



**April 12, 2024**

HII's Weekly News Digest is compiled every Friday by the Corporate Communications team to summarize and highlight news stories of significance to the company.

**HII To Buy Australian Steel For AUKUS Subs:** The Daily Telegraph reported on Friday that HII has struck a deal with Australia's Boral Steel to begin testing their steel, which could be used to build the *Virginia*-class submarines Australia will buy in the 2030s. The firm will be the first Australian company to enter HII's nuclear vessel supply chain. HII Executive Vice President, Strategy and Development Eric Chewing said the company is working with another 300 Australian companies to see if they could be included in their supply chain. Australia Minister for Defence Industry Pat Conroy said the United Kingdom is on track to finish the design of the SSN-AUKUS — the submarine that will eventually be built in South Australia — within the next two years, and that the U.K. will bear more of the risk as it builds two submarines before Australia finished constructing its first. Australian Defence Magazine reported on Friday that the integration of Australian steel into HII's supply chain paves the way for further opportunities for native suppliers and offers the potential to create more jobs in Australia.

**Navy Considers Procurement Strategies To Help Shipyards:** USNI News reported on Tuesday that Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro has ordered his Office of Strategic Assessment to perform a "deep dive" on how the service can implement recommendations from the recent 45-day study of the U.S. Navy's shipbuilding programs. He pointed to multi-year procurement strategies, multi-ship buys, and advanced procurement to get materials to the shipyards earlier — acquisition strategies the Navy currently employs across its shipbuilding enterprise — as options the service is evaluating to address the delays to several programs. Meanwhile, Politico reported on Tuesday that the nation's shipyards are finding competition in the service industry when it comes to attracting younger workers. In previous decades, "Rosie (the riveter) didn't have the option to go work for an Amazon warehouse or to hand a chicken sandwich out of a window for roughly the same pay as a shipyard job," Jennifer Boykin, president of Newport News Shipbuilding and executive vice president of HII, said Tuesday at the Sea-Air-Space Expo at National Harbor, Maryland. Nickolas Guertin, the Navy's acquisition executive, told an audience at the trade show on Tuesday that during the recent shipbuilding review, it became clear "attracting and retaining workers in the production facilities is much harder" than other job prospects. The issue is exacerbated by cohorts of more experienced workers who are approaching retirement age and will soon leave the workforce.

**Navy Introducing Information Warfare Into LVC Environments:** Defense News reported on Wednesday that the U.S. Navy is increasingly introducing information warfare systems into its live, virtual and constructive environments. The demand for information warfare capabilities is growing, especially in the undersea community, Vice Adm. Kelly Aeschbach, leader of Naval Information Forces, said at the Sea-Air-Space Expo. The first few LVC environments — that will be uploaded in the fourth quarter of fiscal 2025 — will focus on meteorology and oceanography, service officials have said. Other disciplines include communications, cryptology and electronic warfare. In 2022, the service embedded information warfare specialists aboard submarines to examine how their expertise aids underwater operations. Now, information professional officers and cryptologic technicians have joined two East Coast-based subs: USS *Delaware* (SSN 791) and USS *California* (SSN 781).

### Social Media Highlight Of The Week

Posted Thursday on HII's Facebook page:

"April 11 is #NationalSubmarineDay, and Newport News Shipbuilding, A Division of HII, is proud to be one of two designers and builders of nuclear-powered submarines for the US Navy.

In February, we celebrated the successful completion of initial sea trials for Virginia-class attack submarine *New Jersey* (#SSN796)."



**Navy Seeks "Single Pane" Solution To Data Overload:** Breaking Defense reported on Thursday that the U.S. Navy is seeking a standard that will place information from a wealth of sensors and unmanned systems available to the service on a single display, rather than the current environment where disparate information is shared on competing monitors. 4th Fleet Commander Rear Adm. Jim Aiken said the widespread use of sensors created by multiple vendors creates tremendous data — often in inconsistent or incompatible formats — that the 4th Fleet is struggling to make best use of. Aiken argued it will take new tools and techniques to forge one-off unmanned experiments into a true "hybrid fleet," acting not as individual tactical experiments but as a coherent operational force. Meanwhile, C4ISRNet reported on Tuesday that the Navy is addressing the need to oversee unmanned and autonomous technology by creating the robotics warfare specialist ranking. Know by the RW rating, these personnel will be the subject matter experts for computer vision, mission autonomy, navigation autonomy, data systems, artificial intelligence and machine learning, Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro told participants at Sea-Air-Space.

**Navy Plans to Expand Additive Manufacturing On Navy Subs:** Inside Defense reported on Wednesday that the U.S. Navy aims to increase the number of parts produced through additive manufacturing and equipped on submarines to "near 100" by year's end, Executive Director of Strategic Submarines Matt Sermon said at the Sea-Air-Space Expo. As the sea service looks to improve submarine maintenance rates, it is moving to advance additive manufacturing capabilities and develop expedited processes to create and equip 3D-printed parts on submarines. Defense News reported on Wednesday that the U.S. Navy believes additive manufacturing could be a key to help solve delays in shipbuilding programs and help shore up the industrial base. Mark Massie, a program manager for additive manufacturing at Naval Sea Systems Command, acknowledged that the path to more widely utilizing 3D-printed parts has challenges that the U.S. Navy is working to overcome. That includes getting more companies on contract, simplifying the process required by the Pentagon to buy 3D-printed materials and finally testing the parts once they are acquired. HII CEO Chris Kastner said the company will play a regulatory role in additive manufacturing, getting approval from the Navy to use such parts on ships. "It's here, it's happening," he said of 3D printing. "I would like it to happen much more quickly and (there be) more of it."

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*Please note: Social media is blocked on HII computers for most employees. Employees are encouraged to visit HII's Facebook page and other social media sites on personal time and from non-work devices.*

*Send feedback to: [HII\\_Communications@hii-co.com](mailto:HII_Communications@hii-co.com).*