Statement from CNO on Discovery of the Location of the Wreck of Destroyer USS Edsall (DD-219)

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Chief of Naval Operations / Admiral

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On behalf of the United States Navy, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Royal Australian Navy for locating the final resting place of the destroyer USS Edsall (DD 219), lost in a valiant battle against the Imperial Japanese Navy in the early days of World War II. The commanding officer of Edsall lived up to the U.S. Navy tenet, “Don’t give up the ship,” even when faced with overwhelming odds. The wreck of this ship is a hallowed site, serving as a marker for the 185 U.S. Navy personnel and 31 U.S. Army Air Force pilots aboard at the time, almost all of whom were lost when Edsall

succumbed to her battle damage. This find gives us the opportunity for today’s generation of Sailors and Navy civilians to be inspired by their valor and sacrifice.

The U.S. Navy would also like to take this opportunity to salute the valor of the crew of the Australian sloop HMAS Yarra, lost two days after the Edsall, under similar circumstances in a heroic battle against overwhelming odds.

Finding the Edsall further cements the strong alliance that has existed between the United States and Australia since World War II, the relationship between the Royal Australian Navy and the U.S. Navy, further reinforced by the current Australia, United Kingdom, United States (AUKUS) trilateral security partnership. A key component of AUKUS is the development of the most cutting-edge underwater technologies of the type that enabled the discovery of Edsall in the vastness of the Indian Ocean, something not possible just a few years ago. These advanced technologies, enabled by interoperability between long-standing Indo-Pacific Allies and partners, ensure our collective capability to preserve the peace, respond in crisis, and win decisively in war, if called.