Navy to Increase Berthing on Future Expeditionary Base Ships

The Expeditionary Sea Base USS Hershel “Woody” Williams (ESB 4) arrives at the Marathi NATO Pier Facility in Souda Bay, Greece, August 18, 2020. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Kelly M. Agee

ARLINGTON, Va. — The Navy is increasing the berthing on its fourth and fifth expeditionary sea base ships (ESBs) to meet the increasing operational demand this class of ships has experienced since it first deployed.

The Navy’s supervisor of Shipbuilding, Bath, Detachment San Diego, San Diego, California, awarded National Steel and Shipbuilding Co., San Diego, California, a $35.6 million fixed-price-incentive modification to previously-awarded contract to incorporate a modification to the ships’ forward house Habitability Modification in support of Expeditionary Sea Base (ESB) 6 and ESB 7, the Defense Department said in a Sept. 4 announcement.

“This Engineering Change Proposal is applicable to ESB 6 and ESB 7 to modify the existing ESB class berthing requirement to support an additional 100 military crewmembers and is deemed essential to Fleet operational requirements planned for this class of ships,” the announcement said.

The Navy has forward-deployed its first two ESBs. USS Lewis B. Puller (ESB 3) has been in the Persian Gulf and has supported mine countermeasures and special operations forces, among other roles. The USS Hershel “Woody” Williams (ESB 4) deployed this year to the Mediterranean Sea. The third ESB, Miguel Keith (ESB 5) has been delivered to the Navy.

Work is expected to be completed by January 2024.