



Aug. 14, 2026

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.

Trump Signs Shipbuilding Memo: Breaking Defense reported Thursday that President Donald Trump has signed a wide-ranging national security memorandum that calls on Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth to submit a report within the next 120 days that includes a proposal to bolster submarine and aircraft carrier readiness with help from the private sector, utilizes foreign shipyards and adds an additional public shipyard in the United States. The Wall Street Journal reported Thursday that the memo also calls for the Navy to redesign *Ford* class of aircraft carriers — beginning with CVN 81 and subsequent ships in the class — so that their system to launch jet fighters utilizes steam catapults, rather than the current electromagnetic system. The directive is one Trump has signaled for several years, but one that Navy officials have fought and will likely cost billions of dollars. The first three ships in the class, USS *Gerald R. Ford* (CVN 78), *John F. Kennedy* (CVN 79) and *Enterprise* (CVN 80), will retain the electromagnetic system. The memo also directs the Pentagon to pursue more direct investments in U.S. shipbuilding. [USNI News](#) reported Thursday Trump is calling for more foreign investment in U.S. shipbuilding and the use of foreign ship designs that would initially get constructed abroad.

Mission Technologies Wins \$2.2 Billion Contract To Support U.S. Southern Command: Virginia Business reported on Thursday that HII's Mission Technologies division has been awarded a \$2.2 billion task order to provide U.S. surveillance and intelligence capabilities to support the U.S. Southern Command. Under the contract, Mission Technologies will provide surveillance, tracking, intelligence, network services, global reconnaissance, analysis and interception capabilities. The work is intended to enhance SOUTHCOM's ability to detect, monitor and disrupt illicit activity across the region and strengthen intelligence and reconnaissance capabilities. GovCon Wire reported on Wednesday that the General Services Administration's Assisted Acquisition Services Defense organization issued the award under the ASTRO indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract. The task order includes one base year with six option years.

Ford-Class Aircraft Carrier *John F. Kennedy* (CVN 79) Departs NNS For Sea Trials: USNI News reported on Wednesday that second-in-class *John F. Kennedy* (CVN 79) left HII's Newport News Shipbuilding division that day to undergo acceptance trials in the Atlantic Ocean. While at sea, the crew and shipbuilders will test and evaluate important ship systems and components. To date, the Navy has accepted delivery of seven of *Kennedy's* 11 weapons elevators, allowing the crew to access all of the weapons magazines and continue training and certification. This is the second time *Kennedy* has been at sea. In January, the carrier successfully completed builder's trials before returning to the shipyard. Stars and Stripes reported Thursday that *Kennedy* was also retrofitted with enterprise air surveillance radar, which the Navy says will enable improved air defense coordination and faster tracking of incoming threats. The carrier is also able to operate the F-35C Lightning II, the carrier-based variant of the fifth-generation strike fighter. *Kennedy* is expected to be homeported initially at Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia, but will shift to Naval Base Kitsap, Washington in 2029.

Hanwha Makes \$1 Billion Offer To Buy Austal USA: The Wall Street Journal reported on Monday that South Korea's Hanwha has made a non-binding offer valued at more than \$1 billion to buy the U.S.

subsidiary of Australian shipbuilder Austal. Austal USA is located in Mobile, Alabama, and specializes in building ships for the U.S. Coast Guard and Navy. It also supplies submarine modules to General Dynamics Electric Boat for the construction of *Virginia*- and *Columbia*-class submarines. The acquisition would provide Hanwha with Austal's Mobile shipyard as well as the company's current contracts. Austal USA employs about 3,500 workers and includes other assets such as repair facilities in San Diego, Calif. Hanwha is seeking to expand its commercial and military shipbuilding ambitions in the U.S. at the same time that President Trump is trying to revitalize domestic shipbuilding. Hanwha Ocean bought Philly Shipyard less than two years ago and has vowed to invest billions of dollars to expand and modernize the facility. Over the past year, Hanwha has won government contracts to build missile-tracking vessels and to design oilers that can provide fuel and equipment during naval operations. USNI News reported on Monday that Hanwha's offer is contingent on a four-week examination of the U.S. shipyard. The Korean company already owns a 19.9% stake in the Australian parent Austal. The deal would be contingent upon U.S. regulators and the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, as well as the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency.

Social Media Highlight Of The Week

Posted Thursday on Newport News Shipbuilding's LinkedIn page:

"We welcomed South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster (South Carolina Governor's Office) to Newport News Shipbuilding Charleston Operations Wednesday.

Under HII's ownership, the site in Goose Creek has increased production by more than 50% as it continues to ramp up in support of US Navy programs.

We appreciate Gov. McMaster's support as we continue to work with our partners at the local, state and federal levels on important workforce development initiatives for South Carolina's rapidly growing maritime ecosystem."



US To Swap Carriers In Middle East: The Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday that the U.S. is preparing to send the aircraft carrier *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) to the Middle East to replace *USS Abraham Lincoln* (CVN 72). *Lincoln* began a scheduled deployment in November and was redirected to the Middle East in January ahead of the U.S. war against Iran. The carrier and its embarked aircraft were instrumental to the U.S.'s Operation Epic Fury bombing campaign, and the ship has since participated in the U.S. blockade of Iranian ports. *Lincoln* has been deployed for more than 250 days and it has not made a port call in 200 days, setting a record for consecutive days at sea, according to Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D., Conn.), who wrote a letter to Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth and Acting Secretary of the Navy Hung Cao. Stars and Stripes reported on Thursday that *Washington* has been operating in the South China Sea and recently finished a port call in Da Nang, Vietnam. *USS George H.W. Bush* (CVN 77) is also deployed to the Arabian Sea as part of the campaign to pressure Iran to reopen the Strait of Hormuz, where hundreds of ships are bottled up by the conflict. U.S. officials told The Wall Street Journal that the plan to send *Washington* to replace *Lincoln* were already underway before reports emerged about crew distress and shipboard conditions.

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

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