Navy Unmanned Maritime Systems Office Expects Major Developments in Next Couple Years



The Orca extra-large UUV recently completed its design stage. Lockheed Martin

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The Navy's Unmanned Maritime Systems program office is juggling the development of a lot of unmanned surface and underwater vehicles right now, and they expect numerous big developments for several programs in the next year or two.

Capt. Pete Small, Unmanned Maritime Systems program manager, told attendees at the Navy League's Sea-Air-Space symposium May 6 that a new draft request for proposals was recently released for a medium unmanned surface vehicle (USV), and the Navy was "aggressively" moving forward with that program.

The Navy is also accelerating a large USV program, and an analysis of alternatives for that effort will wrap up by the end of this year, Small added. The program hopes for a fiscal 2020 start for that platform, and Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson personally wants to see the project bear fruit "ASAP," the captain said.

On the unmanned underwater vehicles (UUV) side of the house, the extra-large UUV Orca recently finished the design phase. It will feature a modular payload and the Navy hopes to take delivery at the end of calendar year 2020, with buys continuing through 2022, Small said.

The Snakehead large-displacement UUV is expected to complete its critical design review this quarter, and the Navy hopes to

have it in the water by fiscal 2021.

And the Razorback, slated for the fiscal 2020 timeframe, would be hosted on a submarine and the Navy is developing a torpedo tube-launched version. The Navy recently issued a request for information on that project and received some responses from industry.