

USNS Puerto Rico Successfully Completes Integrated Sea Trials



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MOBILE,

Ala. – USNS Puerto Rico successfully completed the first integrated sea trials

for an expeditionary fast transport ship on Aug. 22, the Program Executive

Office Ships said in a release. The ship returned to the Austal USA shipyard

following two days underway in the Gulf of Mexico.

Integrated trials combine builder's and acceptance trials, allowing for the shipyard to demonstrate to the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey the operational capability and mission readiness of all the ship's systems during a single underway period. During trials, the shipbuilder conducted comprehensive tests to demonstrate the performance of the ship's major systems.

"The

EPF program continues to be an example of stable and successful serial ship

production," said Capt. Scot Searles, Strategic and Theater Sealift program

manager, Program Executive Office Ships. "I look forward to seeing EPF 11

deliver in the fall and expand the operational flexibility available to our

combatant commanders."

Expeditionary

fast transport ships are noncombatant vessels designed to operate in shallow-draft ports and waterways, increasing operational flexibility for a wide range of activities such as maneuver and sustainment, relief operations in small or damaged ports, flexible logistics support or as the key enabler for rapid transport. The ships are capable of interfacing with roll-on/roll-off discharge facilities as well as on/off-loading vehicles such as a fully combat-loaded Abrams main battle tank.

EPFs

support a variety of missions including the overseas contingency operations, conducting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, supporting special operations forces, and supporting emerging joint sea-basing concepts.

In addition to Puerto Rico, Austal USA is also currently in production on the future USNS Newport (EPF 12) and is under contract to build the future USNS Apalachicola (EPF 13) and EPF 14.