Navy Surface Chief: Zumwalt 'Will Bring the Fear of God to Our Adversaries'



The guided-missile destroyer USS Zumwalt sits pierside while participating in San Francisco Fleet Week in October. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Peter Burghart

ARLINGTON, Va. – The admiral in charge of the Navy's surface warships praised the Zumwalt-class guided-missile destroyers (DDGs) and predicted that they will be fearsome warships.

"I'm very excited about getting the Zumwalt-class destroyers out there," Vice Adm. Rich Brown, commander of Naval Surface Forces, said during a Jan. 6 media teleconference embargoed until Jan. 13. "Incredibly capable ships. When the ships deploy, they will bring the fear of God to our adversaries. I wish we were building more of them. They are great ships."

The USS Zumwalt (DDG 1000), still in its build phase under a split-phase delivery, has been going through installation of its combat systems installed in San Diego since its commissioning in Baltimore and its transit through the Panama Canal to San Diego. The installations included the SPY-3 radar, the testing of the radar and the combat systems, the testing of the integrated power system, the testing of the hull form in light and heavy weather.

"We still have a little bit of work on the installation of the aviation facilities," Brown said, noting that the ship will be going through combat system qualification trials and full employment of the weapon system.

Zumwalt "is tracking right on the timeline … and it's looking like [fiscal 2021] will be FOC [full operational capability]," he said.

The second ship of the class, USS Michael Monsoor (DDG 1001), is deep into its combat systems installation, Brown said. “It’s not taking near as along as Zumwalt – Zumwalt was the first, a lot of lessons learned from BAE [Systems] on that installation, and Michael Monsoor’s installation is tracking right along.

The admiral said that the Zumwalt will deploy in fiscal 2021.

The third ship of the class, Lyndon B. Johnson (DDG 1002), is being built at the Bath Iron Works in Bath, Maine.

“We’re looking at various options to keep her on track,” Brown said. “Right now, there is a little bit of slippage in schedule, but there are a lots of things that the contractor and the Navy are going to do keep her delivering when we want her to with a full combat system. There are some options we can do that I can’t really talk about right now.”