

Navy Accepts Delivery of USNS Hector A. Cafferata Jr.



The U.S. Navy accepted delivery of USNS Hector A. Cafferata Jr. (ESB 8), an Expeditionary Sea Base, from General Dynamics NASSCO in San Diego, Aug. 25, 2026.

The delivery of ESB 8 marks the official transfer of the ship from the shipbuilder to the Navy, following completion of successful integrated sea trials earlier this summer.

“Our ESBs are critical to maritime operations, providing logistics support from sea to shore for a broad range of military operations,” said Jon Thomas, acting program manager, Strategic and Theater Sealift. “ESB 8 capabilities demonstrated during sea trials highlighted the power and flexibility of this ship and we are excited to have another ESB in the fleet. This delivery demonstrates the unwavering commitment to provide superior quality to the warfighter.”

The ship is named for U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Private First Class Hector A. Cafferata Jr., who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his extraordinary heroism during the Korean War. At the Battle of Chosin Reservoir in November 1950, Cafferata single-handedly held off a regimental-strength enemy force and saved the lives of wounded Marines by hurling away a live grenade that had landed in their midst, sustaining severe injuries in the process. ESB 8 stands as a lasting tribute to his legacy of dauntless perseverance and selfless service to the nation.

ESBs are highly flexible platforms that bring critical access infrastructure that supports deployed forces, equipment, supplies, and warfighting capability.

The delivery of ESB 8 underscores the Navy's commitment to building America's Fleet of the Future. For 250 years, American naval power has projected strength globally, operating forward 24/7, 365 days a year. This operational tempo demands continuous capability, and the Fleet of the Future is our answer.

The Portfolio Acquisition Executive (PAE) for Maritime is the single accountable organization for delivering surface ships for the U.S. Navy. This new centralized organizational construct will empower leaders with broader scope and greater authority to accelerate delivery of combat capability and ensure acquisition speed and discipline are driven by what the warfighter needs-when they need it.

From the Chief of Information, Aug. 26, 2026