

# CVN 78 Quietly Declared IOC in December



USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) transits the James River after leaving Newport News Shipyard during sea and anchor, Feb. 25. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jacob Mattingly*

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The lead ship in the Navy’s new fleet of aircraft carriers, the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), has achieved initial operational capability, the program manager revealed at Sea-Air-Space 2022 on April 5.

The ship actually achieved IOC in late December of 2021, but the program did not announce it at the time, said Capt. Brian Metcalf, PMS-378 program manager.

“IOC was just recently declared and set on December of 2021 with the turnover of the last elevator,” Metcalf said. “We didn’t announce it. Some people know what IOC means and some people don’t. It’s an acquisition-specific milestone. The conditions on the ship don’t really change because of IOC. So, we did not make a public announcement on it.”

The Ford is slated for its first operational deployment this fall, Metcalf said. All 11 of the advanced weapons elevators have been turned over to the crew, he said, and a total of 17,000 individual elevator cycles have been completed.