

NAVY NEWS WEEK 25-3

19 June 2018

Australian frigate nets three more drug hauls in Middle East

Royal Australian Navy frigate **HMAS Warramunga** has made an additional three narcotics seizures in the Middle East, bringing the total amount of drugs seized to well over 33 tons.



Seized narcotics being loaded aboard during **HMAS Warramunga's** deployment on **Operation Manitou**.
Photo: RAN

In the three boarding operations carried out in the Arabian Sea between June 3 and 5, Australian sailors seized close to six tons of hashish worth approximately AUD\$294.3 million. The first seizure uncovered 3.3 tons of hashish from a suspect vessel. **Warramunga's** Seahawk Romeo crew identified the second and third suspicious vessels carrying 2.6 tonnes and 40 kilograms of hashish. Commanding Officer **HMAS Warramunga**, Commander Dugald Clelland, Royal Australian Navy, said the ship's company had shown determination and professionalism during the current patrol. *"The crew of **HMAS Warramunga** has been on deployment in the Middle East for more than six months, but everyone onboard remains focused on the mission at hand,"* Commander Clelland said. *"Three successful seizures for **Warramunga** and taking over AUD\$2 billion out of the hands of terrorist networks lifts the morale of the crew, who have all worked exceptionally well together throughout the deployment."* **Warramunga** has now intercepted, seized and disposed of approximately 31.8 tons of hashish and approximately two tonnes of heroin, valued at around AUD\$2.17 billion since starting operations in the Middle East in November 2017. **Operation Manitou** is the Australian government's contribution to support international efforts to promote maritime security, stability and prosperity in the Middle East Region. **Warramunga** is part of the Combined Maritime Forces operating under the United Kingdom-led Combined Task Force 150 (CTF 150).
Source: Maasmond Maritime



The **Silver Cloud** seen near Tower Bridge, London, June 2 moored next to the historic warship **HMS Belfast**

Photo : Sarah Caffyn, Heathfield ©

OP Nistar – Evacuation of Stranded Indians from Socotra, Yemen

In response to a distress call received from the DG shipping and the Indian Sailing Vessels Association, Indian Naval Ship **Sunayna**, currently deployed for a mission based deployment in the Gulf of Aden, was directed to evacuate 38 Indian

nationals stranded on the Yemeni island of Socotra in the aftermath of cyclone Mekenu. A very Severe Cyclonic Storm Mekenu crossed the Yemeni Island of Socotra on 24 May 18, leaving the 38 Indians stranded on the island with limited food and water. Also, three Indian dhows at Socotra suffered damages/ sank alongside in the harbour and another Dhow, MSV



Safina Al Khijar with 12 Indians onboard is reported to be missing. Based on this information, the Indian Navy undertook two aerial sorties on 27 and 28 May 18 to search for the missing 18 Indians. **INS Sunayna**, deployed on a mission based deployment in the Gulf of Aden was pressed into action to evacuate the 38 Indian nationals from Socotra. The operation, code name '**NISTAR**', was carried out on the morning of 03 Jun 18 off the coast of Socotra. The evacuated Indians were embarked onboard and immediately provided with medical care, food, water and telephone facilities to call and reassure their families at home. All 38 have been reported to be safe. Post evacuation, the ship would be proceeding towards Porbandar to disembark the Indians ashore.

Source: Maasmond Maritime



Hindustan is the name traditionally given to the static training ship permanently moored at the Britannia Royal Naval College, although the ship is not in commission and thus not prefixed as HMS. The current **Hindustan** was previously **HMS Cromer**, a Sandown-class minehunter that became the static training ship in 2002. **photo ; Hans van der Ster**

Five ships of the Royal Navy have been named **HMS Hindustan** or **Hindostan**, after the old name for the Indian subcontinent:

☐ **HMS Hindustan** (1795) was a former East Indiaman by the same name and launched in 1789. The Admiralty purchased her in 1795 and classed her as a 54-gun fourth rate. She was converted into a storeship in 1802 and burned in an accident in 1804.

☐ **HMS Hindostan** (1804) was another former East Indiaman, previously named Admiral Rainier. She was purchased in 1804 and classed as a 50-gun fifth rate. She was converted into a 20-gun storeship in 1811, renamed **HMS Dolphin** in 1819, and **HMS Justitia** in 1831, when she became a convict ship. She was sold in 1855.

☐ **HMS Hindustan** (1841) was an 80-gun ship of the line launched in 1841. She became a training ship in 1868 and was renamed **Fisgard III** in 1905. She was renamed **Hindostan** in 1920 and was sold in 1921. Her timbers were used in the construction of Liberty's in London.

☐ **HMS Hindustan** (1903) was an 18-gun twin propeller pre-dreadnought battleship of the King Edward VII class. She was launched in 1903, sold in 1921 and scrapped in 1923. In 1911, the Prince of Wales served 3 months aboard as a junior midshipman.

☐ **HMS Hindustan (L80)** was a Hastings-class sloop of the Royal Indian Marine launched in 1930. She was involved in The Royal Indian Navy Mutiny in 1946. She was sold to the Pakistani Navy in 1948 and renamed **Karsaz**. She was broken up in 1951.

China's security concept contributing to Asia's long-term security, development

China's concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security has clarified the country's stance on issues of regional concern, contributing to long-term stability and development in Asia, Chinese delegates to the ongoing 17th Shangri-La Dialogue said Saturday. The policy package includes the promotion of common development, building of partnerships, improvement of existing multilateral frameworks, rule-setting, military exchanges and proper settlement of differences. Speaking at a special session of the dialogue, officially known as the Asia Security Summit, He Lei, vice

president of the Academy of Military Science of the Chinese People's Liberation Army and the head of the Chinese delegation to the dialogue, said the Asia-Pacific region has witnessed a growing gap between economic development and



security, with economy maintaining a steady and fast growth and security still facing many uncertain factors. The security challenges include the rising "zero-sum" competition; disputes over territorial sovereignty, maritime rights and interests as well as the non-traditional security threats, such as terrorism, natural disasters and transnational crimes among others, He said. "To ensure long-term stability and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific, China has put forward a number of proposals that have been highly valued by the international community." China advocates the concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, takes win-win cooperation as the core of new international relations based on partnerships instead of alliances, and strives to pursue a new path of security which is built by all, shared by all, win-win for all and safeguarded by all, He said. China also champions common development to consolidate economic foundation for peace and stability in the region as there are many regional security issues that cannot be solved without development, the chief delegate said. "Achieving common development is the fundamental guarantee of peace and stability, and the 'master key' to solving security problems." The China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative is not only a path of development but also a path of peace, as it will not only bring opportunities to the economic development of regional countries, but also provide ideas and solutions for them to solve security problems, he noted. The Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road initiative, proposed by China in 2013, is aimed at building a trade and infrastructure network connecting Asia with Europe and Africa along the ancient trade routes. China also calls for improving regional security architecture to lay a solid foundation for enduring peace and stability in the region, He said, adding that China also calls on countries to properly handle differences and disputes to maintain the peaceful and stable environment in the region. Echoing He at a discussion session of the Shangri-La Dialogue, Zhou Bo, director of the Center for Security Cooperation at the Office for International Military Cooperation at Chinese Defense Ministry, said China, while recognizing that peaceful development of its own is closely linked to the future of the Asia-Pacific, puts forward the concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and supports active bilateral and multilateral security dialogue and collaboration, so as to move forward economic and security cooperation in the region. China holds the view that a country should not pursue its own absolute security at the expense of that of others, said Zhou. Meanwhile, Zhao Xiaozhuo from the Xiangshan Forum Secretariat said China, seeking to promote common development and prosperity, has put forward the Belt and Road Initiative which also aims at connecting countries along the routes and promoting unimpeded trade among countries and understanding among peoples. Since its launch in 2002 by the British think tank International Institute for Strategic Studies and the Singaporean government, Shangri-La Dialogue has been held annually as an Asian security forum.

Source: xinhuanet

Clearly the Chinese point of view, ignoring the grabbing of the SCS altogether.

Russian Naval ships anchored at Cam Ranh port, begin Vietnam visit

Hanoi (VNA) –

A Russian Pacific Fleet detachment comprising destroyers **Admiral Tributs** and **Admiral Vingradov** and tanker **Pechenga** arrived in Cam Ranh International Port of south central Khanh Hoa province on June 3, starting a four-day visit to Vietnam. A welcome ceremony was held at the port for the three ships with 819 crewmembers on board, including 76 officers and 680 sailors. The visit is one of activities to realise agreements reached by the two defence ministries' leaders, thus contributing to intensifying the Vietnam-Russia traditional friendship and boosting bilateral defence cooperation, including collaboration between the two navies. During the visit, the Russian officers are scheduled to pay courtesy visits to leaders of the provincial People's Committee and the Naval Region 4 High Command, lay wreaths at a monument to soldiers of the former Soviet Union, Russia and Vietnam who sacrificed for peace and stability in the region. Russian sailors and other crewmembers also participate in sports event with soldiers of the Naval Region 4 High Command.

Source: VNA



ML1387, HMS Medusa, is a Harbour Defence Motor Launch built in Poole in 1943, one of 480 vessels designed to provide an offshore anti-submarine screen for harbours. Entirely built of wood, and powered by diesel engines, they were not fast but had huge endurance. The original concept was for them to be transported to where they were needed as deck cargo but soon they were making the passages themselves from the UK to the Mediterranean, West Indies, South Africa and the Far East. The **Medusa Trust**, a registered charity, exists to preserve **HMS Medusa, ML1387**, for future generations. Our mission is to keep **Medusa** operational and at sea for as long as possible as a tribute to the veterans, education of the public and inspiration of the young. Medusa's importance to the nation's maritime heritage is recognised by her inclusion in the National Historic Fleet. **Medusa** has undergone a major refit mainly funded by The Heritage Lottery Fund. The work has been done in conjunction with The Maritime Workshop of Gosport and has provided an opportunity to young shipwrights to learn and practise traditional shipbuilding skills. **MEDUSA** was re-launched on 1 March 2010 and re-dedicated at a ceremony attended by HRH the Princess Royal on 21 October 2010. At this ceremony **Medusa** was presented with the first of the new Historic Ships Red Ensigns. **Medusa** is entirely funded by donations and operated by volunteers. **Medusa** operates out of Haslar Marina, Gosport. She is certificated by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency for commercial use, and, as well as a programme of visits to UK and French ports, takes Royal Navy CCF cadets to sea for seamanship and navigation training. Photo : Hans van der Ster ©

Doesn't she look very familiar?

Italian manufacturer wants to help build that bigger U.S. Navy fleet

By Aaron Gregg

Competition is heating up in the race to build the Navy's next warship, with foreign and U.S. manufacturers vying for a multibillion-dollar opportunity. In February, the Navy announced it had shortlisted five shipbuilders for the FFG(X) program, which calls for a replacement for the littoral combat ship. Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics, Huntington Ingalls, Austal and Fincantieri were awarded research-and-development contracts this year, and the service expects to pick a single company to oversee the program in 2020. The opportunity has sparked a competitive scramble among the five companies shortlisted for the project. Fincantieri, a Trieste, Italy, manufacturer that maintains a U.S. shipyard in Wisconsin, took the opportunity last week to showcase the **ITS Alpino** warship in Baltimore, while the Italian navy embarked on a tour along the U.S. Eastern Seaboard. "What we're trying to do with this visit is show the U.S. Navy what the art of the possible is," said Richard Hunt, a retired U.S. Navy vice admiral who is Fincantieri's chief strategy officer. The Navy and White House have been decidedly more modest about the military's shipbuilding plans since Donald Trump said on the campaign trail that he wanted to build a 350-ship Navy. Estimates put together by the Congressional Research Service and the Congressional Budget Office found that the Navy's long-term shipbuilding plan to build a 355-ship Navy would not be attained until at least 2050 under current budgets. (The Navy has fewer than 300 ships today.) Still, the warship competition is a major long-term opportunity for whichever manufacturer becomes the primary contractor. The Navy plans to stop buying the littoral combat ship, which has been criticized for growing costs and concerns over whether it could adequately sustain battle damage. The Navy wants to start buying the new frigates in 2020, which leaves little time for R&D. After that, the service plans to buy 20 frigates, one or two per year, at an estimated cost of \$800 million to \$900 million each. The Navy's 2019 budget requested \$134.8 million in R&D funding for the program as the Navy moves toward selecting a manufacturer, and expects to spend between \$850 million and \$1.8 billion for the program annually from 2020 to 2023, according to the CRS. Companies such as Fincantieri, General Dynamics and Lockheed Martin, which specialize in massive procurements of large pieces of military hardware including ships and jets, are trying to capitalize on a broader policy shift that has moved the Pentagon's spending priorities away from counterterrorism, and instead on buying advanced weaponry designed to deter foreign aggression. Gigantic and intimidating weaponry is back in vogue, these companies say. And with the U.S. defense budget growing

again, acquiring such gear might be more viable. *“With Russia and China really going gangbusters as far as aggressiveness and capability, it calls attention to filling the void as far as the frigate is concerned,”* said Hunt, the Fincantieri executive. *“We’re in a Cold War-type environment again.”* To start buying ships by 2020, the Navy is asking for something that has already been produced and demonstrated elsewhere. The contractors shortlisted for the opportunity are mainly pitching souped-up versions of warships that are in service now. Austal USA, an Alabama-based subsidiary of an Australian shipping company, is one of two manufacturers behind the Navy’s littoral combat ship. It is pitching a modified version of its earlier product, something that could offer the Navy an easier transition between systems. General Dynamics, which operates a shipyard in Bath, Maine, is pitching a 6,000-ton frigate used by the Australian, Spanish and Norwegian militaries. Lockheed Martin has sold the Saudi government on its design. And Fincantieri’s FREMM model is in use by navies in Italy and France. The combat capabilities offered by Fincantieri’s ship are similar to what the U.S. already has, so the company is pitching its product as more *“sailor-focused.”* *“My navy is little, and when we come to America everything seems bigger and better, but everybody tells me, ‘Your ship is beautiful,’”* said Mario Olivieri, an Italian navy ensign and the public information officer for the **ITS Alpino**. Built for a smaller crew, the ship boasts an internal spaciousness that cuts against most U.S. Navy ships, where sailors are packed into tight living quarters. Hunt has said that the design of the ship’s bridge, for example, could lead to heightened safety for the Navy because it gives sailors a 180-degree view of the area at the front of the ship. Hunt pointed to an Aug. 21 incident in which the **USS John McCain**, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, collided with a merchant vessel in the waters off Singapore, killing 10 sailors. It was one of several incidents that the Navy has faced in the past year. It is unclear whether equipment deficiencies played a role in the crash. A U.S. Navy investigation concluded that officers were at fault, blaming *“complacency, over-confidence and a lack of procedural compliance”* on the part of specific individuals in the collision. A naval officer recently pleaded guilty to dereliction of duty in the case. Still, Fincantieri has said better visibility from the ship’s bridge might prevent collisions. *“The design drives the way people behave,”* Hunt said. *“So many people could have stopped that situation, but they didn’t because people were clustered together, looking down at computer screens.”*

Source : The Washington Post

U.S. Navy Weighs Passage through Taiwan Strait

The United States is considering sending a warship through the Taiwan Strait, U.S. officials say, in a move that could provoke a sharp reaction from Beijing at a time when Sino-U.S. ties are under pressure from trade disputes and the North Korean nuclear crisis. A U.S. warship passage, should it happen, could be seen in Taiwan as a fresh sign of support by President Donald Trump after a series of Chinese military drills around the self-ruled island. China claims Taiwan as part of its territory.



Preparation for getting underway aboard the guided missile destroyer **USS (Shoup (DDG 86))**. Photo: Eli J. Medellin.

U.S. officials told Reuters that the United States had already examined plans for an aircraft carrier passage once this year but ultimately did not pursue them, perhaps because of concerns about upsetting China. The last time a U.S. aircraft carrier transited

the Taiwan Strait was in 2007, during the administration of George W. Bush, and some U.S. military officials believe a carrier transit is overdue. Another, less provocative option would be resuming the periodic, but still infrequent, passages by other U.S. Navy ships through the Strait, the last of which was in July 2017. The Pentagon declined comment on any potential future operations and it was unclear how soon a passage might take place. Speaking in Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying urged the United States to prudently handle the Taiwan issue so as to avoid harming bilateral ties and peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait region. *“We have repeatedly emphasized that the Taiwan issue is the most important and sensitive core issue in the China-U.S. relationship,”* she told a daily news briefing on Tuesday. Taiwan’s Defense Ministry declined to comment, saying the news had yet to be verified. Trump, who broke protocol as president-elect by taking a phone call from Taiwan’s president in 2016, has toned down his rhetoric about Taiwan in recent months as he seeks China’s aid in the nuclear standoff with North Korea. The United States and China are also trying to find their way out of a major trade dispute that has seen the world’s two economic heavyweights threaten tit-for-tat tariffs on goods worth up to \$150 billion each. China has alarmed Taiwan by ramping up military exercises this year, including flying bombers and other military aircraft around the island and sending its carrier through the narrow Taiwan Strait separating it from Taiwan. *“They’re turning up the heat,”* a fourth U.S. official said, speaking on condition of anonymity to describe the U.S. view of Chinese activities around Taiwan. Separately, it now appears unlikely the United States will send top officials to a June 12

dedication ceremony for the new American Institute in Taiwan, America's de facto embassy in Taiwan. Washington does not have formal ties with Taipei. U.S. officials told Reuters that the date clashes with the planned June 12 summit between Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, but added there will be another opportunity to commemorate the institute's unveiling in September.

Source: gCaptain / Reuters

Belgian frigate *Louise-Marie* in first Harpoon missile firing



Photo: Belgian Navy

Karel Doorman-class frigate **BNS *Louise-Marie* F931** recently became the first Belgian Navy ship to fire the Harpoon anti-ship missile during live firing drills off Norway. The event, which took place off Tromsø, Norway, from May 28 to

31, was captured on video and shared by the Belgian Navy. Though the Harpoon is a primary surface weapon on the Karel Dorman-class frigates, the Belgian Navy had never used it before due to the high cost of the missile and limited inventory. The maiden Harpoon firing was a success, Lieutenant Commander Nicolas Van Damme explained, with the missile hitting a radar reflector target which was positioned on a raft about 17 nautical miles (about 31.5 km) from the ship. In addition to the Harpoon, **BNS *Louise Marie*** also tested its Sea Sparrow anti-aircraft missile, the 76 mm OTO Melara gun and the Goalkeeper close in weapon system. The firings were carried out as part of an international missile exercise called Mjøltnir, which is known as the Hammer of Thor in Norse mythology. A total of six ships participated in the firings which mostly took place at night to avoid traffic at sea.

Source: Naval Today

India's conventional submarine under upgrade in Russia to be floated out in coming days



India's diesel-electric submarine ***Sindhukesari*** under repairs with upgrade in Russia has been rolled out from the workshop of the Zvyozdochka Shipyard in Severodvinsk. The sub will be floated out in several days, a source in defense and diplomatic circles told TASS on Thursday. "*The Indian Navy's submarine **Sindhukesari** has been rolled out of the workshop and the slipway stage of the repairs has been completed. In several days, it will be floated out for outfitting work,*" the source said. After the repairs with the upgrade are over, "*the service life of the **Sindhukesari** will be extended by 10 years to 35 years,*" the source noted. The ***Sindhukesari*** is undergoing medium repairs with the upgrade in Russia for the second time now. Another Indian submarine of this class, the ***Sindhuraj***, is also currently at the Zvyozdochka Shipyard. Russia's Federal Service for Military and Technical Cooperation and the United Ship-Building Corporation declined to comment on this information for TASS. A contract for the ***Sindhukesari***'s medium repairs with the upgrade was

signed in 2015. The term of the repairs is 27 months. The ***Rolldock Star*** vessel delivered the ***Sindhukesari*** to

Severodvinsk in June 2016.



The ***Rolldock Star*** vessel delivered the ***Sindhukesari*** to Severodvinsk in June 2016.

The ***Sindhukesari*** became the sixth Russian-built Project 877EKM

submarine undergoing upgrade at the Zvyozdochka Shipyard for the Indian Navy. Before that, the Severodvinsk-based facility specializing in the repair and decommissioning of nuclear submarines has modernized five diesel-electric subs at its slipway on order from the Indian Navy since 1997: the ***Sindhuvir***, the ***Sindhuratna***, the ***Sindhugosh***, the ***Sindhuvijay*** and the

Sindhurakshak. The Zvyozdochka Shipyard also provided repairs and upgrade of the submarine Sindhukirti at its base (Visakhapatnam). The **Sindhukesari** was built at the Leningrad Admiralty Association (currently, the Admiralty Shipyard). The sub went into service with the Indian Navy in 1989. It underwent medium repairs and modernization at the Admiralty Shipyard. The **Sindhuraj** was laid down at the Krasnoye Sormovo Shipyard in Nizhny Novgorod in 1985 on order from the Indian government. In 1987, the submarine entered service with the Indian Navy. The Admiralty Shipyard also performed the first medium repairs of this submarine. In 2017, the **Sindhuraj** was delivered to the Zvyozdochka Shipyard for the second medium repairs.

Source : TASS

Damen-Saab duo unveils Walrus-replacement submarine design

Swedish submarine specialist Saab and its Dutch partner Damen have unveiled official images of their proposal for the Royal Netherlands Navy's Walrus-class submarine replacement program. Speaking to Dutch newspaper Telegraaf, the heads of two companies provided drawings and first details on the capabilities of their submarine proposal. According to the images released by the companies, the submarine would be based on Saab's export variant of the A26 air-independent propulsion submarine the company is building for the Swedish Navy.



Photo: Damen

Speaking to the Telegraaf, Damen managing director Hein van Ameijden and Saab Kockums head Gunnar Wieslander noted that the modular

design of the boat would allow Dutch companies to implement their products in the submarine and to renew them easily during the life cycle. They further said that the Special Forces launcher, placed next to the torpedo tubes in the nose of the boat would allow divers to swim out horizontally. Thanks to a diameter of one and a half meters, the pipe will be wide enough to launch miniature sea-going vessels, both manned and unmanned, it was further said. Saab and Damen have been working on a proposal for the Dutch Navy's Walrus replacement program since signing a teaming agreement in January 2015. The Dutch defense ministry expects the Walrus replacement program to cost over 2.5 billion euro. Contracts for the submarine construction are expected to be awarded in 2021 with the first submarine arriving in 2027.

Source: Naval Today

Two More Type 054A Frigates from China for Pakistan Navy

A contract for the acquisition of two additional Type 054A Frigates for Pakistan Navy was signed with M/s China Shipbuilding Trading Company Ltd (CSTC), at Ministry of Defence Production, Rawalpindi. Pakistan's deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Operations), Rear Admiral Faisal Rasul Lodhi was present on the occasion. With the conclusion of this contract, Pakistan Navy will have a total of 4 x Type 054A ships in its Fleet by 2021. The induction of these Ships will substantially enhance Pakistan navy's war fighting capabilities while effectively contributing towards Maritime Security Operations in the region.



Two Type 054A Frigates of the East Sea Fleet in a Naval Exercise

The contract value of the four Type 054As for the Pakistan

Navy is unknown, but Pakistan paid about US \$ 200 million (per ship) for the older, smaller F-22Ps. The Chinese Navy is acquiring Type 054A at a unit price of US \$ 218 million. For China, the increasing endowment of Chinese military equipment by Pakistan will continue to deepen the political-military relationship between the two countries, and will further consolidate the Chinese position in this crucial part for its maritime silk route.

About Type 054A Frigates

Designed by the CSIC's 701 Institute, the Type 054A frigate primary mission is "*fleet anti-submarine warfare*" as mentioned in the specifications of the Chinese Navy HQ. The 3,600-ton (standard) vessel is therefore equipped with a number of

weapon systems for this function, such as Type 183 acoustic warfare system, Type 562 anti-torpedo system, Type 307 hull mounted sonar and Type 206 towed array (updated to Type 311 later), Yu-7 torpedo launcher, WHH-003A anti-submarine rocket, and Yu-8 anti-submarine missiles. The vessel is also equipped with eight YJ-83J anti-ship missiles, one H/PJ-26 76mm main gun, two H/PJ-12 CIWS (updated to H/PJ-11 from the 17th vessel of series), as well as a 32x VLS cells capable of launching both the HQ-16 surface to air missile and the Yu-8 ASROC. Since the commissioning of the 1st vessel in January 2008, 10 years ago, a total of 26 Type 054A frigates have already joined the Chinese fleet and they are actively conducting patrol missions from the Bohai Bay to the Gulf of Aden, passing through the western Pacific Ocean, the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. Today 4 hulls are still under construction or fitting out at the Hudong shipyard in Shanghai and Huangpu shipyard in Guangzhou. A successor, the Type 054B featuring electric propulsion, will soon enter production. Regarding the equipment for the Pakistan Navy variant, it is almost certain that all the systems used by the Chinese Navy will be replaced by exportable, modified versions. Thus, the HQ-16 or HQ-16C could leave their place to the LN-80, the H/PJ-11 to the Type 730B, the Yu-8 to the ET80 ... etc, not to mention the combat systems and sensors. Despite this, the four new Type 054As are expected to be the most potent surface combatants of Pakistan's surface fleets, and could work alongside future S20 submarines of Chinese origin for various missions as well.

Source: Navy Recognition / Eastpendulum.com



HMS Archer P 264 outbound from Aberdeen Photo : George Saunders ©

HMS Archer is the lead ship of the Archer class. As the lead ship she was one of several of her class to be completed in 1985 by Watercraft Marine, the original shipbuilders — most of the remaining vessels were completed or built by Vosper Thornycroft. In 2015, she was one of the first of her class to

receive an upgrade. The Archer class were built as Royal Naval Reserve (RNR) training vessels, but after limited use they were transferred to URNU service. Archer became the training ship of the Aberdeen URNU in 1991, succeeding Chaser. The role of a training ship within an URNU is to provide opportunities for students to receive practical training and gain experience afloat. Archer's programme is generally divided into two durations of training - a weekend or the longer deployments that take place during the university Easter and summer holidays. Deployments in the Easter and summer holidays venture further afield, Archer has visited ports from the Western Isles and east coast of Britain to the Republic of Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway and the Baltic. These longer deployments are often undertaken in company with other ships such as Example and Explorer



Like this part of the photo, the crew manning the flying bridge outbound from Aberdeen Photo : George Saunders © The Aberdeen URNU operated from 1967 until 2012 before being moved to Edinburgh. In summer 2012, the ship was moved to Rosyth Dockyard to serve with Edinburgh URNU and to increase the presence of the RN in Edinburgh. In June 2017, Archer, in company with HM Ships Smiter, Ranger and Exploit, deployed to the Baltic to take part in the NATO BALTOPS exercise, the first time that Royal Navy P2000s have been involved in such an exercise. Archer is permanently

crewed by five RN personnel, and is captained by a lieutenant. Chief petty officers fill the roles of executive officer and marine engineering officer, and the yeoman and weapons engineering officer are junior rates of the appropriate service branches. With students embarked (up to a maximum of 11), a training officer is usually present who is typically a RNR lieutenant or sub-lieutenant.

Source: Maasmond Maritime

Troubling US Navy review finds widespread shortfalls in basic seamanship

WASHINGTON — A three-month internal review conducted by senior U.S. surface fleet leaders found some or significant concerns with the ship handling skills of nearly 85 percent of its junior officers, and that many struggled to react decisively to extricate their ship from danger when there was an immediate risk of collision, according to an internal message obtained by Defense News. Led by the Surface Warfare Officer School, officer of the deck competency checks were conducted on a random selection of OOD-qualified first-tour division officers (the newest officers in the fleet) in underway bridge navigation simulators fleet-wide between January and March. Of the 164 officers who were evaluated, only 27 passed with “no concerns.” Another 108 completed with “some concerns,” and 29 had “significant concerns,” according to the message, which was released by the Navy’s top surface warfare officer Vice Adm. Richard Brown. Brown, who leads Naval Surface Force Pacific, termed the results “sobering.”



A junior officer standing watch on the bridge aboard the destroyer **Carney**. Photo: MC2 James Turner

The evaluations raise distressing questions about the level of ship handling training junior officers get both prior to their arrival at their first command and when they arrive. In a Tuesday interview with Defense News at the Pentagon, Brown said the checks would be used to inform new

training in development for young officers and that changes were already underway that show the Navy is serious about self-assessment and improvement in the wake of the twin disasters that claimed the lives of 17 sailors last summer.

Among the shortfalls identified in the checks:

- ▯ Officers struggled with operating radars and the associated tools at hand, an issue that emerged in the wake of the **Fitzgerald** accident.
- ▯ Officers had a firm grasp of the international rules of the road for navigating ships at sea, but struggled to apply them practically during watch standing, especially in low-visibility situations.
- ▯ Most officers were able to keep clear of close encounters with other ships in the simulator but those that found themselves in extremis “were often ill-equipped to take immediate action to avoid collisions” — a factor that was a direct contributor to the loss of life in both the **John S. McCain** and **Fitzgerald** collisions in 2017. In his message to the fleet, Brown said the OOD competency reviews should be a call to action for the surface community to get after its shortcomings. “While the OOD competency checks were a snapshot in time, we must be realistic in confronting the systemic shortfalls that they revealed in core proficiencies across the junior qualified members of the force,” Brown said in the message. “We as a community can and must tackle our deficiencies and ensure there is meaningful experience behind our qualification letters.” The areas of concern listed in the message conjure unsettling reminders of the 2017 accidents. In the case of **McCain**, confusion and indecision took hold on the bridge at the precise moment when the ship had to take immediate actions to avoid a collision, despite the presence of the commanding officer. In response to the evaluations, Brown directed that the Navy’s Norfolk-based Navigation, Seamanship, and Ship-handling Trainer gin (?) up and distribute “a series of ‘Extremis Extraction’ scenarios that show significant promise in helping to reduce or eliminate the decision paralysis that Junior Officers demonstrated during the scenario.” Brown directed that his ships run the scenarios regularly in the trainers. In the case of **Fitzgerald**, both the bridge and the combat information center showed a lack of basic understanding of the radar they were using and failed to use the tools at hand effectively. As a result, the surface fleet increased radar training at its nine-week basic division officer course from two hours to 11 hours, the message said. While the increases have shown promise, the fleet intends to add training to the advanced division officer course prior to a junior officer’s second DIVO tour, and in the long term the fleet intends to add two weeks of Coast Guard certified radar training into a new officer of the deck training course in development. Brown told Defense News that the evaluations were done as part of an effort to see what the most immediate needs were as the surface fleet sets out make changes to how it trains its junior officers. “We wanted to very quickly establish what was the baseline, so it was a random sampling of 164 first-tour division officers who had a wide range of experience,” Brown said. Some of the officers had only been given their officer-of-the-deck qualifying letter a few weeks prior to the evaluation and some had been through a deployment’s worth of bridge watch, Brown said. What the tests showed was that the junior officer community falls into a pattern familiar to any large organization: a few hot runners, a few poor performers, and a whole lot of average. “So out of 164 what we ended up seeing was kind of what we expected: We

got a bell curve distribution. We had 27 who were on top, we had 108 who were in the middle and we had 29 who were kind of at the lower end," he said. The data from the evaluations was going to be used to develop a junior officer of the deck pilot course that will launch in May 2019, and will be followed by a re-evaluation of those graduates a year later. "We want to make sure the changes we are making are actually having an impact in the fleet and if we are increasing the level of experience and performance. ... We want to move that bell curve to the right." he said. In both the near and long term the surface fleet is investing heavily in improvements to shore-side simulators and trainers, new assessment teams, increased sea time for all junior officers and more emphasis on bridge watch team management skills as well as new courses of instruction for junior officers, initiatives that Brown said in the message he believes will yield improvements. Brown closed the message by saying he had confidence the current and future crop of junior officers was up to the task. "I have every confidence in our current generation of Junior Officers," he said. "We owe them the training and tools necessary to become expert Mariners. Together, we will get there."

Source: Defense News.

Workhorses of the sea



Photo: Espen Ronnevik / Roar Lindefjord / Equinor

The 22,000-tonne topside for the drilling platform was lifted into position in one single lift on the Johan Sverdrup field over the weekend using the engineering marvel [Pioneering Spirit](#).

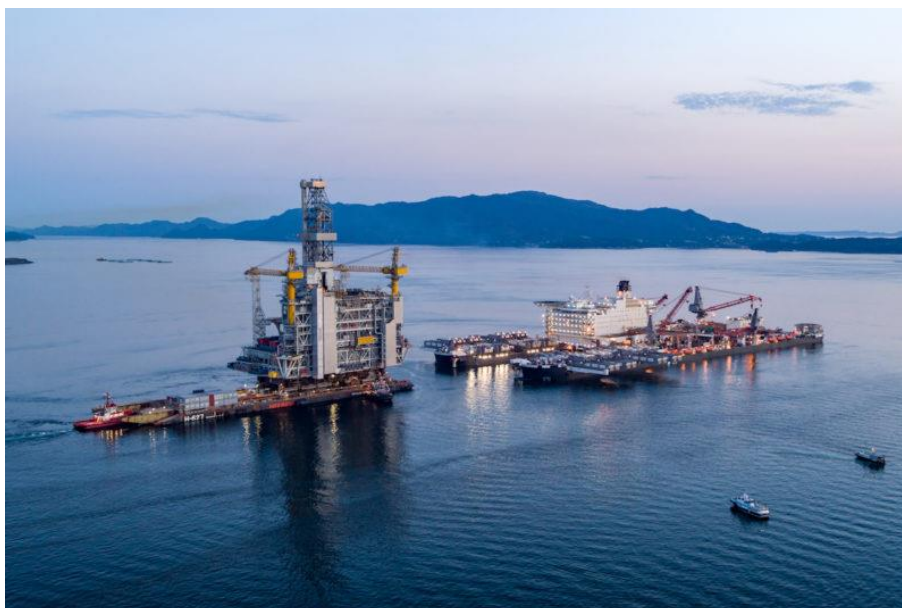


Photo: Espen Ronnevik / Roar Lindefjord / Equinor

I had to include this majestic workhorse of the sea once again. Placing a 22000 ton topside of an oilplatform in one go after bringing the topside from the manufacturing site is no mean task.