

Navy to Christen Littoral Combat Ship Canberra



The crew of USS Mobile (LCS 26), man the ship during the commissioning ceremony of Mobile. The newest Independence-class LCS, the future USS Canberra (LCS 30), will be christened June 5. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Alex Millar*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy will christen its newest Independence-variant littoral combat ship (LCS), the future USS Canberra (LCS 30), during a 12 p.m. CDT ceremony Saturday, June 5 in Mobile, Alabama, the Defense Department said in a June 4 release.

The Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Senator the Honourable Marise Payne, serves as the ship's sponsor. As she is unable to attend, His Excellency the Honourable Arthur Sinodinos, Australian Ambassador to the United States, will deliver the christening ceremony's principal address. Todd Schafer, acting assistant secretary of the Navy (Energy, Installations, and Environment) and Vice Adm. Ricky Williamson, deputy chief of naval operations for Fleet Readiness and Logistics (N4) will also provide remarks. In a time-honored Navy tradition, the Australian Ambassador's wife, Elizabeth Anne Sinodinos, will break a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow on behalf of Foreign Minister Payne.

"Tomorrow we christen the second USS Canberra named for the great capital city of Australia, our stalwart ally and superb naval partner," said acting secretary of the Navy Thomas Harker. "In so doing we move one step closer to welcoming a new ship to Naval service and transitioning the platform from a mere hull number to a ship with a name and spirit. There is no doubt future Sailors aboard this ship will carry on the same values of honor, courage and commitment upheld by crews

from an earlier vessel that bore this name.”

LCS is a fast, agile, mission-focused platform designed to operate in near-shore environments, winning against 21st-century coastal threats. The platform is capable of supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence.

The LCS class consists of two variants, the Freedom-variant and the Independence-variant, designed and built by two industry teams. The Freedom variant team is led by Lockheed Martin in Marinette, Wisconsin (for the odd-numbered hulls). The Independence-variant team is led by Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama, (for LCS 6 and the subsequent even-numbered hulls).

LCS 30 is the 15th Independence-variant LCS and 30th in class. It is the second ship named in honor of the city of Canberra. The first USS Canberra (CA 70) was laid down as USS Pittsburgh on Sept. 3, 1941, and renamed Canberra on Oct. 15, 1942. She was named in honor of the Australian heavy cruiser HMAS Canberra, which sank after receiving heavy damage during the Battle of Savo Island.

CA 70 was the first U.S. Navy cruiser named for a foreign capital. USS Canberra (CA 70) received seven battle stars for her service in World War II. In May 1958, Canberra served as the ceremonial flagship for the selection of the Unknown Serviceman of World War II and Korea. Canberra was decommissioned in a ceremony on Feb. 2, 1970, at the San Francisco Bay Naval Shipyard. One of her propellers is preserved at the Los Angeles Maritime Museum, while the ship's bell was donated to the Australian National Maritime Museum in 2001.