as many aircraft. The nation's newest most advanced aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), will be in service until at least 2070. All U.S. nuclear-powered aircraft carriers operating in the Navy fleet today were built at Newport News Shipbuilding. USS Enterprise (CVN

65) was first in 1961, then served the nation more than 50 years, having operated safely on nuclear power before being decommissioned in 2017.

Three other Ford-class aircraft carriers are currently under construction at Newport News Shipbuilding. They include John F. Kennedy (CVN 79), Enterprise (CVN 80) and Doris Miller (CVN 81). In addition, Newport News Shipbuilding is conducting mid-life refueling complex overhauls on two Nimitz-class aircraft carriers: USS George Washington (CVN 73) and USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74). These overhauls will extend the service life for each platform by another 25 years, ensuring the Navy is positioned to deploy a fleet of aircraft carriers ready to support national security requirements.