

Eastern Shipbuilding Cuts Steel for Second Offshore Patrol Cutter

PANAMA CITY, Fla. – Eastern Shipbuilding Group (ESG) began to cut steel for the second offshore patrol cutter (OPC), the Chase, on April 27, ESG said in a release.

The cutting of steel starts the fabrication and assembly of the cutter's hull, and ESG is to complete keel-laying of the Chase next year. Additionally, ESG has started the placement of orders for long lead time materials for the third OPC, the future cutter Ingham. The OPC is to replace medium-endurance cutters in U.S. Coast Guard service now.

"Today marks a monumental event and reflects the dedication and resolve of our workforce to execute program milestones on time. ESG is dedicated to the task of building the most sophisticated, highly capable ships for the Coast Guard," said Eastern Shipbuilding's president, Joey D'Isernia.

"Today's success is the start of serial production of the OPCs at ESG by our dedicated team of shipbuilders and subcontractors for our customer and partner, the United States Coast Guard. We are excited for what will be a great 2020 for Eastern Shipbuilding Group and Bay County, Florida."

The OPC is designed to conduct multiple missions in support of the nation's maritime security and border protection. It will provide a capability bridge between the national security cutter, which patrols the open ocean, and the fast-response cutter, which serves closer to shore.

The OPC design includes the capability of carrying an MH-60T or MH-65 helicopter and three operational over-the-horizon small boats. The vessel is to be equipped with a highly

sophisticated combat system and C4ISR suite that will enhance capabilities to execute the service's missions.

On Sept. 15, 2016, the Coast Guard exercised the option for detail design on Eastern Shipbuilding's OPC contract. The deal includes the production of up to four vessels.