

Navy Accepts Delivery of Final Freedom-Variant LCS, USS Cleveland



Release From Naval Sea Systems Command

Cleveland is the 16th and final ship of its class, marking the completion of the Freedom-variant littoral combat ship (LCS) construction phases – a sustained acquisition effort involving Navy personnel, industry partners, and program management teams for over two decades.

“The delivery of USS Cleveland, our final Freedom-variant LCS, symbolizes the U.S. Navy’s unwavering vigilance and a steadfast commitment to protecting national interest and ensuring global stability,” said Jay Iungerich, acting deputy program manager of the LCS Program Office (PMS 501).

Following commissioning in Cleveland, Ohio in early 2026, LCS

31 will be homeported in Mayport, Florida. She will support forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence in key operational theaters.

“With the final Freedom-variant LCS now delivered, we celebrate the successful outcome of years of innovation and commitment,” said Melissa Kirkendall, Program Executive Officer, Unmanned and Small Combatants (PEO USC). “This highly capable and lethal warship is ready to assert maritime dominance and protect global waters with unparalleled precision and power.”

LCS 31 honors the city of Cleveland, Ohio. She will be the fourth ship to bear the name. The lineage began with the Denver-class protected cruiser, USS Cleveland (C-19), later reclassified as CL-21, commissioned in 1903. She served prominently as flagship of the Atlantic Fleet. During World War I, she diligently escorted convoys and transported troops before her decommissioning in 1929.

The second USS Cleveland (CL-55), a Cleveland-class light cruiser, entered service in 1942, leaving her mark on history through extensive action in World War II’s Pacific theater. Her participation spanned numerous campaigns, including Guadalcanal, Bougainville, the Philippines, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. CL-55 was decommissioned in 1947.

The third namesake, USS Cleveland (LPD-9), an Austin-class amphibious transport dock, was commissioned in 1976 and served a distinguished 30-year career. LPD-9 was a familiar presence in deployments and exercises around the world, notably contributing to Operation Desert Shield/Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom. She was decommissioned in 2011.

Now, LCS 31 carries the legacy forward, embodying Cleveland’s spirit of service.

LCS is a fast, agile, mission-focused warship designed to operate in near-shore environments to counter 21st-century

threats. It is a class of small surface combatants armed with capabilities to defeat challenges in the world's littorals. LCS can operate independently or in high-threat scenarios as part of a networked battle force that includes larger, multi-mission surface combatants such as cruisers and destroyers.

PEO USC designs, develops, builds, maintains, and modernizes the Navy's unmanned maritime systems; mine warfare systems; special warfare systems; expeditionary warfare systems; and small surface combatants. For more news from Program Executive Office, Unmanned and Small Combatants, visit: <https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Media/News/>