

MARAD Authorizes Construction of Two Additional National Security Multi-Mission Vessels



An artist's conception of the NSMV. MARAD WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration (MARAD) authorized the construction of two additional National Security Multi-Mission Vessels (NSMV), which will replace aging training vessels at Maine Maritime Academy in Castine, Maine, and Texas A&M Maritime Academy in Galveston, Texas, MARAD said in a Jan. 19 release.

MARAD previously authorized the construction of the first two NSMVs, destined for SUNY Maritime College in Bronx, New York, and Massachusetts Maritime Academy, in Bourne, Massachusetts, on April 8, 2020.

"The NSMV is part of a strategy to bolster maritime education, revitalize U.S. shipbuilding, and provide a much-needed shot in the arm to the U.S. maritime industry," added Doug Burnett, the chief counsel of MARAD, who is acting in lieu of the administrator. "America must be a maritime nation if it is to continue to lead the world in this century."

With this authorization, recapitalization of our nation's aging maritime training fleet is nearly complete. Construction of all authorized vessels at Philly Shipyard Inc. will also strengthen America's industrial base while supporting more than 1,200 shipyard jobs in Philadelphia.

The NSMV will feature numerous instructional spaces, a full training bridge, and have space for up to 600 cadets in a first-rate maritime academic environment at sea. State

maritime academies graduate approximately 70 percent of all new officers each year – the merchant mariners who help keep cargoes and the U.S. economy moving. Many also support U.S. national security by crewing military sealift vessels.

The NSMV is also a highly functional national asset that includes modern medical facilities, a helicopter pad, the ability to accommodate up to 1,000 people in times of humanitarian need, and roll-on/roll-off and container storage capacity for use during disaster relief missions.

In May 2019, MARAD awarded TOTE Services LLC a contract to be the vessel construction manager for the NSMV program. This contract is an innovative approach to federal shipbuilding where the government benefits from commercial best practices for ship design and construction. In April 2020, TOTE Services awarded Philly Shipyard Inc. a contract to construct up to five NSMVs with fixed prices and schedules.