

HII Breaks Ground on Unmanned Systems Center of Excellence



Hampton Mayor Donnie Tuck, Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam and HII Executive Vice President and President, HII Technical Solutions Andy Green break ground on HII's Unmanned Systems Center of Excellence. HII

NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – Huntington Ingalls Industries has broken ground on a new Unmanned Systems Center of Excellence in Hampton, Virginia, the company said in a Sept. 22 release. Two buildings totaling over 150,000 square feet will be constructed on the 20-acre campus and will be purpose-built for unmanned systems prototyping, production and testing.

“With U.S. Navy’s increasing demand for UUVs and USVs, we are committed to investing in and expanding our unmanned systems capabilities,” said Andy Green, HII executive vice president and president of Technical Solutions. “Our new Unmanned Systems Center of Excellence will ensure we can continue to provide our customers with the most advanced autonomous systems across all class sizes.”

The HII Unmanned Systems Center of Excellence, located on the Hampton Roads Center – North Campus, will be a state-of-the-art facility with a high-tech digital manufacturing infrastructure. This agile space will be reconfigurable for different production and systems integration projects and have precision machining capabilities, a surface finishing area and a dedicated welding space.

“Virginia is proud to be home to the largest military shipbuilder in the country,” said Gov. Ralph Northam. “Huntington Ingalls Industries is a national leader in advanced manufacturing, and this investment is a powerful testament to Virginia’s workers and business environment. The company’s new unmanned systems facility in Hampton will

support America's national security and play a key role in strengthening our economic recovery as we continue working to rebound from this health crisis."

HII partnered with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, the city of Hampton and the Hampton Roads Alliance to secure the project for Virginia. More than 250 jobs will be created and will enable collaboration with HII's Newport News Shipbuilding division, which has advanced undersea system engineering capabilities.

"The new campus complements our current facilities in Massachusetts, Florida and Washington that have been delivering marine robotics to the Navy for nearly 20 years," said Duane Fotheringham, president, Technical Solutions' Unmanned Systems business group. "In order to manufacture and support large and extra-large UUVs, the size of the manufacturing operation needs to increase significantly. This new facility will give us the space and infrastructure we need to scale our operations to meet the needs of our customers now and into the future."

The groundbreaking ceremony was also attended by Virginia Secretary of Commerce and Trade Brian Ball; Hampton Mayor Donnie R. Tuck; Hampton Economic Development Director Chuck Rigney Sr., and Rob Brown, president of Robert Brown & Associates.

The first 22,000-square-foot building will be completed by the end of this year. The main 135,000 square-foot-facility is planned to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2021.