USS Gerald R. Ford Set for 11 At-Sea Periods for Tests and Trials

The aircraft crash and salvage crane aboard the aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford lifts an F/A-18 Hornet training shell during a general quarters training evolution on the ship's flight deck. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Zack Guth

ARLINGTON, Va. — The U.S. Navy's newest aircraft carrier will go through a rigorous period of tests and trials over the rest of fiscal 2020, a Navy official said.

Speaking Jan. 16 at the Surface Navy Association gathering here, Capt. Ron Rutan, the Navy's program manager for the USS Gerald R. Ford, lead ship of its class, said the ship gets underway "11 times over 220 days" starting Jan. 16, continuing 18 months of post-delivery testing and trials, which will run into through the second quarter of fiscal 2021.

Rutan said the ship will have contractor personnel on board continuing work while the ship is at sea. The Navy plans to complete work on the seven Advanced Weapon Elevators that have not yet been certified. He said that four others already have been certified and they have been put through more than 5,000 cycles, including runs while the carrier has been put through high-speed turns that simulated Sea State 5.

One of the 11

events this quarter of the fiscal year will be used to certify the ship’s
flight deck.

The carrier
is scheduled for full-ship shock trials during the third or fourth quarters of
fiscal 2021.