

Rethinking Sailors and CVN RCOH: Navy Leverages Industry Contracts to Reclaim Up to 1 Million Sailor Man-Hours



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NORFOLK, Va. (June 15, 2026) – The Navy Quality of Service Cross-Functional Team (QoS CFT) and PAE Maritime’s In-Service Aircraft Carrier Program Office (PMS 312) are changing how the Navy does business for the execution of aircraft carrier Refueling and Complex Overhaul (RCOH), beginning with USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75).

A RCOH is a comprehensive maintenance and modernization overhaul that is performed at the midpoint of an aircraft carrier’s 50-year lifespan. Traditionally, Sailors assigned to a ship undergoing an RCOH could be assigned to perform supplementary, non-rate-specific duties such as painting, insulating, transportation services, and maintenance.

The Navy is rethinking its approach by leveraging commercial contracts to fulfill these requirements during Harry S. Truman’s upcoming RCOH, a strategic shift that will potentially return up to one million man-hours to the crew. By reducing the crew’s supplementary workload during demanding shipyard periods, Sailors will have more time to focus on advanced training and operational readiness.

“This shift is about putting our Sailors’ time and talents where they matter most,” said Vice Adm. Scott Gray, who leads the Navy QoS CFT. “By contracting out routine tasks like transportation and preservation, we free our crew from

traditional shipyard duties, empowering them to focus on their in-rate training and core warfighting capabilities.”

To date, five Navy contracts have returned approximately 690,000 labor hours to the crew, with plans to award five additional contracts over the next five years.

As a key component of the Navy’s broader Quality of Service (QoS) initiatives, this strategy allows for optimized, smaller crew sizes to remain assigned to ships undergoing maintenance.

By alleviating hands-on, non-rate-specific maintenance tasks, Sailors can concentrate on developing critical warfighting skills and completing their professional development. This approach maintains a higher state of overall readiness while significantly improving the crew’s quality of life in the shipyard environment.

Ultimately, this transition is expected to streamline maintenance processes, fostering a more sustainable and effective workforce balance between active-duty personnel and the shipyard’s industrial base.

The Portfolio Acquisition Executive (PAE) for Maritime is the single accountable organization for delivering surface ships for the U.S. Navy. This new centralized organizational construct empowers leaders with broader scope and greater authority to accelerate delivery of combat capability and ensure acquisition speed and discipline are driven by what the warfighter needs—when they need it.”

In addition to leading the Navy QOS CFT, Vice Adm. Scott Gray serves as Commander, Navy Installations Command, which is responsible for worldwide U.S. Navy Shore installation management, designing and developing integrated solutions for sustainment and development of Navy shore infrastructure as well as quality of life programs. CNIC oversees 10 Navy regions, 71 installations, and more than 48,600 employees who

are focused on warfighting and manning, training, and equipping the Shore to fight and win. Navy installations are warfighting platforms essential to every fleet operation.