Navy Commissions Naval Support Facility Redzikowo, a Future Aegis Ashore Site



Capt. Jon Grant and NSF Redzikowo staff personnel attend the Polish Force Protection Battalion, Battalion Day ceremony in this 2019 photo. Sailors assigned to NSF Redzikowo and AAMDS Poland conduct regular training events with the Force Protection Battalion and local emergency services departments. NSF Redzikowo

REDZIKOWO, Poland – The U.S. Navy's newest shore installation, Naval Support Facility (NSF) Redzikowo, was officially commissioned on Sept. 3 at a ceremony in front of U.S. and Polish dignitaries, the commander, Naval Region Europe, Africa Public Affairs said in a release.

The ceremony, based on traditional Navy ship commissioning events, celebrated the official turnover of NSF Redzikowo's newly completed support facilities from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to the Navy.

It also marked another significant milestone for NSF Redzikowo, which was established in 2016 as the first U.S. installation in Poland.

Redzikowo will be the second operational location for the Aegis Ashore Missile Defense System (AAMDS), part of the United States' contribution to NATO ballistic missile defense. The AAMDS site at Redzikowo, currently under construction, is estimated to be operational no earlier than Fiscal Year 2022.

"In the years to come, Redzikowo will play a critical role in the defense of Europe, as an important operational asset," said Rear Adm. Scott Gray, commander of Navy Region Europe, Africa, Central (EURAFCENT), who presided over the ceremony.

“And in the Navy’s tradition, this is why we chose not to simply dedicate this installation, but to commission it … to man our ‘ship’ and bring it to life.”

Gray and Słupsk Mayor Barbara Dykier conducted a ceremonial ribbon-cutting for the installation’s main campus.

Gray and Dykier were joined by the installation’s two commanding officers, Capt. Eric Williams of NSF Redzikowo and Cmdr. Derek Johnson of AAMDS Poland, as well as Col. Radoslaw Sułek of the Polish Army’s Force Protection Battalion and Col. Patrick Dagon, commander of the Army Corps of Engineers’ Europe District.

The new additions to NSF Redzikowo include the base’s administrative offices and a Multi-Purpose Facility (MPF) with housing and dining facilities, as well as security and public works buildings, a general purpose warehouse, a fire station and athletic facilities. Williams and Johnson started moving their personnel into the new workspaces during the summer.

“Within just three days of my assuming command of U.S. Naval Support Facility Redzikowo, this event – the commissioning ceremony and all the accomplishments within – were mere visions scribbled on a piece of paper and carried in my ‘playbook’ still today,” said Williams, who has commanded NSF Redzikowo since November 2019. “The vision was that this was meant to happen and then, that it would happen … I’m excited, and my entire crew of Sailors and civilians are excited.”

Located at a former military and civilian airfield 225 miles northwest of Warsaw, NSF Redzikowo is operated in conjunction with the Polish Force Protection Battalion.

Sailors assigned to NSF Redzikowo and AAMDS Poland conduct regular training events with the Force Protection Battalion and local emergency services departments. They also participate in local outreach projects in the surrounding

communities, including Redzikowo and Słupsk.

“Through regular community outreach at local schools and training with Polish first responders, you have proven you are truly a part of this community,” Gray said. “The relationship you’ve built is not just a reflection of the trust and partnership between the Navy and our Polish allies, but also between the United States and Poland and our long-standing friendship.”

Once complete, NSF Redzikowo will be the second Navy facility to employ Aegis Ashore; the first, Naval Support Facility Deveselu, Romania, was established in October 2014.

Aegis Ashore is part of the European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA), the voluntary U.S. contribution to NATO’s BMD system. EPAA’s main purpose is to protect NATO allies and U.S. deployed forces against ballistic missile threats emanating from outside the Euro-Atlantic region.

First conceived in 2009, EPAA became a reality in 2011 with the deployment of Aegis-equipped Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers to Naval Station Rota, Spain and a forward-based TPY-2 radar system to Turkey.

The next step came in May 2016, when the AAMDS site at NSF Deveselu achieved operational certification through a series of unit- and theater-level tests and exercises. That same month, ground was broken on the second AAMDS facility at the former Słupsk-Redzikowo Airport, and NSF Redzikowo was officially established on Nov. 30, 2016 under the command of Capt. Rick Gilbert.

Upon completion, the AAMDS site at NSF Redzikowo will consist of a fire-control radar “deckhouse” with an associated Aegis command, control and communications suite. Separately, it will house several launch modules containing SM-3 (Standard Missile-3) missiles. These capabilities will be identical to those at NSF Deveselu.

Aegis Ashore uses a defensive system almost identical to that used on the Navy's Aegis-capable guided-missile destroyers and cruisers at sea. The system is designed to detect, track, engage and destroy ballistic missiles in flight using the Aegis SPY-1 radar and the SM-3 missile interceptor. SM-3 missiles have no offensive capability and only target incoming ballistic missiles launched by hostile countries.

Concurrent with construction of the AAMDS section of the base, the Navy worked with the Army Corps of Engineers and the Missile Defense Agency to construct facilities capable of supporting more than 200 U.S. military personnel, government civilians and contractors who will man the AAMDS site and support its operations.

"We are incredibly proud to be able to construct and deliver the newest U.S. Navy base," said Dagon. "Not only does it strengthen NATO's defensive posture in this part of the world, but it also demonstrates the valuable and effective partnerships between the U.S. and Poland."

Following acceptance of the new support facilities by the Navy earlier this year, NSF Redzikowo and AAMDS Poland began the process of relocating from temporary offices into the administration building and MPF in late June. Sailors will transition from off-base housing into new living quarters at the MPF in early 2021.

NSF Redzikowo's operations enable the responsiveness of U.S. and allied forces in support of Navy Region EURAFCENT's mission to provide services to the fleet, fighter, and family throughout the European, African and Central Command theaters of operation.