

Ship Clips - March 28, 2011

A compilation of articles concerning the
Shipbuilding Industry

From the Congressional Shipbuilding Caucus

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Monday, March 28th, 2011

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Crunch

Navy to Christen the Arlington on Sat.

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Navy Chief Warns Of 2020s Shipbuilding Crunch

The U.S. chief of naval operations is warning the government to start heading off severe budget challenges for naval forces in the 2020s, when a surge of ships built in the 1980s will "age out" at the same time when the Navy will be trying to replace its strategic submarine and nuclear aircraft carrier fleets.

"The biggest issue is the decade of the '20s," Navy Adm. Gary Roughead told Washington-based defense reporters March 23. "The nation is looking at a challenge to shipbuilding that I believe we need to start thinking about now."

The Navy already is under fire for its shipbuilding cost estimates and planning (Aerospace DAILY, March 14). Without mentioning the alleged budget gap, Roughead notes how just decommissioning a Nimitz-class carrier will cost "a couple of billion dollar[s]."

According to the Navy, the 10 Nimitz carriers are each designed for a roughly 50-year service life, with one midlife refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH). The USS Nimitz (CVN 68), which first deployed in 1975, USS Dwight D. Eisenhower (CVN 69) and USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) have all completed RCOH, and the USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) has been undergoing its RCOH since 2009. The next generation of aircraft carrier, the Gerald R. Ford class (CVN 78), was ordered in 2008 and is slated to be delivered in 2015 to replace the USS Enterprise (CVN 65). Around 2025, the Nimitz will have to be brought out of service and ostensibly replaced too.

Meanwhile, the Navy is designing a class of 12 SSBN(X) ballistic missile subs, which the sea service wants to buy to replace 14 Ohio-class strategic boats. But concerns emerged last year that the per-item price tag could swamp the Navy shipbuilding account. In February 2010 the Navy estimated the procurement cost of each SSBN(X) would be \$6 billion-\$7 billion in fiscal 2010 dollars - close to half of the Navy's annual budget for procuring new ships, according to an October report by the Congressional Research Service. In September 2010, Pentagon leaders said the Navy was working to cut the average unit cost of Ohio replacements Nos. 2-12 to \$5 billion each in 2010 dollars by trading off speed and other capabilities.

Wake-Up Call

Roughead's warning is supposed to serve as a wake-up call, since the time frame is far off for military and legislative planning, and yet not that far away considering it takes roughly a decade to deliver capital ships.

Meanwhile, the chief says he is committed to putting an aircraft carrier "back in Mayport," Fla. The move to shift the East Coast home base of one nuclear-powered carrier from Norfolk, Va., to Mayport has been a contentious topic in Congress, where lawmakers are interested in protecting or securing local jobs related to hosting a carrier, but Roughead deemed it militarily shrewd. The Navy sees international trade patterns and other activity shifting into the Southern Hemisphere, due to expansion of the Panama Canal and different trade routes coming up from Africa. "Strategic dispersion is a good thing," he says.

(AVIATION WEEK 24 MAR 11) ... Michael Bruno

Navy To Christen The Arlington On Sat.

LPD 24 will be homeported in Norfolk

WASHINGTON - The Navy will christen its newest amphibious transport dock ship, the Arlington, on Saturday at Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, Pascagoula, Miss. Scheduled to deliver to the Navy in December 2011, the Arlington will be homeported in Norfolk.

The ship is named for the city of Arlington, Va., honoring the 184 victims in the air and on the ground who lost their lives when American Airlines Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, as well as the military and civilian employees, emergency, fire and rescue personnel of Arlington County and surrounding communities who provided critical assistance after the attack.

Arlington County Fire Chief James Schwartz, the incident commander coordinating the rescue response efforts on the ground at the Pentagon during the Sept. 11 attack, will deliver the ceremony's principal address. Joyce Rumsfeld, wife of former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, is the ship's sponsor, and in accordance with Navy tradition, will break a bottle of champagne across the bow to formally christen

the ship.

Designated LPD 24, Arlington is the eighth amphibious transport dock ship in the San Antonio class. This class is set to replace 27 amphibious ships from the three classes of amphibious ships now in service.

According to the Navy, the Arlington is capable of embarking a landing force of up to 800 Marines.

Two previous ships have carried the name Arlington. The first was a steel-hulled C1-B type cargo ship operating during World War II. The second USS Arlington was a 14,500-ton Vietnam War era, major communications relay ship, which assisted with communications during a June 1969 conference between U.S. President Nixon and Republic of Vietnam President Thieu.

Cmdr. Darren W. Nelson of Rushville, Neb., is the prospective commanding officer and will lead a crew of 360 officers and enlisted Navy personnel and three Marines. The 24,900-ton ship is 684 feet in length, has an overall beam of 105 feet, and a navigational draft of 23 feet. The ceremony will be available via live webcast at www.vistasat.com/ngwebcast.html.

(WAVY NBC NORFOLK 24 MAR 11)

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus To Visit Austal Shipyard
For Littoral Combat Ship Program Announcement

MOBILE, Ala. -- Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus will visit Austal USA's Mobile River shipyard Friday afternoon to make an announcement about the littoral combat ship program.

The U.S. Navy last year awarded Austal and Lockheed Martin 10-vessel contracts to build littoral combat ships, which are designed to fight in coastal waters.

This 10-ship contract will require Austal to more than double its US workforce to approximately 3,800 employees, company officials said. Both companies have received contracts for the first two ships under those contracts. Both companies have already built one LCS and are constructing another under previous contracts.

(MOBILE PRESS-REGISTER 23 MAR 11) ... Dan Murtaugh

USS Milwaukee, USS Detroit Next
For Marinette Marine

U.S. Navy Secretary Mabus reveals names in visit to shipyard

MARINETTE - U.S. Navy Secretary Ray Mabus unveiled the names Friday of the next two littoral combat ships to be built at Marinette Marine Corp.

LCS 5 will be the future USS Milwaukee and LCS 7 will be the future USS Detroit. Mabus addressed a group of Marinette Marine workers while standing in front of LCS 3 (Forth Worth), which is under construction in the shipyard.

Late last year Lockheed Martin secured a contract with the U.S. Navy to build as many as 10 littoral combat ships through fiscal year 2015. "These (ships) are going to be the backbone of the U.S. Navy for the next few decades," Mabus told workers before unveiling the new names. Pre-production work is under way on LCS 5 (Milwaukee) and \$376 million in funding for LCS 7 (Detroit) was allocated Thursday. "You've got workers from Michigan and Wisconsin and I wanted to do something to honor them," Mabus said.

He said as the ships travel the world he wants people to know about the cities of Milwaukee and Detroit.

"A lot of challenges we are going to face in the future

involve threats ... close to shore," Mabus said. "These ships, with their shallow draft and speed, will be a game-changer for us." Marinette Marine Corp. built the first-in-class littoral combat ship USS Freedom, which is in service with the Navy. Austal USA is building another 10 littoral combat ships of a different design in Alabama.

Through fiscal year 2015, the contracts could be worth \$3.6 billion to Lockheed Martin and \$3.5 billion to Austal USA, according to the Navy. The cost of the vessels in the contract are expected to average between \$430 million to \$440 million per ship, Navy officials said in December. The service could purchase as many as 55 of the ships in the coming decades and there also has been interest from foreign navies.

Marinette Marine Corp. President and CEO Richard McCreary said the LCS program will stabilize employment at the shipyard. The company recalled about 110 laid off workers and expects all workers to be back by mid-summer. He said Marinette Marine is expecting to see growth of about 40 workers per month starting in late summer.

LCS 3 (Fort Worth) is about 85 percent complete and is scheduled for delivery to the Navy in 2012.

Mabus was joined Friday by Sen. Herb Kohl, D-Milwaukee, and Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich. The trip to Marinette was delayed due to Levin meeting with President Barack Obama to discuss the situation in Libya.

Broadcast Clip -
Secretary of the Navy Tours Marinette Marine

(WBAY ABC GREEN BAY 19 MAR 11) Taky Ono - The Secretary of the Navy visited Marinette Marine on Friday to talk about the multi-billion dollar Littoral Combat Ship program. "What makes it worthwhile is being with sailors, being with marines, and being with people who build the equipment that they need, and that's what today means," said Secretary Mabus.

He also announced the names of the first two ships these workers will be building: USS Milwaukee and USS Detroit. Secretary Mabus says they're named after the hometowns of the two senators who helped push the contract through Congress.

(GREEN BAY PRESS GAZETTE 19 MAR 11)

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<http://www.dote.osd.mil/pub/reports/FY2010/pdf/navy/2010lcs.pdf>