

USS Oakland Commissioning Ceremony Set for April 17



The USS Independence, a sister ship to the future USS Oakland, which will be commissioned on Saturday, April 17. *U.S. NAVY* ARLINGTON – The Navy's newest Freedom-variant littoral combat ship, the future USS Oakland (LCS 24), will be commissioned at 10:00 a.m. PST on Saturday, April 17, 2021 in Oakland, California, the Defense Department said in an April 16 release.

Due to public health and safety concerns related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the commissioning will be a private event. The ceremony will be live-streamed for those unable to attend. The following link will become active approximately five minutes prior to the event (9:55 a.m. PST): <https://allhands.navy.mil/Live-Stream>.

Acting Secretary of the Navy Thomas W. Harker, will deliver

the commissioning ceremony's principal address. Ms. Kate Brandt, Google sustainability officer, is the ship's sponsor. The ceremony will be highlighted by a time-honored Navy tradition when Ms. Brandt gives the order to "man our ship and bring her to life!"

Cmdr. Francisco X. Garza, a native of Phoenix, Arizona, is the ship's commanding officer and leads a crew of 70 officers and enlisted personnel. The 3,200-ton Oakland was built by General Dynamics/Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama. The ship is 421 feet in length, has a beam of 103 feet, and a navigational draft of 15 feet. The ship is powered by two gas turbine engines, two main propulsion diesel engines, and four waterjets to reach speeds up to 40-plus knots.

"The USS Oakland crew is excited and ready to bring our ship to life and join the fleet," said Garza. "We are privileged to be a part of this ship and embody the spirit of the people of Oakland. As plank owners and future crew members build a positive legacy for this ship, the city of Oakland will experience those successes with us."

Oakland is the third ship to bear the name. She is the 12th Independence-variant LCS and the 297th ship to join our battle force. The littoral combat ship is a fast, agile, focused-mission platform designed to operate in near-shore environments, while capable of open-ocean tasking and winning against 21st-century coastal threats such as submarines, mines, and swarming small craft. The LCS is capable of supporting forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence.

USS Oakland will be homeported at Naval Base San Diego, California.