Official: Navy Seeking 18 LAW Ships in POM-25



The Light Amphibious Warship will be much larger than this utility landing craft, and it will also have the ability to discharge its cargo and passengers onto unprepared shores. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Keith Nowak*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy will attempt to "lock in" a plan to procure 18 light amphibious warfare (LAW) ships in the Defense Department's Program Objective Memorandum-2025 (POM-25), Marine Corps Brig. Gen. Marcus Annibale, director of expeditionary warfare (OPNAV N95), said at the Surface Navy Association's annual symposium on Jan. 11.

"The light amphibious warship will birth a new class of ships," Annibale said. "And the inventory goal is 18 [for the] initial capacity. That's mapped to the Marine Littoral

Regiment."

Last April, SEAPOWER reported that the Marine Corps planned to least two commercial ships over the next two years to experiment with the LAW ship concept known as landing ship medium (LSM), according to Brig. Gen. Mark Clingan, assistant deputy commandant for Combat Development and Integration and deputy commanding general of Marine Corps Combat Development Command.

A LAW/LSM ship would be designed to carry 75 Marines in a Marine Littoral Regiment and land them ashore in an expeditionary environment. These ships would be less attractive targets for enemy missiles than a larger amphibious warfare ship, Clingan remarked.

Annibale also said that he remained focused on a capacity goal of 31 amphibious ships for the Marines: 10 LHA/LHD large-deck amphibs, and 21 LPD/LSD amphibious transport docks.

Mine Countermeasures

Another priority is to deliver the Mine Countermeasures Mission (MCM) package for the Independence-class Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), he said.

"The MCM mission package is on the cusp of IOC [initial operational capability]," Annibale said. "The USS Cincinnati is doing trials on it.

"We don't want to put the man in the minefield, we want to put the sensor in the minefield," he continued, noting that allies such as the Dutch and Belgians are involved from a NATO standpoint. "So very exciting times on all the capabilities that go with the MCM mission package."