

Navy Tackling Shipyard Inefficiencies That Leave Fleet Lagging



The USS Boise, shown here in 2014, has been waiting 18 months for its required yard period. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Daniel M. Young

NATIONAL HARBOR,

Md. – The Navy is investing \$21 billion in a multiphase program to improve the

efficiency of its government shipyards, which have struggled to get ships and

submarines back into service on time. The program is called the Shipyard

Industrial Optimization Plan, said Steve Lagana, program manager for the plan

in the Naval Sea Systems Command Industrial Division.

Speaking at a NAVSEA

briefing at the Navy League's annual Sea-Air-Space exposition May 7, Lagana

said the plan was developed in response to criticism from Congress, which has

complained about ships and submarines languishing in the yards or unable to get

in for required maintenance. A prime example of the problem is the three Los

Angeles-class attack boats that have lost their certification to sail due to

the overdue maintenance. The USS Boise has been waiting 18 months for its

required yard period.

The plan was

developed by a team of 40 engineers, Lagana said. The first two phases of the plan were surveys of the yards and detailed analysis of the problems. Those studies showed enormous inefficiencies created by the physical layout of the yards, which had facilities providing parts or services to the dry docks in some cases more than a mile apart.

Lagana showed diagrams of the existing arrangements at the major yards and the planned realignments, which would produce more compact and efficient facilities. At the Puget Sound and Norfolk yards, the facilities serving submarines and nuclear-power carriers would be separated and combined with their supporting components.

"This is a whole new way of thinking about the problem," Lagana said. Ships in the yards do not produce a lethal Navy, he said.