

Huntington Ingalls Completes Flight Deck on Aircraft Carrier John F. Kennedy



The 780-ton upper bow was lowered into the dry dock and placed on future aircraft carrier John F. Kennedy. Ashley Cowan/Huntington Ingalls Industries

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – The final piece of the John F. Kennedy's (CVN-79) flight deck, the upper bow section, was installed July 10 on the future aircraft carrier, Huntington Ingalls Industries announced in a release.

The addition of the upper bow section at the company's Newport News Shipbuilding division is one of the last steel structural units, known as a superlift, to be placed on Kennedy. It was built using digital technology, such as virtual reality, to guide workers through the assembly process. The shipyard used a large crane to lift the section into place on the ship.

"We are very pleased with the progress being made on Kennedy as we inch closer to christening the ship later this year," said Mike Butler, Newport News Shipbuilding's program director for the JFK.

"The upper bow is the last superlift that completes the ship's primary hull. This milestone is testament to the significant build strategy changes we have made –

and to the men and women of Newport News Shipbuilding who do what no one else in the world can do.”

Weighing

780 tons, the superlift took 18 months to build.

Kennedy is

being built with an improved build strategy that includes the increased use of

digital tools to build superlifts that are much larger and more complete at

ship erect than on prior carriers. Kennedy is on track to be built with

considerably fewer man-hours than the first ship in its class, USS Gerald R.

Ford.

More than 3,200

shipbuilders and 2,000 suppliers from across the country are supporting the

construction of aircraft carrier Kennedy. The ship is in the early stages of

its testing program and is on schedule to launch during the fourth quarter. Christening

is planned for late 2019.