

**Small Relieves Downey as
Commander Naval Sea Systems
Command**



Vice Adm. James P. Downey was relieved of his dual-hatted role as Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) by Rear Adm.

Pete Small and as Portfolio Acquisition Executive Industrial Operations (PAE IO) by Rear Adm. Todd Weeks during a joint change of office and command ceremony on the Washington Navy Yard, Aug. 6.

Admiral James W. Kilby served as the ceremony's presiding officer and highlighted Downey's extensive contributions to fleet readiness and the Navy's acquisition enterprise.

Downey served as Commander of NAVSEA since January 2024.

"What we do and how we treat people matters," said Downey. "This legacy strengthens the Navy and all of us who ready the ships that our warfighters take to sea. As you press forward, set your steady course by the stars that matter most: our Sailors, our Marines, our government and industry civilians and contractors. Set your course by our mission. It is noble and enduring."

Rear Adm. Pete Small assumes acting command of NAVSEA following a dual-role assignment as NAVSEA's Chief Engineer and NAVSEA Deputy Commander for Naval Systems Engineering since June 2024, and as Commander, Naval Surface and Undersea Warfare Centers since June 2025.

Serving as a vital link between the technical community and warfighters, Small facilitated close coordination between NAVSEA Engineering and the warfare centers.

Under his leadership, NAVSEA accelerated the delivery of new technologies, sustainment solutions, and engineering support to program offices, depots, and fleet customers, directly aligning with the command's mission to accelerate force generation and fleet readiness.

"I am honored to take the helm of this fantastic organization and to continue the progress we've made to accelerate force generation and deliver readiness in support of our Fleet and Acquisition partners," said Small.

During Downey's tenure leading a global workforce of 90,000 personnel and managing a \$55 billion annual budget, he championed a culture of servant leadership that broke down bureaucratic silos and drove historic improvements in fleet readiness. Under his command, the NAVSEA Enterprise achieved a 30 percent increase in submarine maintenance throughput, reduced work stoppages by 40 percent, spearheaded a historic breakthrough in Navy financial auditability, and led the Navy's rapid salvage response to the Francis Scott Key Bridge collapse.

Following the change of office and change of command, Downey is slated to retire after 40 years of distinguished and dedicated service to the U.S. Navy.