

Geurts: Third Zumwalt DDG Will Be Commissioned After Combat Systems Activation



The USS Lyndon B. Johnson is made ready before flooding of the dry dock at General Dynamic-Bath Iron Works shipyard and subsequent launching of the third Zumwalt-class destroyer in 2018. U.S. Navy via General Dynamics-Bath Iron Works

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy's third Zumwalt-class guided-missile destroyer will be commissioned after its combat systems are fully installed and activated, rather than going through a two-part delivery, the Navy's top acquisition official said.

The future USS Lyndon B. Johnson (DDG 1002), under construction at the Bath Iron Works shipyard in Bath, Maine, will not be commissioned until after its combat systems are installed, unlike the process used for its two predecessors, USS Zumwalt (DDG 1000) and Michael Monsoor (DDG 1001), said James F. Geurts, assistant secretary of the Navy for research, development and acquisition, speaking to reporters in an April 28 teleconference.

In the case of the first two of the class, the ships' hulls were completed and put through trials and then delivered to the Navy before their combat systems were installed. The Zumwalt was commissioned – in a status the Navy calls In Commission, Special – in Baltimore and then proceeded to San Diego for installation and activation of its combat systems. It was delivered to the Navy on April 24 and will begin at-sea testing of its systems preparing for its initial operational test and evaluation and its 2021 initial operational capability milestone.

The USS Michael Monsoor similarly was commissioned on Jan. 26,

2019, and proceeded to San Diego for its combat systems installation, which was completed in March.

The Lyndon B. Johnson is 93% complete, Geurts said, but will not be delivered and commissioned until its combat systems are installed. Since the combat systems activation will be conducted in San Diego, it will need to proceed there in a status other than as a commissioned ship.

“We did change to a single-phased delivery for that ship, and so we are adjusting that ship’s future plans based on all the learning we’ve had on DDG 1000 and DDG 1001,” Geurts said.

“I’m personally not a fan of two-phased delivery,” he said. “I can understand why we do them. In certain cases, I think they’re also problematic because you end up delivering the ship more than once and you can get into a delayed test-maintain-fix cycle.”