

# NAVSEA Assumes Maintenance Functions for SRF-JRMC

WASHINGTON – Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA), formally assumed responsibility for ship maintenance availabilities at U.S. Naval Ship Repair Facility and Japan Regional Maintenance Center (SRF-JRMC) from commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet (USPACFLT), Oct. 1, NAVSEA said in a release.

NAVSEA's responsibilities include the oversight of all ship maintenance and repair operations, industrial processes and procedures, and repair-related programs. USPACFLT will retain administrative control and budget authority for SRF-JRMC.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for the Navy to implement best practices across all ship maintenance facilities," said NAVSEA Commander, Vice Adm. Tom Moore. "The added synergy will allow us to deliver ships out of maintenance on time and within cost. SRF-JRMC is an outstanding command with a proud and rich history of ensuring the readiness of our forward deployed ships.

"We are thrilled to have them join the One NAVSEA Team. This change will help ensure that the exceptional workforce of SRF-JRMC can benefit from the maintenance expertise NAVSEA brings, putting into practice lessons learned to ensure a streamlined approach to ship maintenance across the fleet."

Following the 2017 Comprehensive Review and Strategic Readiness Review, the Navy determined that NAVSEA's technical expertise and proven maintenance processes could be harnessed to ensure the delivery of materially-ready ships to USPACFLT.

"NAVSEA is looking forward to directly supporting USPACFLT and providing a smooth transition to ensure alignment of maintenance industrial operations for SRF-JRMC," Moore said. "As the Force Behind the Fleet, NAVSEA is dedicated to

delivering deployable ships to the fleet on time and on budget.”

In addition to SRF-JRMC, NAVSEA oversees ship maintenance at the Navy’s four public shipyards and seven regional maintenance centers.

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## **Navy Air Warfare Director: C-130 Fleet Will be Full Up in Fiscal 2019**

WASHINGTON – The Navy expects to have all of its C-130 Hercules transport aircraft back flying this fiscal year after grounding many for problems with their propellers.

“We’ll have all the aircraft up by FY ’19 and all the aircraft to the NP2000 [propeller] by FY ’20,” said Rear Adm. Scott D. Conn, director of Air Warfare in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, testifying Sept. 28 before the House Armed Services Seapower and Projection Forces subcommittee.

The Navy Reserve operates 24 C-130T and KC-130T transports, as well as 15 C-40A Skytrain II airlift jets. They are used to support deployed fleet operations by transporting personnel, cargo, spare parts and mail to ships and stations. The C-130 will become even more important in the future.

“The C-130T is the only Navy aircraft capable of moving all modules of the F-35’s engine,” Conn said.

Many Navy and Marine Corps C-130s were grounded as a precaution after a Marine Corps Reserve KC-130T crashed in Mississippi in July 2017, with the possibility that a

propeller separated from an engine and cut through the fuselage. The crash killed 15 Marines and one Sailor.

Congress supported the Navy in procuring new propeller blades and new NP2000 propellers for the legacy C-130Ts and KC-130Ts with \$121 million.

The Air Force and Navy formed an Independent Review Team at Warner Robins air logistics complex in Georgia to revamp C-130 propeller overhaul requirements, with the Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and partner-nation C-130 operators also invested in the process.

The logistics complex began build-up of 54 propellers in March in support of naval C-130s. The propellers were assembled using new production blades procured from the original equipment manufacturer who currently is increasing delivery from 30 a month to 48 a month by October, Air Force Lt. Gen. Donald E. Kirkland, commander of the Air Force Sustainment Center, also testified at the hearing.

The Navy also is upgrading the mission systems of its C-130s.

“For fiscal 2019 the Navy requested \$28.5 million for avionics and communications obsolescence upgrades to keep the aircraft compliant with FAA and ICAO [International Civil Aviation Organization] standards to be able to enter air traffic management systems throughout the world,” Conn said. “These modernization efforts are critical to maintaining Navy logistics support to our deployed forces.”

The Navy completed procurement of the C-130Ts in 1996.

“We’re now looking at recapitalizing our effort beginning with advance procurement and buying three [C-130J] aircraft in FY ’23,” Conn said.

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# **HII                    Awarded                    Advance Procurement Contract for 11th NSC**

PASCAGOULA, Miss. – Huntington Ingalls Industries' (HII's) Ingalls Shipbuilding division received a \$97 million fixed-price contract from the U.S. Coast Guard on Sept. 28 to purchase long-lead materials for an 11th national security cutter (NSC).

“Every National Security Cutter built at Ingalls Shipbuilding is an immediate and important defender of America’s shores when it joins the fleet,” said Ingalls Shipbuilding President Brian Cuccias. “This long-lead material award is critical to the efficient production of these platforms and to the health of our 422 suppliers in 40 states. We look forward to building and delivering another quality ship for the Coast Guard.”

The advance procurement funds will be used to purchase major components for NSC 11, such as steel, the main propulsion systems, generators, electrical switchboards and major castings.

Ingalls has delivered seven NSCs, the flagship of the Coast Guard’s cutter fleet, designed to replace the 12 Hamilton-class high-endurance cutters that entered service in the 1960s.

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# President Signs Budget Boosting Navy Ship, Aircraft Procurement

ARLINGTON, Va. – The fiscal 2019 defense budget, part of a multiagency appropriations bill signed into law Sept. 28 by President Donald J. Trump, reflects the will of Congress to plus-up Navy Department ship and aircraft procurement.

The law appropriates \$606.5 billion for base defense spending and \$67.9 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations funds, totaling \$675 billion. This is \$20.4 billion over fiscal 2018 funding levels and matches the fiscal 2019 request.

The law, the first defense budget in 10 years that was passed before the fiscal year it funds began, added two littoral combat ships, two F-35B and four F-35C Lightning II strike fighters, two E-2D Advanced Hawkeye early warning aircraft and seven MV-22B/CMV-22B Osprey tiltrotor transport aircraft. The law deleted funding for two C-40A Skytrain II transport aircraft.

The law funds 13 ships in 2019 at \$24 billion, \$2.3 billion more than the Navy's request. These include:

- Two Virginia-class attack submarines (\$4.3 billion)
- Three Arleigh Burke-class Flight III guided-missile destroyers (\$5.3 billion)
- Three littoral combat ships (\$1.6 billion)
- One expeditionary sea base ship (\$647 million)
- One Spearhead-class expeditionary fast transport (\$225 million)
- Two John Lewis-class fleet replenishment oilers (\$1 billion)
- One towing, rescue and salvage ship (\$80.5 million)

The law also funded advance procurement for several ships:

- \$350 million for an LPD Flight II amphibious transport dock

ship

- \$350 million for the LHA 9 amphibious assault ship
- \$250 million to purchase an additional Arleigh Burke guided-missile destroyer in fiscal 2020
- \$3 billion to support the construction of the Columbia-class ballistic-missile submarine
- Adds \$18 million for industry studies and requirements definition for the Common Hull Auxiliary Multi-Mission Platform (CHAMP) to replace sealift and auxiliary vessels and directs the Navy to present an updated acquisition strategy for CHAMP.

Aircraft funded for fiscal 2019 (\$20 billion, \$1 billion more than the Navy's request) include:

- 22 F-35B and 13 F-35C Lightning II strike fighters (\$3.5 billion)
- 24 F/A-18E/F Super Hornet strike fighters (\$1.9 billion)
- 10 P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft (\$1.8 billion)
- Nine E-2D Advanced Hawkeye early warning aircraft (\$1.1 billion)
- Three MQ-4C Triton maritime patrol UAVs (\$544 million)
- Two KC-130J Super Hercules refueler/transport (\$150 million)
- 13 MV-22B and CMV-22B Osprey tiltrotor transports (\$1.1 billion)
- Eight CH-53K King Stallion heavy-lift helicopters (\$1 billion)
- 25 AH-1Z Viper attack helicopters (\$798 million)
- Six VH-92A presidential transport helicopters (\$49 million)

Sara Fuentes, staff vice president, legislative relations, contributed to this report.

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# Marine Corps Awards Contract for Lighter Body Armor System

MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO, Va.— Marine Corps Systems Command (MCSC) has awarded a contract to produce Plate Carrier Generation IIIs (PC Gen IIIs) – a move that will help Marines increase their mobility and keep them safe through training and deployments.

Vertical Protective Apparel, LLC, of Shrewsbury, New Jersey, was awarded a \$62.6 million firm-fixed-price, indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract to produce and deliver the PC Gen IIIs. A maximum quantity of 225,886 will be delivered, and the work will be completed by September 2023.

The PC Gen III is a body armor system that provides increased mobility, improved fit, lighter weight and additional modularity to support various types of missions. Compared to the legacy system, the PC Gen III offers increased ballistic protection and will be available in eight sizes to allow for a more customized fit across the Marine Corps.

“The legacy carrier fit the span of the Marine Corps, but this new system is more tailorable to fit Marines of various sizes with three new smaller-stature options,” said Flora “Mackie” Jordan, body armor engineer for the Infantry Combat Equipment Team at MCSC. “We wanted to give as much mobility back to Marines as possible by reducing the weight and bulk of the vest without decreasing ballistic protection. We were able to reduce the weight of the vest by 25 percent.”

The goal was to lighten the load Marines carry to reduce fatigue and improve their operational capability in the field. A few new features of the PC Gen III contributed to the weight reduction.

Excess material was removed from the shoulders and about an

inch-and-a-half was taken from the bottom, which provides better integration with the USMC Pack. The team also chose a laminated laser cut material that only absorbs seven percent of water compared to 70 percent with the legacy system.

“We made sure to get the best system for our Marines, which included choosing the best lightweight soft armor and the best quality when it comes to the cut and sew of the carrier,” said Mackie.

While conducting research, MCSC discovered Marines are eight percent faster when the PC Gen III systems were combined with prototype lightweight plates, compared to the Enhanced Small Arms Protective Inserts. They also found Marines could remove and reassemble the vest in less than three seconds.

“With the old system, it took about seven seconds to take it off, and 10 minutes to reassemble,” said project officer Capt. Frank Coppola, who helped test the vests. “The new quick release works a hundred times better. It has a vastly improved quick detach system for Marines to act fast while on missions.”

The PC Gen III is less bulky and easier for Marines to move in, especially when working in tight spaces. An inner vest was also added to increase modularity of the system. Marines can adjust it to meet the requirements and environment of their particular mission.

“Our vests have come a long way over the past 15 years, and the reduced weight and increased mobility is huge,” Coppola said. “The fact that we can decrease the size of the vest and still be protected is the key.”

Infantry, school house, and Reconnaissance Marines, along with vehicle crewmen and combat engineers will receive the vests when fielding begins in the third quarter of fiscal year 2019.

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# Navy Acquisition Chief: Navy Moving to Use Block Ship Maintenance Contracts

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy’s top acquisition official said the service is moving toward block bidding of ship maintenance rather than issuing contracts for single ship availabilities. The Navy also is working to rapidly address unplanned repair needs for its ships.

“We’ve got a real challenge and opportunity ahead on how we operate [the Navy’s] repair enterprise at speed,” James F. “Hondo” Geurts, assistant secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition, told reporters Sept. 26 at the Modern Day Marine expo in Quantico, Virginia. “We’ve already instituted a number of changes in contracting, how we deal with over-and-above and unplanned work.

“Traditionally, we’ve taken a very bureaucratic approach to resolve each one of those,” he said. “[We’re] coming up with a new contract mechanism that allows us to rapidly adapt to that unknown work as it pops up, so that we aren’t keeping ships in the yards longer than they have to be.”

Geurts said the Navy is “looking at how do we put multiple ships together so that there is a longer planning window and industry can provide better solutions because they have a longer-term look, whether that’s workforce, or training, or yard planning. Ideally, we would contract for all the ship repairs for the next six months in a block as opposed to our more traditional [method of] each ship’s repair independently. That way industry would better plan and [facilitate] for the

long haul.”

He also said that with the number of ship repairs needed, “we don’t have the capacity now without improving our efficiency and working with industry to figure how to become more efficient, as well as looking at their scale and how we bring more players into the marketplace to help us with that growing need.”

Geurts cited a recent request for proposals in which three or four repairs were bundled together in a single bidding action.

“We’ve revised how we’re doing this unplanned of over-and-above work, which is adding great efficiencies,” he said. “We have approved [the] grouping together of contracts.”

He also said the Navy conducted a survey of shipyards across the country, including those not currently doing business for the service, to determine repair capacity, location of dry docks, etc., “and proactively going out and, where there is opportunity, certifying those facilities and enabling them to compete and add into the marketplace.”

The Navy received last month feedback from shipyards numbering in “double digits.”

“Ultimately, we want a vibrant repair capability that can both do the work we know really well, efficiently and effectively, as well as give us capacity for work that we didn’t know as it pops up,” he said.

As to the block bidding, Geurts said that “if you have the right competitive market you will absolutely save money, because right now we’re doing it single bid by bid. It’s really hard for a company to do that efficiently.”

He also spoke of a workforce challenge across the country, “whether it’s in the public yards or in the private repair yards. We right now don’t have the full workforce we need to

meet the demand.”

Geurts sees the Navy’s efforts as “providing a better stability and a better planning horizon” for the ship maintenance enterprise.

According to the Marine Corps, fielding for the JLTV will begin in spring 2019. In all, the Army plans to purchase 49,000 JLTVs and the Marine Corps will purchase 9,091.

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## **Navy to Combine F-35C Replacement Training Squadrons in 2019**

Navy to Combine F-35C Replacement Training Squadrons in 2019 ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy plans to deactivate one of its two F-35C fleet replacement training squadrons next year and combine its aircraft and personnel within the other replacement training squadron.

According to a Navy internal directive dated Sept. 10, the Navy intends to deactivate Strike Fighter Squadron 101 (VFA-101) on July 1. VFA-101 is based at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, and is mainly involved in training instructor and test pilots for the F-35C.

The Navy will “realign” VFA-101 assets into VFA-125, the fleet replacement training squadron based at Naval Air Station (NAS) Lemoore, California.

“This will co-locate the fleet [replacement] squadron production of pilots directly into the operational squadrons scheduled for transition to F-35C and meet testing and

evaluation requirements for initial operating capability of VFA-147 as the first [F-35C] joint strike fighter deployer in fiscal year '21," the directive said. "The move of VFA-101 personnel and aircraft also supports Naval Aviation Warfighting Development Center advanced training at NAS Fallon, Nevada."

VFA-101, a former fleet replacement squadron for the F-14 Tomcat fighter, was reactivated in 2012 and began flying the F-35C in 2013.

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## **HII Lands New Radar Tower on USS George Washington**

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries' (HII's) Newport News Shipbuilding division has completed approximately 25 percent of the refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH) work aboard the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS George Washington following the recent landing of its modernized radar tower, the company said in a Sept. 21 release.

USS George Washington is the sixth Nimitz-class ship to undergo this major lifecycle milestone and the first to have its new radar tower installed as one complete structure instead of two individual units.

"This is a significant engineering, planning and construction improvement," said Chris Miner, Newport News' vice president, in-service aircraft carrier programs. "This lift was the result of our digital shipbuilding efforts to harness the use of technology, including visual work instructions that allowed us to increase efficiency and productivity. We look forward to continuing to work with our Navy customers to improve our RCOH

processes.”

The RCOH began under a planning contract in August 2017 and includes the refueling of the ship’s reactors as well as extensive modernization to more than 2,300 compartments, 600 tanks and hundreds of systems. In addition to the radar tower structure, major upgrades will be made to the island house, flight deck, catapults, combat systems and the island.

The overhaul is expected to be completed in late 2021.

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## **ONR Delivers Capability to Navy Divers**

ARLINGTON, Va. – For U.S. Navy deep-sea divers, time is of the essence. While operating 100 feet down, with little to no natural light – often in frigid temperatures and limited oxygen – time is everything.

But for divers, time remains a precious commodity on the surface as well.

For years, military divers have had to manually write and log information from dives while at sea into a system known as the Dive/Jump Reporting System (DJRS). Manually entering entries can be time-consuming and allow human error.

Enter the Office of Naval Research (ONR) Global TechSolutions program – a rapid-response science and technology program focused on solutions to problems submitted by Sailors and Marines.

ONR TechSolutions and industry partners have created a new tool called the Scuba Binary Dive Application (SBDA) 100 to

digitally plan, record and report dive-profile information to DJRS. The application will accelerate the process of logging and uploading dive information, and will help eliminate potential data-entry mistakes, ONR reported in a Sept. 19 release.

The idea originated from Force Master Diver Scott Brodeur, Naval Expeditionary Combat Command.

“Scott has completed over a thousand dives during his career and he recognized the need to make the logging and reporting process more efficient for his peers,” said Jason Payne, TechSolutions acting program manager.

The SBDA 100 is a software application on a ruggedized tablet used to log, compute and accurately compile dive-profile data.

The data – collected from a wrist watch that divers wear during operations called a Navy Diver Computer – includes dive site conditions, equipment used by the divers, dive events (such as when a diver left the surface or left the bottom of the ocean floor) and if the dive required decompression stops. SBDA 100 syncs this information and automatically uploads it to DJRS.

“For years, I witnessed how many hours it takes to manually log dives – watching the young guys that have to – at the end of a long 12- to 14-hour day – come back and manually go through the dive logs and write everything down, and double check it and triple check it,” said Brodeur.

During a recent training exercise in the Gulf of Mexico, Brodeur, the Naval Experimental Dive Unit and other U.S. Navy divers stationed around the globe had the opportunity to test the technology for the first time.

“The designers gave me a crash course on how to operate the technology,” said Chief Navy Diver Marshall Goble, ship repair facility, Yokosuka, Japan. “I used the device as a primary but

still used the 'old school' way and wrote down the information as well. Both calculations came out 100-percent accurate. I found the tablet easier to use, and I have no doubt it's going to streamline efficiency."

Throughout the process of the development of the SBDA 100, ONR TechSolutions has worked in conjunction with Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command (SPAWAR) Atlantic; industry partner Intelligent Automation Inc.; and Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Panama City, which is the home of the U.S. Naval Diving and Salvage Training Center. SPAWAR served as the principal investigator and NSWC Panama City provided technical support and hosted the training and demonstration of the SBDA 100 at sea.

"The technology has tested very well," said Brodeur. "It's a testament to the value of the ONR TechSolutions program and everyone who worked on this project. Witnessing this idea come to fruition and have it be built, demonstrated, designed and ready for use is pretty exciting."

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## **Coast Guard Updates North Carolina Hurricane Florence Response**

GOLDSBORO, N.C. – The Coast Guard continues to coordinate with federal, state and local agencies to respond to flooding from Hurricane Florence in North Carolina, the Coast Guard Hurricane Response Media Operations Centers said in a Sept. 18 release.

The service provided the following update of its activities,

which include:

- The Coast Guard has rescued 426 people and 234 pets since Hurricane Florence began.
- There are 26 shallow-water response boat teams deployed to North Carolina comprising 116 people.
- There are 191 Coast Guard members assigned to the North Carolina Incident Command Post in Goldsboro, North Carolina.
- There are four buoy tenders en route to Wanchese, Oak Island, and Atlantic City Beach to assess waterway and port conditions.

“Search and rescue remains the highest priority in the neighborhoods impacted by Hurricane Florence,” said Capt. Bion Stewart, leader of the Coast Guard’s response to Hurricane Florence in North Carolina. “We are also focusing on reopening the ports and waterways to support relief aid and resume commercial operations vital to North Carolina economy and national interesting, working alongside the North Carolina State Port Authority, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Army Corps of Engineers to open the Cape Fear River and Morehead City waterways with safety-focused restrictions this afternoon.”