

Saudi LCS Construction to Begin by End of 2019



The Saudi version of the LCS will be modeled off of the Freedom-class littoral combat ships, like the USS Sioux City (LCS 11) and USS Milwaukee (LCS 5) shown here. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Marianne Guemo

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – Construction on a version of the Littoral Combat Ship for the government of Saudi Arabia is on track to start by the end of this calendar year, according to a Navy official.

Ghadeer Halim, deputy program manager for International Small Combatants (PMS 525), said after a presentation from her program office at Navy League's Sea-Air-Space symposium May 6 that the current plan calls for the construction of four LCSs for the Saudi government with the option for four more for a possible total of eight ships.

Lockheed Martin was awarded a \$282 million contract for design and materials for the construction of the four Multi-Mission Surface Combatant ships back in November.

The ships will differ from the U.S. Navy LCS in that the module will be permanent and fixed rather than replaceable with a different module.

The United States and Saudi Arabia came to an agreement on an \$11.2 billion deal back in 2015 that included a modified version of the LCS.

The ship would be based on Lockheed's Freedom-class LCS, one of two different LCS types. (Austal USA builds the Independence-class.)