

Italian Navy Commissions New Logistics Support Ship



The Italian navy's newest logistics support ship, the ITS Vulcano. *Fincantieri S.p.A.*

The Italian navy commissioned its newest logistics support ship (LSS), the ITS Vulcano (A5335) at a ceremony at the Fincantieri Naval Integrated shipyard in Muggiano, Italy.

The 633-foot (193 meter), 27,200-ton LSS can replenish a surface ship task group and transfer cargo to other auxiliary vessels, including diesel fuel, jet fuel, fresh water (including the ability to produce fresh water), spare parts, food and ammunitions, as well as perform maintenance and repairs at sea repairs for other vessels with integrated maintenance workshops. Vulcan replaces ITS Stromboli, and carries significantly more fuel and JP5.

The ship has a crew of 235, including troops, special teams and medical personnel. The LSS has can carry eight 20-foot container living modules or other modular units.

According to a statement from Fincantieri, the LSS is a dual-use vessel, meaning it can be used for traditional replenishment of underway naval forces with four alongside refueling rigs and one astern refueling station, or support humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and other civil purposes. Vulcano's hospital is equipped with surgical rooms, radiology and analysis rooms, a dental facility, and hospital beds for up to 17 seriously injured patients as well as an additional eight patients in the clinic area.

The statement also says the LSS has a reduced environmental impact thanks to a state-of-the-art CODLAD propulsion system which generates lower levels of pollution emissions. The ship can shift between a high-powered diesel for speeds up to approximately of about 20 knots, and electric motors using diesel generators for slower speeds (around 10 knots).

Vulcano was fabricated in three different Fincantieri yards. The forward section of the vessel was built at Castellammare di Stabia Shipyard in Naples, while the aft section was built in the Riva Trigoso shipyard. The sections were assembled at the yard in Muggiano, near La Spezia, where the ship underwent harbor and sea trials for final delivery.

The Vulcano project is the basis of the "Flotte Logistique" program, which includes the construction of four LSS for the French navy through an Italo-French consortium between Chantiers de l'Atlantique and Naval Group under the Italian-French LSS program led by OCCAR, the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation. The construction of the forward sections of these ships has been commissioned to Fincantieri, which last month has laid the keel of the first vessel at its shipyard in Castellammare di Stabia in Naples.

In addition to the LSS, the Fincantieri's Muggiano shipyard is also building the Landing Helicopter Dock Trieste, due to be delivered next year, as well as seven Multipurpose Offshore Patrol Ships, which will begin entering the fleet beginning this year.

State Dept. Approves \$1.8B Sale of P-8A Patrol Aircraft to Germany



A P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft assigned to the “Grey Knights” of Patrol Squadron (VP) 46, sits on the flight line,

Jan. 7, 2021. Germany is seeking a foreign military sale of five such aircraft worth nearly \$1.8 billion. *U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Austin Ingram*

WASHINGTON – The State Department has approved a possible foreign military sale to Germany of P-8A aircraft and associated support and related equipment, for an estimated cost of \$1.77 billion, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency said in a March 12 release.

Germany has requested five P-8As aircraft and their associated mission systems and avionics. The sale also would include “aircraft spares; spare engine; support equipment; operational support systems; training; training devices; maintenance trainer/classrooms; publications; software; engineering technical assistance; logistics technical assistance; country liaison officer support; contractor engineering technical services; repair and return; transportation; aircraft ferry; and other associated training and support; and other related elements of logistics and program support,” the release said.

The proposed sale will improve Germany’s capability to meet current and future threats by providing critical capabilities to coalition maritime operations. Germany currently operates the Lockheed P-3C Orion, but that aircraft is reaching end-of-life and will retire in 2024. Germany plans to replace it with the P-8A Poseidon. The proposed sale will allow Germany to modernize and sustain its maritime surveillance aircraft capability for the next 30 years.

The prime contractor will be the Boeing Co., Seattle, Washington.

Royal Malaysian Navy Stands Up Unmanned Aircraft Squadron



A ScanEagle UAS being displayed on its pneumatic launcher at the inauguration ceremony of Malaysia's 601 Squadron on 4 March 2021. *Royal Malaysian Navy*

The Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) established the 601st Unmanned Aerial System Squadron on March 4, 2021, operating the Boeing Insitu ScanEagle UAS from its base at Kota Kinabalu in Sabah. It is the RMN's first unit dedicated to unmanned aerial systems.

According to First Admiral Ahmad Shafirudin, commander of the Naval Air of the RMN, the squadron will acquire capability and knowledge for UAS operations and support for the RMN and Malaysia's joint forces.

The RMN has already received six aircraft from Insitu Boeing as part of an order for a total of 12 systems, announced by

the U.S. Department of Defense on May 31, 2019 under of the Foreign Military Sales program, and part of the U.S. government's Maritime Security Initiative. The remaining six ScanEagles are to be delivered by 2022. The value of the contract is \$19.3 million. The Naval Air Systems Command, Patuxent River, Maryland, is the contracting activity. That contract also announced systems for Indonesia, Philippines and Vietnam.

At that time, the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur issued a statement saying, "These UAVs will enhance the Royal Malaysian Navy's ability to defend the country's territorial integrity."

The contract also included two pneumatic launchers, two SkyHook UAS retrieval systems, two ground control units, as well as spare payloads, spare and repair parts, support equipment, tools, training and maintenance technical services, and field service representatives.

ScanEagle is a small, long-endurance, low-altitude system that can carry electro-optical imagers, long-wave infrared sensors and X-band radar payloads. The RMN intends to initially operate the systems from land with a mobile detachment concept, but eventually they could be hosted aboard ships.

The 601 squadron will be located at RMN Naval Base at Kota Kinabalu in Sabah on the northern part of the island of Borneo, in East Malaysia. There are several reasons the squadron will be located in East Malaysia. Unmanned air operations in Western Malaysia are complicated by the more complex and crowded airspace. More importantly, RMN officials acknowledge a more pressing need for maritime ISR across Malaysia's eastern maritime border, where there is a current threat of non-state-sponsored militant activities.

Malaysia's chief of navy, Adm. Tan Sri Mohd Reza bin Mohd Sany, participated in the event. U.S. Defense Attaché Capt. Muzzafar Khan, who attended the official handover ceremony,

said, “For over 60 years the U.S. and Malaysia have shared a productive and mutually beneficial security cooperation partnership, and I am glad to see that continuing today.”

China Adopts ‘Assertive Posture’ With Eye on Taiwan, Admiral Says



The Tien Kung 天弓 area defense system, developed indigenously by the National Chun-Sheng Institute of Science and Technology (NCSIST), is designed to intercept tactical ballistic missiles. *NCSIST*

Admiral Philip Davidson, commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, speaking at the American Enterprise Institute on March 4 and in testimony to Congress on March 9, said the

People's Republic of China (PRC) is stepping up its pressure on Taiwan and called for the island nation to increase its defensive capabilities.

In his testimony on Capitol Hill, Davidson said, "The PRC has adopted an increasingly assertive military posture to exert pressure and expand its influence across the region. This is particularly stark concerning Taiwan. Over the past year, Beijing has pursued a coordinated campaign of diplomatic, informational, economic, and – increasingly – military tools to isolate Taipei from the international community and if necessary, compel unification with the PRC."

"I worry that they're [China] accelerating their ambitions to supplant the United States and our leadership role in the rules-based international order... by 2050," he said. "Taiwan is clearly one of their ambitions before that. And I think the threat is manifest during this decade, in fact, in the next six years."

At the American Enterprise Institute, Davidson said it is vital the U.S. continue arms sales to Taiwan and encouraged their continued investments in national defense. Taiwan receives military assistance from the United States, but being diplomatically and commercially isolated, Taiwan has had to develop much of its defense capabilities on its own.

"Helping to encourage Taiwan on its investments, a mix of capabilities that include capabilities that helps Taiwan deter, as well as provides some decent [other] capabilities that helps Taiwan defend, I think is a very important approach that the [Defense] Department needs to take," Davidson. "And I would say, you know, for the greater U.S. government – consistent arms sales to Taiwan to help in this deterrence strategy is critically important. And again, that takes a balance to capabilities to go to them."

The Taiwan News reported on Feb. 17 that Taiwan's National

Chung-Shan Institute of Science and Technology (NCSIST) has been directed to ramp up production of Taiwan-made weapons systems, including anti-aircraft and anti-ship missiles. NCSIST is responsible for the development, manufacture and sale of Taiwan's indigenous defense technology and weaponry.

According to the news report, the list includes the Sky Bow III (Tien Kung III) surface-to-air, anti-ballistic missile and the Hsiung Feng III supersonic missile capable of destroying both land-based and naval targets. Development of the Sky Sword II (Tien Chien II) radar-guided air-to-air missile, as well as some classified missile systems, will be stepped up.

The PRC is a nation of 1.4 billion, with the largest navy in the world. One hundred miles away is Taiwan, a country of 22 million people. Militarily, it almost seems to be an untenable position.

"Taiwan is the most dangerous Sino-American flashpoint, because regaining de facto sovereignty over Taiwan has long been a Chinese core interest, and the potential for the use of force to accomplish reunification is always on the table," said Ret. Rear Adm. Michael McDevitt, author of the recently published "China as a Twenty-First-Century Naval Power: Theory, Practice, and Implications" from Naval Institute Press.

Should China and Taiwan begin hostilities, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has a decided home-field advantage. "In the face of almost two decades of Chinese military modernization, Taiwan's forces – as well as the U.S. forward deployed forces – are vastly outgunned on a day-to-day basis, as they operate literally in China's front yard, because they face the totality of China's armed forces," McDevitt said.

" "[PRC President and Communist Party Secretary] Xi Jinping has suggested that an indefinite perpetuation of the current status quo, with Taiwan existing as a de facto independent

country, cannot go on forever. Xi gives the impression he is impatient because he fears perpetuation of the status quo will eventually lead to 'peaceful separation,'" he said.

McDevitt said there are those that think Xi Jinping wants to be remembered as the party secretary that finally resolves the Taiwan question. "Taiwan is always going to be just a hundred miles of the coast of China, it will never be towed out to the mid-Pacific," he said.

"The basic U.S. policy on reunification is straightforward," he said. If the people of Taiwan decide in favor of it, "that is fine, but in the meanwhile, any attempts by the mainland to unify through coercion or outright aggression might result in U.S. military intervention," said McDevitt. "Given the economic clout and military capability of the mainland, it is hard to imagine that reunification of some sort, a commonwealth for example, will not eventually take place, unless of course, Beijing agrees to let Taiwan declare independence, which in my mind would be the sensible thing for Beijing to do. Taiwan is not going anywhere."

The Biden administration has signaled its support for Taiwan. State Department Spokesman Ned Price said on Jan. 21, "The United States notes with concern the pattern of ongoing PRC attempts to intimidate its neighbors, including Taiwan. We urge Beijing to cease its military, diplomatic, and economic pressure against Taiwan and instead engage in meaningful dialogue with Taiwan's democratically elected representatives. We will stand with friends and allies to advance our shared prosperity, security, and values in the Indo-Pacific region – and that includes deepening our ties with democratic Taiwan.

"The United States will continue to support a peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues, consistent with the wishes and best interests of the people on Taiwan," Price said. "The United States maintains its longstanding commitments as outlined in the Three Communiqués, the Taiwan Relations Act,

and the Six Assurances. We will continue to assist Taiwan in maintaining a sufficient self-defense capability. Our commitment to Taiwan is rock-solid and contributes to the maintenance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and within the region.”

Senators, Congressmen Reintroduce the Energizing American Shipbuilding Act



Members of the U.S. Senate and House have reintroduced the Energizing American Shipbuilding Act, intended to boost ship construction. *USDOT*

WASHINGTON – U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker, R-Mississippi, a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, joined Sen. Bob

Casey, D-Pennsylvania, in reintroducing the Energizing American Shipbuilding Act, Wicker's office said in a March 11 release.

Reps. John Garamendi, D-California, who serves on the House Armed Services Committee, and Rob Wittman, R-Virginia, ranking member of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, introduced the companion bill in the House of Representatives.

The legislation would support American shipbuilding by requiring a portion of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and crude oil exports to be transported on U.S.-built, U.S.-crewed vessels.

"Strengthening our domestic maritime industry is essential to our national defense," Wicker said. "Ensuring the U.S. can move our growing energy exports on American-flagged, American-crewed vessels protects the critical role these vessels play in our national defense and bolsters hundreds of thousands of American shipbuilding and maritime jobs. As foreign nations continue to invest heavily in their own shipbuilding capacity, the United States cannot allow our own capabilities to dwindle."

"America's merchant fleet has dwindled 60 percent since 1991. Requiring LNG and oil to be exported on U.S.-built and crewed vessels will help strengthen our nation's shipyards and maritime industry and keep America competitive in international markets," Casey said. "The bipartisan Energizing American Shipbuilding Act would also create good-paying jobs for our ports in Pennsylvania, and throughout the country, while increasing ship manufacturing to ensure that we can provide sealift capacity for our military."

"U.S. exports of America's LNG and crude oil resources present a unique opportunity to create new middle-class jobs by strengthening our nation's crucial domestic shipbuilding,

advanced manufacturing, and maritime industries – which are key to national security and our ability to project American military power abroad,” Garamendi said. “American shipyards and mariners are ready for the job, and our bill ensures American workers are no longer expected to compete against heavily subsidized foreign shipyards in Korea, China, and elsewhere. Our domestic maritime industry is critically important to the U.S. economy and national security, and I will work tirelessly until this bill becomes law.”

“The Energizing American Shipbuilding Act is a major step in the right direction for the American shipbuilding industry, the men and women of America’s shipyards, and our national security,” Wittman said. “The EAS creates new, good-paying jobs for working-class Americans in every state while enhancing our national security by transporting more American-produced energy on American crewed, built, and flagged ships. Furthermore, The EAS Act ensures the United States has the industrial shipbuilding capacity necessary for our national defense by building new LNG carriers rivaling those of China and Russia and ensuring the continued prosperity of our shipbuilding industry.”

The bill would require that vessels built in the U.S. transport 15 percent of total seaborne LNG exports by 2043 and 10 percent of total seaborne crude oil exports by 2035. If enacted, the bill is expected to spur the construction of dozens of ships, supporting thousands of good-paying jobs in American shipyards, while also boosting domestic vessel component manufacturing and maritime industries.

AeroVironment's Arcturus UAV Subsidiary Awarded \$7M for SOCOM UAS Program



Arcturus UAV's Jump 20 unmanned aircraft. *AeroVironment*
SIMI VALLEY, Calif., March 9, 2021 – AeroVironment Inc.'s wholly owned subsidiary Arcturus UAV, now operating under the AeroVironment brand, was awarded a competitive task order valued at approximately \$7 million from the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), the company said in a March 9 release. The competitive task order is for a one-year period of performance, which started Feb. 3, 2021.

USSOCOM selected Arcturus UAV as one of six companies qualified for the potential \$975 million Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) MEUAS contract in June 2020. The contract enables awardees to compete for site-specific task orders and provide USSOCOM with unmanned aircraft systems services and support for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) operations.

“Part of AeroVironment's expanded portfolio of medium UAS, the fixed wing Jump 20 is capable of vertical takeoff and landing,

making it completely runway independent,” said Rick Pedigo, AeroVironment vice president of global sales and business development. “Runway independence maximizes the ability of customers to deploy the Jump 20 in a broad range of locations and environments, while minimizing the logistical footprint required to operate it. Jump 20 is also capable of hosting multiple different payload options, delivering true versatility and multi-mission capabilities to support a wide array of customer requirements.”

AeroVironment recently successfully demonstrated the Jump 20 for the U.S. Army Future Tactical Unmanned Aircraft System (FTUAS) “Rodeo,” which took place from Feb. 22 through March 5 at Fort Benning, Georgia.

DOD Releases Fiscal Year 2020 Freedom of Navigation Report



An MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopter assigned to the Archangels of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 25 Detachment 6 prepares to land on the flight deck of the forward-deployed amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA 6) as part of a 2020 FONOP. *U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Shelby Tucker*
ARLINGTON, Va. – The Department of Defense (DoD) released on March 10 its annual Freedom of Navigation (FON) Report for Fiscal Year 2020. During the period from Oct. 1, 2019, through Sept. 30, 2020, U.S. forces operationally challenged 28 different excessive maritime claims made by 19 different claimants throughout the world.

Unlawful and sweeping maritime claims – or incoherent legal theories of maritime entitlements – that are inconsistent with customary international law as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention pose a threat to the legal foundation of the rules-based international order. Consequently, the United States is committed to confronting this threat by challenging excessive maritime claims.

DoD's operational challenges are also known as "FON

assertions,” “FON operations,” and “FONOPs.” The comprehensive, regular, and routine execution of these operations complements diplomatic engagements by the U.S. State Department and supports the longstanding U.S. national interest in freedom of the seas worldwide.

Upholding freedom of navigation as a principle supports unimpeded lawful commerce and the global mobility of U.S. forces. FONOPs demonstrate the United States will fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows – regardless of the location of excessive maritime claims and regardless of current events.

Each year, DoD releases an unclassified summarized FON Report identifying the broad range of excessive maritime claims that are challenged by U.S. forces. The FON Report also includes general geographic information to describe the location of FON assertions while still maintaining operational security of U.S. military forces.

“Excessive maritime claims” are those that are inconsistent with international law as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention. They include a variety of restrictions on the exercise of navigation and overflight rights and freedoms and other lawful uses of the sea. If left unchallenged, excessive maritime claims could limit the rights and freedoms enjoyed by the United States and other nations.

As long as restrictions on navigation and overflight rights and freedoms that exceed the authority provided under international law persist, the United States will continue to challenge such unlawful maritime claims.

The United States will uphold the rights, freedoms, and lawful uses of the sea for the benefit of all nations – and will stand with like-minded partners doing the same.

Previous DoD FON Reports are available at <http://policy.defense.gov/OUUSDPOffices/FON.aspx>

Virginia SSN New Jersey Construction Advances with Pressure Hull Complete



The Virginia-class submarine New Jersey (SSN 796) reached pressure hull complete in February 2021. The construction milestone signifies that all of the submarine's hull sections have been joined to form a single, watertight unit. The boat is currently 72% complete. *HII / Matt Hildreth*

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding division has achieved a milestone in the construction of the submarine New Jersey (SSN 796), the company said in a March 9 release.

The company reached pressure hull complete on Feb. 10, meaning that all of its hull sections were joined to form a single,

watertight unit. This is the latest major milestone before the submarine is christened and floated off.

“Achieving this milestone is especially significant as it continues to prove our teams can safely perform at a high level in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Jason Ward, vice president of Virginia-class submarine construction. “The successful execution of this event demonstrates our culture of trust, accountability and strict adherence to standards, which is paramount in our building warships for our Navy customer.”

New Jersey is the 23rd Virginia-class fast attack submarine. Construction began in March 2016 and is about 72% complete. The boat is scheduled for delivery to the Navy in 2022.

HASC Chairman: Don't 'Waste Any More Money' on F-35 Strike Fighter



Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) 3rd Class Joshua Ott conducts flight operations with an F-35B Lightning II fighter aircraft assigned to the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). *U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Matthew Cavenaile*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The chairman of the House Armed Services Committee says he'd like the Defense Department to stop buying the troubled and massively expensive F-35 Lightning II strike fighter.

In a wide-ranging discussion livestreamed March 5 by the Brookings Institution, a Washington think tank, the chairman, Washington Democrat Rep. Adam Smith, said "our acquisition and procurement process over the last 20 years can only be described as a complete disaster."

Citing development and maintenance problems or cost over runs with the F-35 – believed to be the world's most expensive weapons platform – as well as the Navy's Littoral Combat Ship and the Marine Corps' canceled Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle, Smith said "we on the Armed Services Committee have to

seriously scrub those programs like the F-35," adding "we have to make sure that we don't waste any more" money.

"What does the F-35 give us, and is there a way to cut our losses?" Smith asked, noting "the sustainment costs are brutal." Originally planned to replace 90% of U.S. strike fighter aircraft, Smith conceded "you can't get rid of the program," but as HASC chairman said he was seeking "a mix of fighter/attack aircraft that's cost effective."

The Marine Corps has converted five squadrons to the F-35B vertical takeoff and short landing variant of the fifth-generation strike fighter. The Navy's first fighter squadron to transition from the F/A-18E Super Hornet to the F-35C Lightning II aircraft carrier variant is slated to deploy later this year on USS Carl Vinson. Another squadron will become the Navy's second fleet F-35C squadron after training at Naval Air Station Lemoore, California. Meanwhile, a Marine Corps squadron has completed transition to the F-35C and is expected to deploy on a carrier in fiscal 2022.

Smith also dismissed Pentagon plans late in the Trump administration to create a 500-ship Navy, many of which would be small ships or unmanned vessels. However, he called submarines "the most important part" of the nuclear triad that includes long range bombers and ground-based intercontinental ballistic missiles.

"We must have nuclear deterrent," Smith said, "so that nobody thinks they can ever launch any nuclear weapon of any size without paying an unacceptable cost." He did question, however, whether the United States needed 5,000 nuclear-armed missiles as a deterrent when China has less than 200 nuclear weapons and is projected to double that amount to slightly under 400 weapons in coming years. He wondered whether the United States needed to spend more than \$1 trillion to maintain that advantage.

The chairman said he wanted to have a conversation with missile hawks about how large a deterrent nuclear force is needed.

“I will say the submarines are the most important piece of this without question,” he said, adding, “the ability to deliver from the submarines is the most survivable leg of the triad.”

Lawmakers should examine if the United States can achieve the same level of deterrence for less money, “as China has,” he said.

HII Announces the Election of Kari Wilkinson as Ingalls Shipbuilding President



Kari Wilkinson, incoming executive vice president of Huntington Ingalls Industries and president of Ingalls Shipbuilding. HII

NEWPORT NEWS, Va.—Huntington Ingalls Industries' (HII) board of directors has elected Kari Wilkinson to serve as executive vice president of HII and president of HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division, effective April 1, the company announced in a March 5 release. She will succeed Brian Cuccias, who announced he will retire April 1.

Cuccias was named Ingalls Shipbuilding president in 2014 and is responsible for all programs and operations at the shipyard in Pascagoula, Mississippi. His career began in 1979 when he joined Litton Data Systems as a financial analyst on several Navy programs. Prior to becoming president of Ingalls, Cuccias held various positions of increasing responsibility at the division, including vice president, amphibious ship programs and vice president, program management.

"Under Brian's leadership, Ingalls Shipbuilding optimized production, improved performance and continued meeting or exceeding customer commitments through many significant and unforeseen challenges," said HII Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Chris Kastner. "His shipbuilding expertise brought immeasurable value, and his contributions to this business have positioned Ingalls for lasting success."

Kari Wilkinson, who will report to Kastner, currently serves as Ingalls' vice president, program management.

"Kari is a respected leader with an impressive 25-year record of success managing programs and overseeing major shipbuilding initiatives at Ingalls," Kastner said. "Her focus on operational excellence, exemplary leadership skills and ability to build effective customer relationships well positions her for this new role, and I look forward to working with her to continue the Ingalls Shipbuilding legacy of success."

Wilkinson began her career with Ingalls as an associate naval architect in 1996. Since that time, she has supported major shipbuilding production events and milestones from positions in engineering, has worked closely with business development on requirements and preliminary ship designs for both domestic and international customers, and also coordinated the prioritization of equipment and processes in operations during the Hurricane Katrina recovery effort.

Wilkinson transitioned into program management in 2007 as a ship program manager for the San Antonio-class LPD program, assuming the position of vice president, program management in 2016. In this current role, she has profit and loss responsibility for all elements of program execution and serves as the principal liaison to the Navy and Coast Guard for all platforms in the Ingalls portfolio.

Originally from Jenison, Michigan, Wilkinson earned a bachelor of science in naval architecture and marine engineering from the University of Michigan, and an MBA from Temple University.