

# Fairbanks Morse Defense to Supply Valves, Actuators for U.S. Coast Guard WCC Program



BELoit, Wis. – August 12, 2025 – [Fairbanks Morse Defense](#) (FMD) has secured a contract from Birdon America to supply key fluid control components for the U.S. Coast Guard's [Waterways Commerce Cutter](#) (WCC) program. The company will deliver [motor-operated valves](#) for the first two vessels.

“Safeguarding maritime commerce extends beyond the open ocean. We must also ensure the security and reliability of our inland waterways,” said Michael Johnston, President of Components at Fairbanks Morse Defense. “This contract underscores Fairbanks Morse Defense’s enduring commitment to maritime readiness across all critical corridors that drive the nation’s economy.”

The WCC program is a major modernization effort to replace the Coast Guard’s decades-old fleet of inland buoy and construction tenders, which is approaching obsolescence. These vessels are responsible for maintaining more than 28,000 aids to navigation across 12,000 miles of inland waterways, which are critical routes for the transport of over 630 million tons of cargo annually. Beyond navigation, the cutters also support search and rescue, environmental protection, [marine safety](#), and [port security](#).

The new fleet will have up to 30 vessels consisting of three designs: [River Buoy Tenders](#), [Inland Construction Tenders](#), and [Inland Buoy Tenders](#). The first of these new vessels, which will be constructed at Birdon’s recently acquired Bayou La Batre shipyard in Alabama, includes sixteen River Buoy Tenders and eleven Inland Construction Tenders.

Initial deliveries are expected to be operational in 2027.

Acquired by Fairbanks Morse Defense in 2021, [Hunt Valve](#), together with its divisions, Hunt Valve Actuator, Montreal Bronze, and Pima Valve, LLC, is a trusted provider of advanced fluid power engineering solutions for U.S. and Canadian maritime defense forces. The company brings decades of expertise in delivering high-performance, [severe-duty valves](#) and [engineered system solutions](#) that meet the rigorous standards of the Navy and Coast Guard and are built to endure the world’s most demanding naval environments.