

SECNAV Del Toro Names Future Virginia-class Submarines SSN 814, SSN 815, and SSN 816



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WASHINGTON – Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced the names of three Virginia-class submarines to be the future USS Potomac (SSN 814), the future USS Norfolk (SSN 815), and the future USS Brooklyn (SSN 816)

Secretary Del Toro detailed the announcement Jan. 13 during video remarks directed to the Department of Navy's (DoN) submarine community.

"Today's submarine force is the most capable force in the world and in the history of U.S. Navy," said Secretary Del Toro. "It is my honor and privilege to announce the names of the future submarines which will protect us from deep below

the ocean's waves."

Secretary Del Toro previously named USS Long Island (SSN 809), USS San Francisco (SSN 810), USS Miami (SSN 811), USS Baltimore (SSN 812), and USS Atlanta (SSN 813).

The naming of the future USS Potomac (SSN 814) honors a river on the Eastern seaboard of the United States and six prior ships so named. Rising in West Virginia and emptying into Chesapeake Bay, the Potomac's banks are home to Washington, District of Columbia, and running through three states.

The first Potomac was a frigate laid down in the Washington Navy Yard in 1819. She served in the Pacific, the Mexican-American War, and the Civil War. The second Potomac was part of the "Stone Fleet" to block the entrances to Confederate harbors. The third Potomac (AT-50) was acquired for service in the Spanish-American War, later serving as a fleet and submarine tender, as well as supporting Marine Corps operations in the West Indies. The fourth Potomac (AG-125) was launched as the Coast Guard ship Electra, but taken into Navy service in 1935 to serve as President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's yacht. She is preserved as a museum ship in Oakland, California. The fifth Potomac (T-AO-150) was wrecked by a fatal fire at a refueling pier in 1961, after which the forward part of the ship was declared a total loss. Rebuilt, she served in the Military Sea Transportation Service as Shenandoah. She became the sixth Potomac (T-AO-181) in 1976 when accepted back into Navy service as part of Military Sealift Command. In 1990 she joined the Maritime Administration's Maritime Prepositioning Force. She took part in the Persian Gulf War, provided humanitarian relief during the Rwandan Genocide, supported military operations in Bosnia, and assisted Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

The future USS Norfolk (SSN 815) honors the city of Norfolk, VA (2023 pop. 230,930) and three previous U.S. Navy vessels: a brigantine (1798–1800); destroyer leader DL-1 (1953–1970); and

Los Angeles-Class nuclear attack submarine SSN-714 (1983–2015). The first Norfolk undertook convoy duty during the Quasi-War with France to protect American commerce. The second Norfolk served as an antisubmarine hunter-killer ship in the Atlantic. The third and most recent Norfolk spent her time in the silent service conducting operations in the Atlantic during both the Cold War and the Global War on Terror.

Founded in 1682, the city grew into a major center of trade and shipbuilding, with Gosport Shipyard (present-day Norfolk Naval Shipyard) in particular playing a critical role in both the city and the Navy's development. The shipyard completed construction of Chesapeake, one of the original six frigates, in 1799. The Federal Government subsequently purchased the shipyard in 1801. From this point on, the Navy's presence would only continue to grow, leading to the eventual establishment of Naval Operating Base Hampton Roads (present-day Naval Station Norfolk) in 1917. As of 2024, Norfolk and the surrounding area hosts over 82,000 active-duty military personnel and multiple installations including Naval Station Norfolk, which is now the world's largest naval station, and Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads, which serves as headquarters for U.S. Fleet Forces and NATO Allied Command Transformation.

The future USS Brooklyn (SSN 816) is named to honor the New York City borough of Brooklyn (2020 pop. 2,736,074) and three previous Navy vessels: a screw sloop of war (1859–1889), armored cruiser CA-3 (1896–1921), and light cruiser CL-40 (1937–1947). The first Brooklyn participated in the U.S. Navy blockade of the Confederacy and fought at both the Battle of Mobile Bay and Fort Fisher. CA-3 also proved her mettle in battle, playing an important role at the Battle of Santiago de Cuba in 1898 during the Spanish-American War. Finally, CL-40 participated in antisubmarine warfare operations in the Caribbean during WWII, as well as the Allied invasions of

North Africa, Sicily, Anzio, and southern France, earning four battle stars in the process.

Founded by Dutch settlers in the 17th century on the western edge of Long Island on lands inhabited by the Lenape tribe, Brooklyn was incorporated as a city in 1834 and subsequently consolidated into New York City in 1898 as one of its five boroughs. Critical to Brooklyn's growth and development was the Brooklyn Navy Yard, which was established in 1801. During its 165-year history, the navy yard constructed some of the Navy's most famous vessels, including second-class battleship Maine, battleship Arizona (Battleship No. 39), and battleship Missouri (BB-63). Although it closed in 1966, the Navy Yard continues to serve as an industrial park, playing a vital role in Brooklyn's ongoing economic development.

Along with the ship names, Del Toro has also selected the sponsors for the three newly named submarines. The sponsor plays an important role in the life of each ship and is typically selected because of a relationship to the namesake or to the ship's current mission. In their role as the ship's sponsor, they will represent a lifelong relationship with the ship and crew. The following individuals were identified as sponsors:

Lisa Collis, spouse of Sen. Warner, will sponsor the future USS Potomac (SSN 814).

Ann Holton, spouse of Sen. Kaine, will sponsor the future USS Norfolk (SSN 815).

Dorothy McAuliffe, spouse of former Virginia Gov. McAuliffe, will sponsor the future USS Brooklyn (SSN 816).

Attack submarines are designed to seek and destroy enemy submarines and surface ships; project power ashore with Tomahawk cruise missiles and Special Operation Forces (SOF); carry out Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) missions; support battle group operations; and engage in mine

warfare.