

Sea Hunter MDUSV Reaches New Milestone for Autonomy

RESTON, Va. – The Office of Naval Research's (ONR) Medium Displacement Unmanned Surface Vessel (MDUSV), Sea Hunter, became the first ship to successfully autonomously navigate from San Diego to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and back without a single crew member onboard, except very short-duration boardings by personnel from an escort vessel to check electrical and propulsion systems, the ship's builder, Leidos, said in a Jan. 31 release.

Leidos designed and built the 132-foot-long Trimaran, Sea Hunter, an autonomous, unmanned vessel capable of traveling for long periods of time and executing a variety of missions at a fraction of the cost of a manned ship. This recent achievement is part of an extended test phase, which has been ongoing since the end of 2016.

"The Sea Hunter program is leading the world in unmanned, fully autonomous naval ship design and production," said Gerry Fasano, Leidos Defense Group president. "The recent long-range mission is the first of its kind and demonstrates to the U.S. Navy that autonomy technology is ready to move from the developmental and experimental stages to advanced mission testing."

Sea Hunter will continue long duration and mission package testing throughout 2019. ONR awarded Leidos a potential \$43.5 million contract to develop Sea Hunter II, which is currently under construction in Mississippi. The sister ship will be evolved based upon lessons learned during the first Sea Hunter build, evolving mission requirements and further development of autonomy enhancements.

"Our talented team of engineers, scientists and analytical

experts have decades of experience that will allow us to deliver a second highly autonomous vessel designed to keep our servicemen and women safe while monitoring the maritime environment," said Fasano. "We're excited to showcase our unique and innovative capabilities for a program of great national significance."