NAVSEA Commander: Planning Critical to On-Time Maintenance of Ships

Gas Turbine System Technician (Mechanical) 3rd Class Jonathan Gancayco, from Oakland, California, right, and Seaman Brice Rodgers, from Philadelphia, operate a lift on the pier beside the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69). Ike is currently pier side in Naval Station Norfolk conducting routine maintenance. U.S. Navy / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Asheka Lawrence-Reid

ARLINGTON, Va. – The on-time delivery of ships, submarines and systems from the Navy's repair yards and the private shipyards as well as on-time delivery of new construction ships remains the Naval Sea Systems Command's (NAVSEA's) top priority, the NAVSEA commander said.

"It all starts with advance planning," said Vice Adm. William Galinis, the NAVSEA commander, speaking Sept. 16 in a webinar of the Virtual Fleet Maintenance & Modernization Symposium of the American Society of Naval Engineers. "We're going to be relentless to get the planning right."

Advance planning is critical in determining what work a ship will need so that materials can be ordered and delivered in time and the necessary work force assigned and mustered to perform the maintenance before the work starts. Each day matters, he said.

Galinis noted that the duration and complexity of ship maintenance and modernization availabilities is increasing.

"We need to be absolutely relentless in execution," he said.

One of the planning actions that has proved beneficial is sending assessment teams to do ship checks, inspecting a ship

in advance of the availability to determine the condition and needs of the ship to develop the work package as completely as possible.

Galinis said that one of the biggest challenges is unplanned work that emerges. Managing that change is critical to minimizing its impact on the schedule.

He also said, “We are challenged in some areas by capacity. We need to build additional capacity.”

The admiral said that currently 47 CNO [chief of naval operations] availabilities are being executed in private shipyards (including three nuclear-powered attack submarines at Newport News Shipbuilding). Of those, he said, approximately half are “tracking to the schedule,” he said, with the other half being challenges. In addition, 13 nuclear-powered ships – 11 submarines and two aircraft carriers – are in availabilities in the Navy’s shipyards.

Galinis stressed the importance of teamwork between the Navy, the ship repair industry and the supply chain in meeting the challenges of on-time delivery.

Achieving a predictable and stable workload in ship repair yards benefits both the Navy and industry, enabling the yards to hire and retain a skilled, right-sized work force, a feature that also enables suppliers to get backlogs of orders. It benefits the populations and economies of the communities located by the yards and suppliers as well.