



# HII Weekly News Digest

Jan. 17, 2025

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 Focused On Improving Shipbuilding Throughput:** Defense One reported on Tuesday that HII is taking several steps to improve its shipbuilding programs in 2025. CEO Chris Kastner told reporters ahead of the Surface Navy Association's annual meeting that the company wants to expand its manufacturing facilities this year to speed up and streamline production of nuclear submarines. HII is expanding in several states including Texas, Louisiana and South Carolina in an effort to bring on additional labor to meet shipbuilding needs. Kastner said his focus this calendar year is to improve shipbuilding cost and schedule performance. He pointed to the use of enterprise data and artificial intelligence tools to keep programs on schedule and operating efficiently. Meanwhile, National Defense reported on Thursday that the Navy is trying to send a more consistent demand signal to shipbuilders to help shore up the industry. Brian Blanchette, president of HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division, said the company, Congress and Navy are aligned to overcome industry challenges. "Everybody agrees on what we need: we need more ships, we need more throughput, we need more output," Blanchette said.

**Frigate Designs Expected To Be Complete In 2025:** Defense Daily reported on Wednesday that the Navy plans to finally complete design of the *Constellation*-class frigate this year. Fincantieri Marinette Marine won the original contract for up to 10 frigates in 2020. That lead ship is close to three years behind the original schedule. Completing the ship's design clears the way for the Navy to tap a second yard to build more hulls. Capt. Andy Gold, program manager for the frigate within Program Executive Office Unmanned and Small Combatants, said Fincantieri is facing workforce and workload challenges experienced by other shipbuilding programs throughout the nation. Last month, Program Executive Officer for Unmanned and Small Combatants Rear Adm. Kevin Smith said the frigate will need to mimic submarine shipbuilding by moving toward distributed and federated shipbuilding. This model has other companies build modules and parts of the vessel, where the prime contractor performs final integration and assembly.

**HII Christens Amphib *Harrisburg* (LPD 30):** WLOX reported on Saturday that HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division christened *San Antonio*-class amphibious transport dock *Harrisburg* (LPD 30) during a ceremony on Saturday in Pascagoula, Mississippi. The ship is named after Pennsylvania's capital city, which has a rich industrial history. Workboat reported on Saturday that the ship is the first Flight II LPD and will support expeditionary warfare, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions.

**White House Announces More Than A Dozen Ship Names, Including CVNs 82, 83:** Navy Times reported Thursday that the Navy has announced the naming of two future *Gerald R. Ford*-class aircraft carriers after former presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush. The future USS *William J. Clinton* (CVN 82) and USS *George W. Bush* (CVN 83) will be the fifth and sixth carriers in the *Ford* class, continuing a tradition of naming modern aircraft carriers after U.S. presidents. Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro made the announcement during a private White House ceremony on Jan. 3. Del Toro has named 16 ships in the last two weeks as his time as the Navy's top civilian ends next week. Chelsea Clinton will serve as sponsor for her father's namesake ship. No sponsor has been announced for USS *George W. Bush*. USNI News reported that HII's Newport News Shipbuilding has advocated for block buy contracting to

streamline future carrier purchases, like the service did for the future *Enterprise* (CVN 80) and *Doris Miller* (CVN 81). In a briefing with reporters last week, HII CEO Chris Kastner said the shipbuilder would like to see CVN 82 purchased in fiscal year 2028.

### Social Media Highlight Of The Week

Posted Thursday on HII's LinkedIn page:

"Today, Brian Blanchette, president of Ingalls Shipbuilding, a Division of HII, joined top industry and military leaders for the Accelerating Force Generation panel at the Surface Navy Association's 37th National Symposium moderated by VADM James Downey, USN, Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA).



The discussion focused on how the industry is working to retain a skilled workforce that supports the warfighter, as well as continue to look for opportunities to accelerate and expand capacity.

At HII, we remain committed to investing in our people and infrastructure to meet the Navy's needs and appreciate the opportunity to be a part of the discussion.

hashtag#SNA2025"

**Support for Unmanned Systems Picks Up Pace:** Inside Defense reported on Wednesday that the Defense Innovation Board has issued several recommends to the Defense Department on how to field unmanned weapon systems at scale. Chief among the board's concerns is that the DOD can act as a barrier to its own goals involving unmanned systems. The board is recommending the Pentagon publish an unclassified operational and tactical vision for unmanned systems in the force. Making topline budgets and more concrete procurement targets publicly known would be helpful for private capital and manufacturers. The DOD also needs to have the funding to procure these systems available and ready for commitment, which the board acknowledged would have to be a joint effort with congressional appropriators. Defense Daily reported on Wednesday that Adm. Stuart Munsch, the Navy's top officer for Europe and Africa, said uncrewed surface vessels are part of the future toolkit for the service, which needs to be able to surge production of these systems and continually adapt their capabilities. Munsch told an audience at the annual Surface Navy Association Symposium, USVs are valuable when used with other systems to clutter the battlefield and add complexity. The idea of unmanned systems is picking up steam in Congress. Defense Daily reported on Thursday that Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., the ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said he supports building a significant number of uncrewed U.S. Navy vessels in the years ahead. "Uncrewed craft on the surface and (unscrewed) subs are going to be a huge part of this next generation," Kaine said.

*HII's Weekly News Digest is produced by HII's Corporate Communications team and posted to Homeport every Friday.*

*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.*

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