

Navy Awards Contract to VT Halter for New Oceanographic Survey Ship

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy has awarded a contract to shipbuilder VT Halter Marine toward advance work for the eighth Pathfinder-class oceanographic survey ship (T-AGS).

The Naval Sea Systems Command awarded to VT Halter Marine a “not-to-exceed \$9 million undefinitized contract action for functional design engineering, procurement of long-lead time material, and limited advanced production to support the Oceanographic Survey Ship (T-AGS 67),” the Defense Department announced on Nov. 19.

VT Halter Marine, based in Pascagoula, Mississippi, has built seven Pathfinders, six of which were delivered between 1994 and 2001. One of these, USNS Sumner, was withdrawn from service in 2014. A seventh, USNS Maury, was delivered in 2016. It is 15 feet longer than the earlier Pathfinders and features a moon pool to facilitate operation of unmanned underwater vehicles.

The Pathfinder class is operated by the Military Sealift Command for the Naval Meteorology & Oceanography Command.