Sea-Air-Space 2021 Prequel: CNO Describes the Fleet of 2025



Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Adm. Mike Gilday speaks to 1st Class midshipmen during his visit to the U.S. Naval Academy in April. *U.S. NAVY / Midshipman 1st Class Tommy Brophy*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy's top officer has described what he sees the U.S. Fleet will look like in 2025, a benchmark which he says the Navy will have made investments so that the fleet will have made notable strides with fielding increased combat capability.

CNO Adm. Michael Gilday, speaking in a prerecorded webinar of the Navy League's Sea-Air-Space Prequel, listed some of the major platforms and weapons that will make the fleet more capable by 2025:

Under the sea:

- “All of our Block III and IV [Virginia-class attack submarines] should be delivered by 2025 with an undersea weapon that is more lethal and has greater range.”

On the sea:

- “We [will be] just on the cusp of delivering our first Constellation-class frigate.”
- “We will be delivering the [Arleigh Burke-class] Flight III DDGs in earnest.”
- “We are investing in a longer-range weapon, the Maritime Strike Tomahawk that gives us range and speed to reach out and touch an adversary.”
- “We believe that we will be delivering the Zumwalt-class destroyers with a hypersonic missile capability.”

In the air:

- “We’ll have half of our [carrier] air wings [with] a fourth- and fifth-generation mix [of strike fighters], which analysis has shown to be quite effective against our adversaries. Tied in with that is a longer-range air-to-surface missile that gives us greater reach and greater punch.”
- “Our P-8s [maritime patrol reconnaissance aircraft] we are investing in with an upgrade.”

“All of that is coming into play by 2025,” the admiral noted. “So, we do have an investment strategy that incrementally gets us to a more capable, lethal fleet – not necessarily a bigger fleet – unless we saw a rise in the [budget] topline.”