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Ramaphosa approves Op Copper extension

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President Cyril Ramaphosa has approved the extension of the anti-piracy **Operation Copper** in the Mozambique Channel for another year. In a letter dated 28 March 2018 and sent to the Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces, Ramaphosa informed members of the Council of the extension of the employment of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) *“for service in fulfilment of the international obligations of the Republic of South Africa towards Southern African Development Community maritime security, in the Mozambique Channel.”* *“I have extended the employment of two hundred members of the South African National Defence Force...in order to deter and prevent piracy in the Mozambique Channel. Members of the SANDF employed will continue monitoring and deterring piracy activities along the southern African coast of the Indian*

Ocean,” Ramaphosa stated in the letter. *“This extension of the employment is for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. The total expenditure expected to be incurred for the employment is R127 000 000.”* The South African Navy has been involved in **Operation Copper** since the **SAS Mendi** commenced patrols in January 2011. An operational pause was undertaken in July 2012 as the use of the frigates *“was proving costly and expensive.”* It was then decided to introduce the Warrior-class Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) into **Operation Copper**. Since then, deployment duties have rotated between the frigates and the OPVs. The replenishment ship **SAS Drakensberg** has also been sent to patrol for pirates, and assisted European warships in apprehending seven Somali pirates in early 2012. *defenceWeb* understands that no vessels have been deployed to the Mozambique Channel since January this year. This is most likely due to budget constraints, which has seen the Navy having to cut its sea days from 12 000 to 10 000 a year in the 2019/2020 financial year. **Operation Copper** has accounted for the bulk of the Navy’s total sea days. According to the Department of Defence’s Annual Performance Plan for 2018, an amount of R4 424 685 000 has been allocated to the maritime defence programme for the 2018 medium term expenditure framework. This is a shortfall of close to R3 billion of what the maritime service maintains it needs to do its job of defending and protecting South Africa and its maritime zones. **Source:** <http://www.defenceweb.co.za>

And the waste of valuable resources carries on, although it does give our sailors valuable time at sea.

NZ Navy ship 'Endeavour' to be scrapped in Indian yards critics say exploit child labour

A former New Zealand navy ship is set to be dismantled on the coast of India, by an industry workforce critics claim is dangerous and employs child labour. **HMNZS Endeavour** was decommissioned last year and is currently making her way to the scrapper’s yards on the Indian Ocean. She will be pulled apart for scrap and recycling by JRD Industries in the ship breaking yards of Alang, India. The yards there stretch for ten kilometres and recycle half of the world’s salvaged ships. The industry has been accused of dangerous working conditions and exploiting child labour, particularly in the yards of Bangladesh and Pakistan. *“These guys are living in essentially a shanty town// they’re working very long hours essentially they’re climbing all over these boat using oxygen torches to break these boats to bits,”* Thomas Harre of Slave Free Seas said. The recycling yards of Alang have recently been trying to improve conditions to meet EU standards The New Zealand Defence Force says they’ve checked and are satisfied the yard meets the standards of the Hong Kong international convention for the safe and environmentally sound recycling of ships. *“Now that’s a bit of international law that hasn’t come into force and it’s only been signed by five different countries, India’s not one of them neither is NZ,”* Mr Harre said. In a statement the defence force said it was aware of the concerns over scrapping ships in such countries, but intensive research had found some Alang ship scrappers had improved their practices dramatically. Workers are *“registered”* with mandated rates of pay and no child labour is tolerated. The NZDF also says the navy has visited the shipyard several times and has sent someone to closely supervise the recycling process from start to finish. The **Endeavour** will be the first western owned warship to be dismantled in Alang. **Source:** TVNZ

50 ships deployed in India's area of responsibility: Navy

Around 50 Indian Navy vessels are currently deployed in sea lanes, including in areas of India’s maritime interest and in anti-piracy operations, the Navy said today. Around 50 Indian Navy vessels are currently deployed in sea lanes, including in areas of India’s maritime interest and in anti-piracy operations, the Navy said today. The Indian Navy has wider presence in the backyard, the Indian Ocean region, which is also witnessing an increasing presence of the Chinese navy. It also has

mission based deployments from the Persian Gulf to the Malacca Straits and from northern Bay of Bengal to the east coast of Africa and southern Indian ocean. "#MissionBasedDeployments From Persian Gulf to Malacca Straits & from Northern Bay of Bengal to Southern Indian Ocean to East coast of Africa @indiannavy with 50 ships on vigil 24X7 keep our Area of Responsibility (AOR) safe. @indiannavy Anytime, Anywhere Everytime @nsitharaman," the Indian Navy spokesperson tweeted. These are also the areas that have some of the vital Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs), which are of strategic interest to India. China, too, has deployed its ships in the Indian Ocean to carry out anti-piracy operations. It has a naval base in Djibouti and is building the Gwadar port in Pakistan, strategically situated at the mouth of the Persian Gulf.

Source : Moneycontrol

US submarine that fired on Syria not welcome in Naples, says mayor

The mayor of Naples has complained to port authorities after the **USS John Warner**, a nuclear submarine used in international strikes on Syria, was allowed to pass through the southern Italian city's waters last month. The **Warner** – known to its crew as the "Sledgehammer of Freedom" – stopped in Naples' harbour on March 20th, three and a half weeks before it fired cruise missiles on Syrian military facilities. Yet as Mayor Luigi de Magistris pointed out on Monday, the port of Naples is officially a "denuclearized zone", declared off-limits in 2015 to nuclear-powered vessels or those carrying nuclear weapons. In a note addressed to Rear Admiral Arturo Faraone, who commands the port authority, de Magistris urged him to remember in future that such vessels are not welcome in the waters of Naples, which has declared itself a "city of peace". "Our administration is not against anyone but it is in favour of policies of peace, disarmament and international cooperation," the mayor told Ansa.



The **USS John Warner** visited early April Gibraltar Photo : Francis Ferro ©

Faraone responded that he "shared the concerns" of keeping the port of Naples nuclear-free, but did not have the authority to deny or allow foreign military vessels entry to Italian waters, which falls under the Ministry of Defence's jurisdiction. The **Warner** remained three nautical miles (around six kilometres) outside the entrance to the port, he said. Italy has said that it will not participate in the offensive in Syria, led by the United States with support from France and the UK. It will, however, provide logistic support where necessary to its military allies. Italy hosts an estimated 13,000 American soldiers across six bases, including the Navy complex in Naples that houses US Naval Forces Europe and the Sixth Fleet. Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni is due to brief parliament on the situation in Syria on Tuesday afternoon.

source : The Local

China sends warning to Taiwan with naval drills near island

By GILLIAN WONG

China's navy is holding live-fire exercises near Taiwan on Wednesday in a warning to the democratic, self-ruled island against what Beijing describes as "dangerous" remarks on independence. Few details about the drills in the Taiwan Strait have been released by the Chinese government. State broadcaster China Central Television reported Wednesday that the exercises targeted advocates of formal independence for Taiwan, saying in a headline on its website, "Don't say you haven't been warned!" Taiwan's Defense Ministry spokesman, Chen Chung-chi, sought to downplay the drill, saying China was exaggerating the scale of the activity to create anxiety among the Taiwanese. "It is the Chinese Communist Party that has played this up with cheap verbal intimidation and saber rattling through the state media, hoping to create panic and unease." The Canon G12 washed up off the shores of a beach in Taiwan and was recovered by teacher Park Lee and his students while on a field trip to help clean up the beach. Chen described the exercise as "a regular artillery shooting exercise" and said China was hyping it up to sound like "a so-called military exercise in the Taiwan Strait." China's Defense Ministry did not immediately respond to questions. The maritime safety authority in the coastal province of Fujian announced the Taiwan Strait one-day drill last week, saying only that it would start at 8 a.m. and end at midnight. Last week's announcement of the drill coincided with President Xi Jinping's attendance at what was the largest fleet review since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. It comprised 48 ships, among them China's sole operating aircraft carrier, along with 76 helicopters, fighter jets and bombers, and more than 10,000 personnel. The fleet review last Thursday was held in the South China Sea, off the coast of Hainan province. Chinese officials have also denounced the recent passage of a U.S. law encouraging more high-level contacts with Taiwan. China says the Taiwan Travel Act violates U.S. commitments not to restore formal exchanges severed when Washington switched diplomatic recognition from Taipei to Beijing in 1979. An agreement to provide Taiwan with submarine manufacturing technology and the appointment of hawkish National Security

Adviser John Bolton have also hardened views among anti-American nationalists in China. China claims Taiwan as its own territory and says the sides, which separated during the Chinese civil war in 1949, must eventually be united, by force if necessary. Despite a lack of formal ties, Washington is legally bound to respond to threats to Taiwan and is the island's main supplier of foreign military hardware Beijing has also repeatedly criticized Taiwanese officials and has lately singled out Premier William Lai after he told the Taiwanese parliament that he's a "*Taiwanese independence worker*," saying that Taiwan is a sovereign, independent nation. Asked about Lai's comments, Liu Jieyi, director of China's Taiwan Affairs Office, said Monday, according to the Global Times newspaper: "*He's precisely a Taiwanese independence advocate!*" Liu was also quoted as saying that China "*has enough confidence and ability to stop any remarks and actions that attempt to separate any territory from the motherland.*" A spokesman for the same office said earlier this month that Lai's comments on independence are "*dangerous and presumptuous.*"

Source : ABCnews

Australian warships 'challenged' by Chinese navy in South China Sea

Malcolm Turnbull says Australia asserts 'right to freedom of navigation' through oceans

Australian Associated Press

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Defence sources say confrontations occurred between **HMAS Anzac**, pictured, and the Chinese military in the South China Sea. Photograph: Lsph Damien Pawlenko

China's military issued "*robust*" challenges to three Australian warships as they travelled through the South China Sea to Vietnam earlier this month, [the ABC reports](#).

Defence sources said the confrontations between **HMAS Anzac**, **HMAS Toowoomba** and **HMAS Success** and the People's Liberation Army occurred ahead of the Australian vessels' arrival for a three-day goodwill visit in Ho Chi Minh City. One official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, told the ABC exchanges with the PLA navy were polite but "*robust*". [The Australian prime minister, Malcolm Turnbull](#), would not reveal what happened in the exchange with the Chinese military when questioned about it on the sidelines of the Chogm meeting in London on Thursday, local time. "*All I can say to you is Australia asserts and practises its right of freedom of navigation throughout the world's oceans, including of course the [South China Sea](#).*" Turnbull said. "*As is our perfect right in accordance with international law.*" The defence department confirmed the three vessels recently travelled through the South [China](#) Sea but refused to provide details of the interactions between Australia's warships and Chinese military, the ABC reported on Friday. "*The [Australian defence force](#) has maintained a robust program of international engagement with countries in and around the South China Sea for decades,*" the department said. "*This includes bilateral and multilateral military exercises, port visits, maritime surveillance operations and ship transits. As they have done for many decades, Australian vessels and aircraft will continue to exercise rights under international law to freedom of navigation and overflight, including in the South China Sea.*" China recently completed a massive military drill in the South China Sea, where its claims are hotly disputed by Vietnam as well as the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan. China's construction of islands and military facilities in the South China Sea, through which some \$3tr in trade passes annually, has sparked concerns Beijing is seeking to restrict free movement and extend its strategic reach. The United States has conducted "*freedom of navigation patrols*" through the South China Sea, stoking tensions with China which says it will protect its sovereignty. The Australian navy ships **Anzac**, **Toowoomba** and **Success** are on a three-month deployment in south-east Asia, which will involve exercises with a number of countries in the region, the defence department said in a separate statement on 17 April. The **Toowoomba** sailed to Vietnam from Malaysia, while the other two Australian warships went through the South China Sea from Subic Bay in the Philippines.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com>

Adelaide class frigates sale discussions ongoing

Talks around the potential sale of Australia's Adelaide Class FFG frigates to Poland continued this week at the Defence Services Asia 2018 event.

Minister for Defence Industry Christopher Pyne met with Poland's Secretary of State in the Ministry of National Defense, Sebastian Chwalek, to continue the ongoing discussions which kicked off in March 2017 when Poland made an expression of interest in purchasing the frigates. Michal Jach, the chairman of the Polish Parliament's National Defence Committee, told the Safety Forum 2017 conference in Szczecin: "*The acquisition of used Adelaide frigates from Australia would represent a major upgrade for Poland, it would raise the combat capability of our Navy.*" Like Australia, Poland is working to

significantly modernise its defence capability, announcing last August it will spend tens of billions of dollars over the next 15 years.



Guided missile frigates (FFG) **HMAS Melbourne (05)** and **HMAS Newcastle (06)** sail in company off the south coast of New South Wales. **Photo: Australian DoD**

The vessels could provide enhanced ballistic missile defence to Poland, given the frigates are armed with a Mark 13 missile launcher for SM-2 missiles. Australia's Adelaide Class frigates, which

come out of service over the next two years, are being replaced by the three Hobart Class Air Warfare Destroyers, one of which has been active since September this year. The FFG frigates have been in service since 1980 and three of the original six are still in service. The frigates are modelled on the US Navy's Oliver Hazard Perry Class frigates, but were modified for Australian requirements. The first four vessels were built in the US, while the other two were constructed in Australia. Poland already operates two former Oliver Hazard Perry Class frigates – **ORP General Kazimierz Pulaski (273)** and **ORP General Tadeusz Kościuszko (273)**[sic] – and it is believed both frigates would be compatible with the Australia's FFGs. Australia and Poland are both in the process of strengthening their submarine capabilities, with Poland set to decide between France's Naval Group, Sweden's Saab and Germany's ThyssenKrupp Marine System for the supply of three new submarines. If Naval Group is selected, Australian SMEs in the supply chain for the Australian Future Submarine project may have the chance to contribute to Poland's submarines.

Source: Defence Connect

Damen positions Enforcer 10000 LDP for Malaysian multirole ship requirement



Netherlands shipbuilder Damen is positioning its Enforcer 10000 landing platform dock (LPD) to meet an anticipated requirement in the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMN) for multirole support ships (MRSS). Gysbert Boersma, Damen's sales director for Malaysia and Indonesia, told Jane's that the company is currently in talks with both the RMN and local industry in support of the bid. However, he also conceded that the MRSS programme is unlikely to start in the near term, given the general election in Malaysia in 2018 and the lack of funding that the procurement has so far secured from the country's national defence budget.

Source: IHS Jane's Defence Weekly

New Canadian warship project off to rocky start as bidders fail to meet some requirements

Canada's quest for a new fleet of warships is off to a rocky start with all bidders failing to meet some of the federal government's requirements. Procurement officials are now trying to regroup on the \$60-billion project and figure out ways that bidders might be able to change their proposals to make them acceptable, a number of defence industry executives pointed out. The problems centre on technical issues. Some are minor but in other cases there is a view among defence industry officials that Canada is asking for too much in some areas such as radar, which may be causing problems with meeting requirements. Public Services and Procurement Canada spokeswoman Michèle LaRose said the bids received for the Canadian Surface Combatant project have not been disqualified. Three bids have been received. The federal government and Irving Shipbuilding are still evaluating the proposals, she added. LaRose pointed out that the evaluation is at the second stage in the process. Government officials say that involves what is known as "the cure process" in which bidders will be given details of how their proposals have failed to meet the stated criteria. They will then be given only one opportunity to fix issues with their bids. If they are still considered "non-compliant" after the cure period they "will be eliminated from the competition," according to the federal government. Technical specifications are now being evaluated by the government. Later this year, the companies will provide the financial information related to their bids. Warship builders submitted their bids on Nov. 30. A winning bid is expected to be selected sometime this year. Irving Shipbuilding will begin

construction of the first ship in the early 2020s and delivery of the first vessel is expected in the mid-2020s, according to the federal government.



HMCS St. John's undergoes a mid-life refit at the Irving Shipbuilding facility in Halifax. **Photo: Andrew Vaughan**

But the project has been plagued with delays and controversy. The final cost of the ships is still unknown. In 2008 the government estimated the total cost of the project to be about \$26 billion. But in 2015 navy commander Vice Admiral Mark Norman voiced concern that taxpayers may not have been given all relevant information, and publicly predicted the cost for the ships alone would be around \$30 billion. Cost estimates for the project are now between \$55 billion and \$60 billion. About half of the cost is for systems and equipment that will go on the 15 ships, according to federal documents obtained by Postmedia through the Access to Information law. "Approximately one-half of the CSC build cost is comprised of labour in the (Irving's) Halifax yard and materials," the documents added. Last year, Jean-Denis Fr chet, the parliamentary budget officer, estimated the CSC program would cost \$61.82 billion. He also warned that every year the awarding of the contract is delayed beyond 2018, taxpayers will spend an extra \$3 billion because of inflation. The surface combatant will be the backbone of the future Royal Canadian Navy. In November in a surprise twist a French-Italian consortium declined to formally submit a bid and instead offered Canada a fleet of vessels at half the price. Officials with Fincantieri of Italy and Naval Group of France said they don't believe the procurement process as it is currently designed will be successful. Instead they provided the Canadian government with a direct proposal that Irving Shipbuilding on the east coast construct 15 ships based on the consortium's FREMM frigate design, which is proven and is currently in operation with the French and Italian navies. They are guaranteeing the cost of the ships at a fixed price of \$30 billion. The deal would have also focused on using Canadian technology on board the ships and included technology transfer to Canadian firms, so they could be involved in future sales of the FREMM vessels on the international market. FREMM ships are operated by the Italian, French, Moroccan and Egyptian navies. Under that plan, Irving could start building the warships almost immediately. The Liberal government, however, rejected the deal.

Source: The National Post

Read this article together with the next article.

Firms didn't bid on Canadian Surface Combatant because of concerns about technical data, says executive

In December Fincantieri of Italy and Naval Group of France decided not to bid on the Canadian Surface Combatant project. Instead, they offered the Canadian government a direct proposal that would see the companies build 15 of the consortium's FREMM frigates at a fixed price of roughly \$30 billion. The Liberal government rejected the offer. Fincantieri and Naval Group knew they were taking a chance when they passed on the formal bidding process for the CSC. Sources close to the European companies said at the time they felt they didn't have anything to lose. They alleged the Canadian competition was skewed to favour a bid by Lockheed Martin Canada and the British firm BAE which would see Canada buying the Type 26 frigate BAE is building for Britain's navy. The Canadian government had originally asked for only bids featuring proven ship designs. But it later changed those parameters to allow a bid from BAE, though the Type 26 was at the time still on the drawing board. Giuseppe Bono, the CEO of Fincantieri, recently told my colleagues at the U.S. publication Defense News of another concern that led to the decision not to bid on the CSC. Bono said that the firms were willing to turn over their sensitive technical data to the Canadian government but that they drew the line at providing the proprietary information to Irving and its team. "We said we were prepared to give the information to the Canadian government but not to a rival company if we didn't know if we were going to win the bid or not," Bono said. Fincantieri and Naval Group, along with other companies, have voiced concerns about Irving's alliance with the U.S. firm, Gibbs and Cox, a top U.S. naval architecture firm that designs surface warships. Gibbs and Cox is also the main competitor for many companies – including Fincantieri and Naval Group – pursuing ship contracts around the world. Irving, however, has rejected such concerns and has stated it is committed to protecting any sensitive data provided by companies bidding on CSC. But Fincantieri and Naval Group weren't buying that reassurance. The firms still have their proposal ready in case the Canadian procurement falls apart and the federal government decides on a different course of action. In February, the U.S. Navy named the FREMM design as

one of five it could consider for its future frigate program and has provided Fincantieri \$15 million to look at a design concept.

Source: Ottawa Citizen

First Peruvian Navy landing platform dock B.A.P. *Pisco* starts sea trials



Photo: Peruvian Navy

B.A.P. *Pisco*, the lead ship of the Peruvian Navy's landing platform dock ships, has started sea trials, the Peruvian Navy announced April 19. *Pisco* got

underway from the Peruvian state-owned shipyard SIMA (Servicios Industriales de la Marina S.A.) in Callao, where it was launched in April 2017, after starting construction in July 2013. Should all go according to plans, **B.A.P. *Pisco*** will be commissioned into Peruvian Navy service by the end of 2018. ***Pisco*** is the first of two ships in the class, based on the design of Makassar-class LPDs South Korean shipbuilder Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering (DSME) initially provided for the Indonesian Navy. PT PAL, the Indonesian shipbuilder who built the vessels under a transfer of technology agreement, subsequently built two vessels for the Philippine Navy which refers to them as Tarlac-class. A second Peruvian Navy LPD is also under construction. It was named **B.A.P. *Paita*** in a keel-laying ceremony held on December 14, 2017. The Peruvian Navy LPDs, built under a contract signed between Peru and DSME in 2012, are 122 meters in length and displace 7,290 tons. They feature a well deck for deployment of amphibious vehicles and are capable roll-on/roll-off operations. The ships' flight deck is capable of accommodating two Sikorsky Sea King helicopters in service with Peruvian naval forces.

Source: Naval Today



HDMS *Hvidbjørnen* (F360) moored in in Reykjavik (Iceland)

Photo : Henk Spanjer Lecturer maritime Institute Willem Barentsz – Terschelling ©

When approached by *Hvidbjørnen* the French trawler refused to let an inspection team aboard and started to sail towards the territorial border. During the chase the two ships collided (no persons injured) HDMS *Hvidbjørnen* and *Ejnar Mikkelsen* participated with Danish air elements in sovereignty and Search and Rescue exercises off Greenland's west coast in 2009. The vessels' patrol took them to the Nares Strait, close to Hans Island, the approaches to the Northwest Passage, and to Lancaster Sound. In Lancaster Sound they joined in a Search and Rescue exercise with the Canadian Coast Guard vessel the **CCGS *Henry Larsen***. HDMS *Hvidbjørnen* (*Hvidbjørnen* is older Danish for polar bear) is a Thetis-class ocean patrol vessel belonging to the Royal Danish Navy. HDMS *Hvidbjørnen* served as a platform for Commander Danish Task Group from 1998 to 2002, where after her sister ship *Thetis* assumed the role. During a patrol in the waters of the Faroe Islands, the French trawler *Bruix* was suspected of illegal fishing.

Source: Maasmond Maritime

Defence Secretary hails new submarine facility in Moray

Defence Secretary has said a new £132 million submarine-hunting aircraft facility is “integral” to defending the UK from the increasing threat from Russia. Gavin Williamson cut the first turf for the new home for the Poseidon marine patrol aircraft at RAF Lossiemouth in Moray. Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson. Pic: Getty Images Due to be completed in 2020, it will house nine Poseidon planes which carry missiles able to destroy submarines. Their key role is protect the Trident nuclear deterrent and the two new aircraft carriers and they will also be used to gather intelligence and carry out search and rescue missions. The new facility will include a tactical operations centre, operational conversion unit, accommodation, training and simulation centre and an aircraft hangar. Mr Williamson said: “With *Poseidon* going to be arriving here from 2020, this is

going to be absolutely integral in terms of our national security, in terms of dealing with the increasing threat that we're seeing from Russia. "What we've seen from Russia in terms of the North Atlantic is we've seen a tenfold increase in their submarine activity. "It is an area of operations which they are absolutely stepping up, using more and more of their submarines. "As a nation we have to respond to that threat, that's why Poseidon is so important." The move comes as the Scottish Government sought assurances over the future of the military in Scotland, amid concerns over the future of the Royal Marines in Arbroath. Scotland's Economy Secretary Keith Brown said: "The Ministry of Defence is now in the midst of a further review which has resulted in speculation about the future of the Royal Marines in Arbroath. "I urge the Defence Secretary to end those fears once and for all by providing clear assurances about Royal Marine numbers and their long term future at RM Condor, and to confirm that there will be no further cuts to Scottish bases, personnel numbers, or their ability to carry out essential training." Mr Williamson, who visited the RM Condor base prior to arriving at Lossiemouth, said: "It's disappointing when the Scottish Government insist on scaremongering. "In terms of our commitment to Scotland - we employ 20,000 people in Scotland we're going to be employing an extra 470 people here at Lossiemouth as a result of this investment - our commitment is absolute. "We're absolutely committed to the Royal Marines staying in Condor. It's rather disappointing the people try and scaremonger and make people worry about their future." Following the Lossiemouth visit, the Defence Secretary travelled to Glasgow to view the first completed unit of the new anti-submarine warship **HMS Glasgow** being built at BAE Systems in Govan. **Source: scotsman**



The Canadian Kingston class unit **Goose Bay 707** being towed out of Halifax by Tug **Glenside** photo: René Serrao, © Portuguese Cove, NS. The **Kingston class** was designed to fill the minesweeper, coastal patrol and reserve training needs of the Canadian Forces, replacing the Bay-class minesweepers, Porte-class gate vessels and Royal Canadian Mounted Police coastal launches in those roles. In order to perform these varied duties the Kingston-class vessels are designed to carry up to three 6.1-metre (20 ft) ISO containers with power hookups on the open deck aft in order to embark mission-specific payloads The seven module types available for embarkation include four route survey, two mechanical minesweeping and one bottom inspection modules The Kingston class displace 970 long tons (990 t) and are 55.3 metres (181 ft 5 in) long overall with a beam 11.3 metres (37 ft 1 in) and a draught of 3.4 metres (11 ft 2 in). The coastal defence vessels are powered by four Jeumont ANR-53-50 alternators coupled to four Wärtsilä UD 23V12 diesel engines creating 7.2 megawatts (9,700 hp). Two LIPS Z-drive azimuth thrusters are driven by two Jeumont CI 560L motors creating 3,000 horsepower (2,200 kW) and the Z drives can be rotated 360°. This gives the ships a maximum speed of 15 knots (28 km/h; 17 mph) and a range of 5,000 nautical miles (9,300 km; 5,800 mi) at 8 knots (15 km/h; 9.2 mph) The Kingston class is equipped with a Kelvin Hughes navigational radar using the I band and a Kelvin Hughes 6000 surface search radar scanning the E and F bands. The vessels carry an AN/SQS-511 towed side scan sonar for minesweeping and a Remote-control Mine Hunting System (RMHS). The vessels are equipped with one Bofors 40 mm/60 calibre Mk 5C gun and two M2 machine guns. The Kingston-class coastal defence vessels have a complement of 37. **Source: Maasmond Maritime**



The Royal Navy mine countermeasures vessel **HMS Cattistock** has returned to Portsmouth after four months of mine clearing work with NATO partners in the North Sea, the Baltic and down to the Channel Islands. The highlight was disposing of a 1000 lb USAF bomb off North East France. **Photo : Raymond Wergan, Newton Ferrer**



Units of the Coast Guard of Iceland moored in Reykjavik

Photo : Wibbo Hofman Lecturer Maritime Institute Willem Barentsz – Terschelling ©

The Icelandic Coast Guard (Icelandic: Landhelgisgæsla Íslands, Landhelgisgæslan or simply Gæslan) is the service responsible for Iceland's coastal defense and maritime and aeronautical search and rescue. Its origins can be traced to 1859, when the corvette *Ørnen* started patrolling Icelandic waters. In 1906, Iceland's first purposely built guard-ship, *Íslands Falk*, began operation. Iceland's own defense of its territorial waters began around 1920 and the Icelandic Coast Guard was formally founded on 1 July 1926. The first cannon was put on the trawler *Thor* in 1924 and on 23 June 1926 the first ship built for the Coast Guard, named *Óðinn*, arrived in Iceland. Three years later, on 14 July 1929 the coastal defence ship *Ægir* was added to the Coast Guard fleet. The Icelandic Coast Guard played its largest role during the Cod Wars between 1972 and 1975, when the Coast Guard ships would cut the trawl wires of British and West German trawlers and engaged in confrontations with Royal Navy warships, in order to enforce a disputed expansion on Icelandic fishing territory. The Coast Guard also maintains the Iceland Air Defence System which conducts ground surveillance of Iceland's air space.

Navy, Marine Leadership Looking at LPD Flight II Missiles, Additional Virginia-class Buys

By: Megan Eckstein

Navy and Marine Corps leaders are mulling if and how to up-gun the San Antonio-class LPD Flight II ships; whether to buy more attack submarines and how to extend the lives of a handful of Los Angeles-class; and other ideas to increase the size and the lethality of the fleet in the near- to mid-term. Top Navy leadership testified at two hearings with the Senate Armed Services Committee this week and addressed several ship classes that are important to fleet operations today and going forward. The Navy just last week announced that its LX(R) effort to replace the Whidbey Island-class dock landing ships (LSD-41/49) would be formally named LPD Flight II, a nod to the San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock (LPD-17) design upon which these ships will be based. With that detail determined, two questions quickly arose: how fast can the Navy buy them, and how much can the Navy and Marine Corps up-gun them? Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. Robert Neller frequently talks about Marines having to “fight to get to the fight” in the future, with Marines supporting sea control however they can while sailing to the ground fight, rather than passively transiting on amphibious ships and not having to do any real work until they arrive at their destination. To support this notion, Neller and others have suggested the Marines would do whatever they could – up to and including firing their Light Armored Vehicles (LAVs) from the amphibious ships, if they had to – to participate in a naval battle. During a Thursday hearing, Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.) asked Neller about the role of amphibians. “I think every surface combatant is exactly that, it’s a warship. And there’s capabilities that we can leverage on the LPD hull form, for example,” Neller began to say. “What if we put the vertical launch system (VLS) on the Flight II LPDs?” Wicker asked “I think that’s a great idea,” Neller replied. “You agree, Secretary Spencer?” Wicker asked, turning towards Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer, who was also testifying at the hearing. “Most definitely,” Spencer agreed. After the hearing, Spencer told USNI News that the VLS idea was only one being floated. Something akin to the over-the-horizon missile that the Littoral Combat Ship program is in the process of acquiring – which can be bolted on to the deck of the ship rather than installed underneath the deck – would be a less intrusive option to consider. Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson, who also testified at the hearing, told USNI News that “the key to delivering things on-time and on-schedule is stable design before we start building. So as we move forward ... this system the secretary

described is attractive because it's a canister, you load it on, it's almost a standalone system. You don't have to change the ship's design a lot." With the LPD Flight II program, Richardson said a focus is "how do we get the best ship at the best value and the best schedule for that" – which could point to a bolt-on option rather than a redesign to incorporate VLS. The LCS's over-the-horizon missile competition is still ongoing, with a contract award expected in the third quarter of this fiscal year, and whichever missile system is selected may be one option for the LPD Flight II program for the sake of commonality. Another option being discussed is a BAE Systems angled "VLS-like" launcher that is fully compatible with missile canisters developed for the Mk-41 VLS system. Much like Boeing's Harpoon missile that USS Coronado (LCS-4) has used to hit over-the-horizon surface targets, the BAE Systems "Adaptable Deck Launcher" would be bolted on to the deck and controlled through the ship's combat system. Charlie McCullough, director of maritime business development at BAE Systems' Platforms & Services, told USNI News earlier this month that the Adaptable Deck Launcher could fire the Standard Missile, Tomahawk, Evolved SeaSparrow Missile and others that can be fired from a VLS cell. would be bolted to the top of the ship deck instead of installed underneath it. This model shows a four-cell launcher, with one cell holding four missile canisters. USNI News photo During a Tuesday hearing of the SASC seapower subcommittee, Wicker asked Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition James Geurts about the LPD Flight II acquisition plan. "It's a derivative design, so that will be a high-confidence acquisition," Geurts said. Lawmakers included funding in the recently-passed Fiscal Year 2018 spending bill for an LPD-30 hull, which Geurts decided earlier this month would be the first of the Flight II ships. The Navy had already put in a request for FY 2019 by the time the 2018 spending bill was passed, and the 2019 request did not include any funds for the LPD program. "Our current strategy is award that '18 ship as quickly as we can to ensure we support ... the Marine Corps, and then I think we'll look closely – it would appear to me that the serial production opportunities for the continuous production of that LPD-17 would be right for either a multiyear or a block buy," Geurts told the seapower subcommittee. "Currently our next buy is in '20. ... If you were to add some economic order quantity or long-lead funding in '19, that could accelerate delivery of those. If that's not available, we could do a block buy or a multiyear in FY '20. Putting some money in FY '19 would help schedule a little bit, but we could execute in either manner." The first 13 LPDs were bought one at a time – no multi-ship deals were ever used – partly due to quality issues in the early ships and partly due to instability within the program in terms of requirements and total program quantity. With the design proven and stable – except for the discussion around the VLS cells – the Navy and Ingalls Shipbuilding in Pascagoula, Miss., would be in a strong position to negotiate a multi-ship buy. After announcing last week that the Navy would extend the service life of every single Arleigh Burke-class destroyer out to 45 years as a means of boosting the size of the fleet and reaching the Navy's 355-ship goal faster, Spencer said on Thursday that "we also have some other plans we're working on, so stand by." The Navy is considering a number of options to reach 355 ships even faster – so long as the plan reaches the right balance of ship types – submarines, destroyers, small surface combatants, amphibious ships, and so on – balances new ship procurement with the ability to man and maintain existing ships, and considers industrial base needs, he said. During the Tuesday seapower subcommittee hearing, Vice Adm. Bill Merz, the deputy chief of naval operations for warfare systems, said extending the entire Arleigh Burke class to a 45-year life – including the ships under construction today and that have not even been built yet – has been done with previous ship classes and would be considered again down the road as an efficient way to retain more ships in the fleet. "This is not without precedence: we did it with the Ohio class (SSBNs and SSGNs). Probably aren't any other classes right now, they're all too new –Virginia (SSNs) may be a candidate, depending on her fuel usage over her life; and then of course the small surface combatants are all relatively new, that may be another candidate later on in the shipbuilding plan as we get more data back on how the ship is performing," Merz said. Though the Los Angeles-class attack submarines cannot be extended as a whole class, as many as five boats will be given new reactor cores and extended, with the Navy planning to re-core and extend the life of the first sub in FY 2019. With the size of the attack submarine force declining for many more years until it eventually begins to grow again – even as combatant commander demand for the SSNs far exceeds the Navy's capacity – Geurts said, "we think we can extend the life of five of those. That will not solve the problem, it will mitigate a little bit the worst part of the dip, so that's something we're studying closely."

Attack submarines are projected to hit a low of just 42 boats in FY 2028, and destroyers would hit a low of 88 in FY 2035, as older hulls retire, according to the Navy's most recent long-range ship plan. Overall the Navy is bracing for a dip in fleet size from about 2025 to 2032 – but moves like extending all the DDGs' lives and extending up to five SSNs change the timing and the depth of that dip in fleet size. Merz said the Navy is closely looking at years where it could buy a third Virginia-class attack submarine – something industry has made clear it wants – in between buying the Columbia-class ballistic-missile submarine, which is the Navy's top acquisition priority and, with a hefty cost, will put a strain on the rest of the shipbuilding budget during the 2020s. "Where we sit today is, we can't build ships and deliver them in time to fill in that dip," Merz said, partly due to the lengthy nature of shipbuilding and partly due to the looming Columbia-class bill "However, extending the class of DDG-51 is the only lever we've pulled so far, we are still looking at candidate years for a third SSN, and then all the other ship lines that we identified excess capacity that, working with Congress, we may be able to continue to bolster those lines more rapidly. It will help recover from the dip, but there will still be a dip outside the [five-year Future Years Defense Program] to a degree." After USNI News reported last week that no Littoral Combat Ships would deploy this year as a result of most of the LCS fleet being in maintenance now and a need to "reset" while transitioning to a new training and crewing model, Merz, Richardson and Spencer were asked about the LCS program by Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ar.). Richardson acknowledged that the LCS is "a program that has been

through some troubled times, and I would say that in the past we probably pushed that ship out forward-deployed a little bit ahead of its time, before the program had stabilized and we had done the appropriate testing and gained the confidence. As soon as I got in as the chief of naval operations I directed the commander of naval surface forces to take a look at that program, rationalize it, and make it look a lot more like a normal shipbuilding program and a ship operating program. So this is what led to changes in the maintenance approach, changes in the blue-gold crewing, the way that we are going to homeport these squadrons and forward-deploy them. "2018 is really a reflection of that shift, and so starting in 2019 we're going to start forward-deploying those: they'll be sustainable, they'll be more lethal by virtue of the enhancements we're putting on those Littoral Combat Ships," Richardson continued "We have 24 deployments planned between '19 and '24, and so really '18 is a reset year to get maintenance and manning in place so that we can deploy these in a sustainable fashion." **Source : USNI**



The patrol vessel P 264 moored in port of Santiago / Cabo Verde Photo : Hermann Hazenberg ©

Workhorses of the sea



The *Skandi Buzios* operating in the Campos Basin offshore Brazil Photo : Capt Jan Plug Master Seven Rio ©