

Construction of Navy's New Frigate to Begin This Month, Admiral Says



An artist's rendering of the Constellation-class guided missile frigate. *U.S. NAVY*

ARLINGTON, Va. – Construction of the U.S. Navy's next-generation guided-missile frigate (FFG) is to take begin later this month, a Navy admiral said.

"[Regarding] the FFG 62 Constellation class, we're going to start bending metal later this month," said Rear Adm. Fred Pyle, director, Surface Warfare Division in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, speaking Aug. 18 at the Surface Navy Association's Waterfront 2022 West Coast symposium. "That's a success story. This frigate is going to bring DDG-like capability. We need to build small surface combatants in numbers [and] get this fighting frigate to sea. So, we're excited about the Constellation-class frigate."

Three Constellation-class FFGs—Constellation (FFG 62), Congress (FFG 63), and Chesapeake (FFG 64) currently are on order. In June, the Navy exercised a contract option to order to build FFG 64 from Wisconsin-based Fincantieri Marinette Marine, the ship's builder.

The Marinette Marine shipyard is currently working on the detailed design for the future USS Constellation.

The Navy has a requirement for 20 frigates. Marinette Marine is now under contract for the first three FFGs with options for seven more.

The Constellation class FFG is based largely on the Italian FREMM frigate, but with a longer hull and features modified to

meet U.S. Navy standards on reliability, survivability, maintainability, habitability and lethality. The 496-foot-long steel ship will displace 7,300 tons and have a beam of 64.6 feet and a draft of 18 feet. It will be powered by a combination diesel electric and gas turbine propulsion system.

The FFG will feature a Mk41 Vertical Launching System, canister-launched Naval Strike Missiles, Mk110 57 mm gun, RAM Mk49 launcher, CAPTAS-4 variable-depth sonar, TB-37 Multi-Function Towed Array, SQQ-89(V)16 undersea combat system, SLQ-25E Nixie, SLQ-32(V)6 SEWIP Block 2, SPY-6(V)3 FFG Radar, Aegis Baseline 10 combat system, one MH-60R helicopter, one MQ-8C, and two 7-meter rigid-hull inflatable boats. Delivery of Constellation is anticipated for 2026.