

Navy to Christen Expeditionary Fast Transport Puerto Rico

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy will christen its newest Expeditionary Fast Transport, the future USNS Puerto Rico (T-EPF 11), during a ceremony Nov. 10 at the Austal USA shipyard in Mobile, Alabama, the Defense Department said in a release.

The principal speaker is congresswoman Jenniffer González-Colón, resident commissioner of Puerto Rico. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor will serve as the ship's sponsor. In a time-honored Navy tradition, she will christen the ship by breaking a bottle of sparkling wine across the bow.

“This ship honors the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the contributions Puerto Ricans have made to our nation and Navy and Marine Corps team,” said Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer. “USNS Puerto Rico will provide our commanders high-speed sealift mobility and agility and I am thankful for this ship, her crew, and our industrial force teammates whose service makes this great ship possible.”

The future USNS Puerto Rico will be the first active ship in naval service to honor the island in the West Indies east of Hispaniola. An Alaska-class cruiser named Puerto Rico was authorized July 19, 1940, but construction was canceled June 24, 1943.

With an all-aluminum shallow-draft hull, the EPF is a commercial-based catamaran capable of intra-theater personnel and cargo lift providing combatant commanders high-speed sealift mobility with inherent cargo handling capability and agility to achieve positional advantage over operational distances.

EPF-class ships are designed to transport 600 short tons of military cargo 1,200 nautical miles at an average speed of 35 knots. The ship is capable of operating in shallow-draft ports and waterways, interfacing with roll-on/roll-off discharge facilities, and on/off-loading a combat-loaded Abrams main battle tank (M1A2).

The EPF includes a flight deck for helicopter operations and an off-load ramp that will allow vehicles to quickly drive off the ship. EPF's shallow draft (under 15 feet) further enhances littoral operations and port access.

The EPF program delivered its ninth ship late last year, USNS City of Bismarck (T-EPF 9), with delivery of USNS Burlington (EPF 10) planned for mid-November. Puerto Rico and Newport (EPF 12) are currently under construction at Austal's shipyard.

Navy Submarine Warfare Director: Navy to Keep Columbia SSBN Line 'Hot' After 12th Boat

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy plans to keep the production line of the Columbia-class nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarine (SSBN) ready for new submarine production, the Navy's director for submarine warfare said.

"What we are going to do is we're going to keep the Columbia line hot," Rear Adm. John Tammen, said Nov. 8 at the Naval Submarine League's annual symposium. "That gives us the

option, if STRATCOM [U.S. Strategic Command] says we need more than 12, well then we can produce more than 12.”

Keeping the line open also may aid in a smoother transition to the Navy’s next submarines, possibly large mother ships for unmanned underwater vehicles and other types mission systems.

“If STRATCOM doesn’t need more than 12, then we’re looking at what we call the Large-Volume Host Platform, where we’ll take that center section – we haven’t nailed down the concept – but there will be the ability to host vehicles on board inside that center section,” Tammen said.

Also speaking at the symposium, Vice Adm. Johnny Wolfe, director of Strategic Systems Programs, noted that the Defense Department’s Nuclear Posture Review calls for a minimum of 12 Columbia-class SSBNs, not a hard limitation of 12 boats.

The design of the lead boat of the new class, Columbia, is 83 percent complete. Construction is scheduled to begin next year. The boat is scheduled for its first patrol in 2031.

Next Sub-Launched Ballistic Missile ‘Won’t Be Completely New’

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy’s next-generation submarine-launched missile (SLBM) will not be a completely new design but will incorporate some of the current Trident D5 Life-Extension (D5LE) version systems.

The follow-on missile is currently known as the Trident D5LE2, according to Vice Adm. Johnny Wolfe, director of Strategic

Systems Programs (SSP).

“What Ohio [-class SSBN] has today [D5LE] is what Columbia will initially have until we get the Life-Extension 2,” Wolfe said Nov. 8 at the Naval Submarine League’s annual symposium.

To lower technical and schedule risk in the Columbia-class ballistic-missile submarine program, the Navy decided to arm the boats initially with the existing Trident D5LE missile rather than develop an entirely new missile concurrent with the development of the submarine. At some point in the service life of the Columbia class, the boats will receive the D5LE2.

Wolfe said the SSP will begin trade studies in 2020 to “define an SLBM that can deploy throughout the life of Columbia,” which is slated to serve to 2084. The studies will determine which D5LE components can be continued in the next missile and which will need to be modernized or replaced for D5LE2.

The D5LE2 “won’t look like the D5 that we’ve got today, it won’t be completely new, it will be somewhere in the middle,” he said.

“If you look at the decisions that we made on Columbia, as we went down to 16 [launch] tubes [from 24 on the Ohio class], part of that decision was made because there was an assumption that the reliability of this weapon system way out in the 2070s and 2080s will be just as reliable and supportable as it is today with the current Trident,” he said.

Wolfe pointed out that the Trident missile inventory will decline to a point where new production will be needed. Part of the challenge is to sustain the industrial base to build, for example, rocket motors, so that the expertise is not lost during procurement troughs and would not have to be reconstituted.

“Our challenge is that whatever we do next has, at a minimum, the reliability, accuracy and supportability that we’ve got

today,” he said.

Sparton, Leidos Team on Mk5 Acoustic Device Countermeasure

DELEON SPRINGS, Fla. – Sparton Corp. has teamed with Leidos Maritime Systems to support the Acoustic Device Countermeasure (ADC) Mk5 program, Sparton said in a Nov. 6 release.

The Mk5 is a next-generation countermeasure intended to replace the ADC Mk3. The ADC Mk5 is a 3-inch diameter expendable device that is submarine launched from internal signal ejectors and is part of a submarine’s defense against acoustic-homing torpedoes.

On Sept. 13, the U.S. Navy announced Leidos had been awarded the contract (valued up to \$36.1 million) under a competitive solicitation. Sparton will contribute to the contract’s scope of work, which includes the design, development, fabrication, integration, testing and low-rate initial production of the U.S. Navy’s Mk5 program. Sparton will also provide manufacturing services to support system fabrication.

“Sparton is excited to leverage our knowledge of maritime acoustic communication systems, packaging, and deployment systems for this new opportunity”, said Jim Lackemacher, group vice president of the Engineered Components & Products Segment. “Sparton looks forward to collaborating with Leidos to bring this vital capability to the fleet.”

Navy EP-3 Intercepted Over the Black Sea

NAPLES, Italy – A U.S. EP-3 Aries aircraft flying in international airspace over the Black Sea was intercepted by a Russian SU-27 on Nov. 5, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs said in a release.

“This interaction was determined to be unsafe due to the SU-27 conducting a high-speed pass directly in front of the mission aircraft, which put our pilots and crew at risk,” the release said. “The intercepting SU-27 made an additional pass, closing with the EP-3 and applying its afterburner while conducting a banking turn away. The crew of the EP-3 reported turbulence following the first interaction, and vibrations from the second. The duration of the intercept was approximately 25 minutes.

“While the Russian military is within its right to exercise within international airspace, this interaction was irresponsible. We expect them to behave within international standards set to ensure safety and to prevent incidents, including the 1972 Agreement for the Prevention of Incidents On and Over the High Seas (INCSEA). Unsafe actions increase the risk of miscalculation and potential for midair collisions.

“The U.S. aircraft was operating in accordance with international law and did not provoke this Russian activity.”

Sikorsky Awarded Contract to Sustain Navy, Marine Super Stallion, Sea Dragon Helicopters

STRATFORD, Conn. – Sikorsky, a Lockheed Martin company, was awarded a performance-based logistics contract with a value of \$717 million to provide supply and logistics support to the entire fleet of in-service CH-53E Super Stallions and MH-53E Sea Dragon helicopters, the company said in a Nov. 5 release.

The H-53E is a battle-proven heavy-lift helicopter continuing to support the U.S. Marine Corps and Navy in missions at home and around the world.

The scope of the contract includes repairs, overhauls, spares, obsolescence mitigation and asset management services over four years. Contract performance is based on material availability metrics with additional incentives added for demand reductions, maintainability enhancements and aircraft readiness contributions.

The expanded comprehensive arrangement will cover additional readiness-critical components, including main and tail rotor blades, main gearbox, main rotor head and flight control components, as well as accessories such as refueling probe and cargo system components.

“We expect the expanded performance-based logistics to measurably improve material availability and reduce support cost while increasing overall aircraft readiness,” said Pierre Garant, Sikorsky senior program manager, Marine Corps In-Service Programs. “Our support infrastructure and past performance-based logistics successes will result in Sikorsky continuing to reliably provide mission support critical to the

warfighter.”

As the Marine Corps’ heavy lift-helicopter designed for the transportation of heavy material and supplies, the CH-53E Super Stallion is compatible with most amphibious class ships. With four-and-one-half hours’ endurance, the helicopter can move heavy equipment over rugged terrain in bad weather and at night. The MH-53E Sea Dragon fills the Navy’s need for long-range minesweeping missions, in addition to heavy-lift duties. The H-53E has consistently proven its worth to the fleet commanders with its versatility and range.

The contract will provide the vital and affordable support to the entire fleet – expanding a reliable base of long-term sustainment as the aircraft continue to fully operate until the introduction of the replacement aircraft, the Sikorsky CH-53K King Stallion.

Fairbanks Morse Awarded Engine Contract for Navy’s First Flight II LPD

WASHINGTON – Fairbanks Morse, an EnPro Industries company, has been awarded a contract to build and deliver the four main propulsion diesel engines (MPDE) that will power LPD 30, which will be the U.S. Navy’s first LPD Flight II class ship, the company announced Oct. 30.

The newly designed ship will be based on the San Antonio-class hull, but the LPD Flight II is fitted with a fully capable flight deck and hangar, a well deck, and the vehicle and cargo capacities to support and sustain more than 500 combat-

equipped Marines for up to 30 days. Each engine will feature common rail (CR) fuel injection technology.

The engines are scheduled to be delivered in the second and third quarters of 2020 to Huntington Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Mississippi. Fairbanks Morse will then support installation, testing and sea trials for the vessel. The four sequentially turbocharged 16-cylinder FM Colt-Pielstick PC 2.5 diesel engines with CR fuel injection will deliver over 31 megawatts of propulsion power and are among the largest medium-speed diesel engines manufactured in the United States.

“As an American manufacturer of medium speed engines, we take great pride in delivering engines and systems for the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard. This contract is particularly special as it is for the first LPD Flight II class ship,” said Deepak Navnith, Fairbanks Morse president. “As a company, we place significant value on innovation and it was at the heart of this win. The common rail fuel injection technology on the LPD PC 2.5 engines will lower total lifecycle costs for the Navy by reducing fuel consumption, lowering emissions, and reducing engine maintenance, enabling the Navy to spend more time at sea at a lower cost.”

The common rail system technology uses a common high-pressure fuel header, high-pressure pumps, electronically controlled fuel delivery, electronic governing system and a new control system to deliver a precise amount of fuel throughout all engine operations. The common rail technology will deliver improved specific fuel consumption at all operating points, resulting in millions of dollars saved by the Navy over the operational lifetime of the power systems.

Fairbanks Morse engineers in Beloit, Wisconsin, worked with the MAN Energy Solutions teams in Augsburg, Germany, and St. Nazaire, France, along with the U.S. Navy to apply MAN’s proven commercial technology from the 32/44CR engine onto the FM Colt-Pielstick PC 2.5V STC engine.

Each engine will be built at the Fairbanks Morse manufacturing facility in Beloit, creating numerous jobs for American workers. Fairbanks Morse engines are installed on approximately 80 percent of U.S. Navy ships that have a medium-speed power application.

KMS Solutions Awarded Navy Cyber Security Services Contract

ARLINGTON, Va. – KMS Solutions. LLC was awarded a cyber security services contract by the U.S. Navy to support the Naval Undersea Warfare Command Code 25 projects including: assessment and authorization; research, development, test and evaluation; environment maintenance; systems security engineering; posture transition support; in-service engineer agent support; and meeting support.

These services are for the development, evaluation, modernization and sustainment of the U.S. Navy tactical and tactical support systems, the company said in an Oct. 29 release. KMS Solutions is a wholly owned subsidiary of Subsystem Technologies.

“KMS Solutions is pleased to provide Code 25 with these services and will bring a wide range of domain knowledge, mission experience, best practices, and next-generation capabilities to the Navy,” said Michael Martino, KMS Solutions vice president. “Through this contract, we will provide Code 25 with proven, successful cybersecurity services.”

Subsystem Technologies CEO Sam Malhotra said, “We are proud to

support Code 25 cybersecurity program and look forward to working closely with our government partners to ensure mission success.”

Navy Task Force Promotes Increased Knowledge of Ocean Environment

ARLINGTON, Va. – In a keynote speech to attendees of the 2018 Oceans Conference – held Oct. 22-25 in Charleston, South Carolina – Chief of Naval Research Rear Adm. David Hahn discussed the goals of the U.S. Navy’s Task Force Ocean (TFO), a signature program of Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson. TF0 is designed to reinvigorate the Navy’s commitment to ocean sciences, advancing its tactical advantage through a better knowledge of the ocean environment and its impact on sensors, weapons and operations.

Hahn, who leads the Office of Naval Research (ONR) and serves as the director of TF0, began his comments by highlighting the critical role of ocean commerce to global prosperity, and the need to provide order and security to that commerce for the good of the nation and the world, according to an Oct. 29 release from ONR.

“Fundamentally, that is the role of your Navy – it’s what we do every day,” Hahn said.

He pointed out, however, that in this era of increasing “great power competition,” the Navy needs to maintain an advantage, and the time to prepare for that is now. Hahn quoted James Forrestal, appointed the first secretary of defense in 1947,

who said in a Congressional testimony, "The tempo of modern war has reached the point where this nation will probably never again have the opportunity to arm itself successfully after the start of hostilities."

That message bolstered the one given at a Tactical Oceanography Symposium held a week earlier at the Undersea Warfighting Development Center in San Diego. Hahn highlighted the importance of furthering ties between the Navy, academia and industry.

"The Navy needs your help," he told attendees at the three-day symposium, the first in a series designed to highlight Navy ocean science issues. "We need a committed partnership between government, academia and industry to ensure the U.S. remains the world leader in ocean science, especially Navy-relevant science. Our competitors are gaining on us."

"Our decades-long competitive advantage in the undersea domain is eroding. This is not a Navy problem – it is our nation's problem," said Oceanographer of the Navy Rear Adm. John Okon during a presentation at the symposium. "As Task Force Ocean continues to evolve, we must remain focused on advancing ocean science and uniting our nation's intellectual capital to increase our competitive advantage."

A recent report prepared by the Consortium for Ocean Leadership, an umbrella organization that includes over 100 public and private ocean research organizations, highlights the mounting pressure on the Navy's advantage over global competitors.

To accelerate the recovery of that advantage in these critical areas, Hahn announced that ONR will increase research and sponsor an additional 50 graduate students and 50 post-doctorates under TF0, primarily in the areas of physical oceanography and acoustics, in addition to ONR's ongoing support for academia.

According to Dr. Tom Drake, director of ONR's Ocean Battlespace Sensing Department, "ONR will revitalize the 'Scientist-to-Sea' program, which provides opportunities for selected scientists and engineers to visit submarines and submarine training facilities, undersea warfighting training centers, Navy laboratories and engineering centers to better understand the needs and priorities of the Navy."

The Navy's commitment to revitalize its ocean science efforts will have very positive benefits to the national ocean science program, as well as the Navy. "This is a most welcome turn of events for Navy oceanographic research," said Prof. Arthur Baggeroer, the secretary of the Navy and chief of naval operations Chair for ocean science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Navy Awards Next-Generation Jammer Low Band Contracts

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The U.S. Navy awarded Demonstration of Existing Technologies (DET) contracts Oct. 25, valued at approximately \$36 million each to L3 Technologies Communications Systems West and Northrop Grumman Corp. Mission Systems in support of the Next Generation Jammer Low Band (NGJ-LB) capability, the Naval Air Systems Command said in an Oct. 25 release.

The Airborne Electronic Attack (AEA) Systems and EA-6B Program Office (PMA-234) headquartered here manages the NGJ-LB program.

NGJ-LB is an external jamming pod that is part of a larger NGJ weapon system that will augment and, ultimately, replace the

aging ALQ-99 Tactical Jamming System currently in use on EA-18G Growler aircraft.

“NGJ-LB is a critical piece of the overall NGJ system in that it focuses on the denial, degradation, deception and disruption of our adversaries’ abilities to gain an advantage in that portion of the electromagnetic spectrum,” said Capt. Michael Orr, PMA-234 program manager. “It delivers to the warfighter significant improvements in power, advanced jamming techniques, and jamming effectiveness over the legacy ALQ-99 system.”

Each DET contract has a 20-month period of performance, during which the NGJ-LB team will assess the technological maturity of the industry partners’ existing technologies in order to inform future NGJ-LB capability development, as well as define the NGJ-LB acquisition strategy.