

General Dynamics Awarded \$1.6 Billion Contract to Build Additional ESBs



An MV-22B Osprey lands aboard the expeditionary sea base USS Lewis B. Puller. General Dynamics NASSCO has won a contract to build the sixth and seventh ESBs with an option to construct an eighth. U.S. Marine Corps/Sgt. Desiree King

SAN DIEGO —

General Dynamics NASSCO, a subsidiary of General Dynamics, was awarded a

contract by the U.S. Navy worth up to \$1.6 billion for the construction of the

sixth and seventh ships of the Expeditionary Sea Base (ESB) program as well as

an option for ESB 8, the company said in a release.

“We are

pleased to be building ESB 6 and 7 for our Navy,” said Kevin Graney, president

of General Dynamics NASSCO. “ESBs have proven to be affordable and flexible,

and as the fleet has gained experience with the platform, we have worked with

the Navy and Marines to develop even more capabilities and mission sets.”

The

contract, announced by the Defense Department on Aug. 23, provides \$1.08

billion as a fixed-price-incentive modification to a previous contract for the

design and construction of the two ships, with an option for the third that, if

exercised, would bring the total cumulative value to \$1.63 billion.

Named

after famous names or places of historical significance to U.S. Marines, ESBs

serve as a flexible platform and a key element in the Navy's airborne mine

countermeasures mission, with accommodations for up to 250 personnel and a

large helicopter flight deck. The ship's configuration supports special warfare

and Marine Corps task-organized units.

Work on the two new ships of the ESB program is scheduled to begin in the first quarter of 2020 and will continue to the second quarter of 2023, providing the opportunity to sustain and grow the workforce along San Diego's working waterfront. NASSCO's location along the historic San Diego Bay provides shipbuilders and skilled tradespeople with access to the nation's leading maritime support businesses, and highly trained employees allow NASSCO to build and repair ships in the most efficient manner possible.

In 2011, the Navy awarded NASSCO with a contract to design and build the first two ships in the newly created MLP program, the USNS Montford Point and USNS John Glenn. The program expanded with three more vessels, the USS Lewis B. Puller, USNS Hershel "Woody" Williams and the Miguel Keith, configured as ESBs. Following the delivery of the first four ships to the U.S. Navy, the fifth ship, the Miguel Keith, is scheduled for delivery in the fourth quarter of 2019.