

USS Augusta Commissions Amidst the Morning Fog of Maine



EASTPORT, ME, UNITED STATES

09.30.2023

Story by [Julie Ann Ripley](#)

[Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet](#)

EASTPORT, MAINE (Sept. 30, 2023) – Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Augusta (LCS 34) commissioned at Eastport, Maine, Sept. 30.

In the week leading up to the commissioning ceremony, the Augusta's crew spent time with their ship's sponsor, Chief Justice Leigh Saufley, and participated in community relations events in their namesake city to build a strong connection with their namesake city community.

During the ceremony guest speaker, The Honorable Jared Golden, U.S. Representative, Maine's 2nd District, wished the crew of Augusta fair winds and following seas as they brought the ship to life and began its commissioned service via recorded remarks.

Remarks were also provided by Vice Adm. John Fuller, Naval Inspector General.

"Competing and being successful in the maritime starts at home. The state of Maine's has a strong bond with the sea and

our nation's military. More than 30 ships proudly represent this state, its cities, places, and people" said Fuller. "The USS AUGUSTA and her crew will play an important role in defending our nation and enabling global maritime freedom and commerce. She will be integrated into operations that provide presence and support both sea control and power projection, which are at the core of the Navy's mission."

Rear Adm. James Downey, Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development, and Acquisition; the Honorable Mark O'Brien, Mayor of Augusta, Maine; and the Honorable Chris Gardner, Director of the Eastport Port Authority and Washington County Maine Commissioner. The ship's sponsor is the Honorable Leigh Saufley, President and Dean of University of Maine School of Law and former Chief Justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court.

"This ship, born of American aluminum, is a testament to the versatility, resolve, and unwavering spirit that have defined our nation from its very inception. The USS Augusta stands as a living embodiment of our shared commitment to safeguarding liberty, defending democracy, and preserving peace around the world," said Cmdr. Christopher Polnaszek, USS Augusta's commanding officer. "Augusta, Maine, a place steeped in tradition and history, has given rise to brave sons and daughters who have answered the call of duty time and again. From the early days of our nation's founding, through the trials of the Civil War, to the modern challenges of the 21st century, the people of Augusta have shown an indomitable spirit, unyielding in the face of adversity. As we commission this warship, we pay homage to that spirit. May it sail the seas as a testament to the enduring strength of the American spirit. Protecting the Frontier."

Augusta is the 17th Independence-variant LCS commissioned in the United States Navy, and the second U.S. Navy ship to bear

this namesake.

Augusta (SSN-710), the first Naval vessel to be named for Maine's capitol, served from 1985 – 2009, taking part in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Its sponsor was Mrs. Diana D. Cohen, wife of Senator William S. Cohen of Maine, who later served as the Secretary of Defense (1997–2001).

USS Manchester (LCS 14), USS Gabrielle Giffords (LCS 10), USS Mobile (LCS 26), and USS Oakland (LCS 24) are deployed to Commander, 7th Fleet area of operations under Destroyer Squadron 7. USS Jackson (LCS 6) is currently deployed and is supporting Pacific Partnership, the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific.

Independence-variant Littoral Combat Ships are fast, optimally manned, mission-tailored surface combatants that operate in near-shore and open-ocean environments, winning against 21st-century coastal threats. LCS integrate with joint, combined, manned and unmanned teams to support forward presence, maritime security, sea control, and deterrence missions around the globe.

Independence-variant littoral combat ships (LCS) are built by Austal USA in Mobile, Alabama.

The mission of Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet is to man, train, and equip the Surface Force to provide fleet commanders with credible naval power to control the sea and project power ashore.

For more news from Naval Surface Forces, visit <https://www.surfpac.navy.mil/>.

For more news from Commander, Littoral Combat Ship Squadron

One, visit <https://www.surfpac.navy.mil/comlcsron1/> or follow on Facebook at www.facebook.com/COMLCSRONONE/