On-Time Delivery of Navy Ships from Maintenance Alleviates Shipyard Capacity Shortage



Vice Adm. William J. Galinis relieves Vice Adm.Thomas J. Moore as commander of Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) during a change of command ceremony in Leutze Park at the Washington Navy Yard earlier this year. U.S. Navy / Laura Lakeway

ARLINGTON, Va. – As the Navy pushes the efforts to reduce the days of maintenance delays to ships in maintenance, the achievement of on-time delivery of ships from their maintenance availabilities in itself will help alleviate shortages in shipyard capacity, said the commander of Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA).

Vice Adm. William Galinis, the NAVSEA commander, speaking to the Defense Writers Group during a Nov. 12 webinar, listed as his No. 1 priority the on-time delivery of ships, submarines and systems, including new construction vessels and those going through maintenance and modernization availabilities.

Galinis said, "getting after the planning piece" right and ensuring that long-lead materials are ordered and received on time goes a long way to being ready to execute construction or maintenance when a ship comes in the yard for an availability.

"We've got maintenance issues within some of our repair yards and in some phases of our new-construction yards that we have to get after," Galinis said. "We're working with industry on how we get after that. If you get ships through the shipyards on the plan that you initially envisioned, that in itself will free up capacity."

The admiral said, “there are shipyards out there that we have not fully tapped into. There’s an opportunity to bring other shipyards into the mix on the maintenance side.”

He said his command is looking at the maintenance capacity “inside the public yards and how much of that work do we really need to push out to the private sector. Our private-sector submarine yards are interested in that type of work. Whet we need to do is show a good requirement and what the workload would look like.”

The Navy improved its ship maintenance backlog in fiscal 2020 over 2019, reducing days of maintenance delay lost ship days from more than 7,000 to about 1,000, Galinis said, an 80% improvement, though because of some re-baselining the percentage “is closer to 40% with the original baseline,” he said.

“We’re not going to get to zero in 2021,” he said, but noted the improvement in performance was positive and that “60% to 70% of availabilities were tracking to on-time delivery.”

He said there was a handful of ships – including four Ticonderoga-class cruisers in the Cruiser Modernization Program and the fire-damaged Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Oscar Austin – that were delayed significantly and skewing the days of maintenance delays metric. He said the Navy is going to re-baseline the Cruiser Modernization program.