



NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA
WESTERN AUSTRALIA DIVISION

May 2020
Volume 4, Issue 5

DOWN THE VOICEPIPE

do you hear there!



HMAS Hobart



Chilean Navy Ship
Capitan Prat FFG 11 (Ex HMAS Newcastle)

COMING UP

Executive Meeting 8th. July 2020

**ALL ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THIS
NEWSLETTER ARE PRINTED IN GOOD FAITH
AND DON'T NECESSARY REFLECT THE VIEWS
OF THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA**

HMAS PERTH (I) MEMORIAL



www.hmasperth.l.com.au

NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA WESTERN AUSTRALIA DIVISION MONTHLY ROUNDUP

It is with great sadness that I inform you that CMDR Geoff Hurren ANC the Westralia Flotilla Commander passed away this last week after battling cancer for the previous twelve months. Geoff was a avid support of the league and its activities and indeed was a esteemed member. Over a period of many years he served in the Australian Army Cadets, Australian Airforce Cadets and finally with the Australian Navy Cadets his input into the ADFC scheme was immense and he will be sadly missed.

The league has just received a grant to purchase a visual electronic screen to be used to provide members and cadets with a modern support system to project powerpoint programs etc.

Works begin this weekend on maintenance and remedy programs to update and refurbish the facility the league will set an ongoing budget to maintain the facility to a modern standard in the years to come. Our AGM is due mid to late August and at the moment we are awaiting direction from authorities when and if this is able to take place. Your Vice President is working on the feasibility studies on what additional future benefits we can offer to our members, and of course we would like to increase a member base for the future of the league.

Your executive have now put together a web page for use of NLWA and over the coming weeks will be set up with a lot of ongoing information for members and the general public so stay tuned. The web log on details are www.navyleaguewa.org.au. At the moment the facebook page for NLWA is attracting a lot of attention and is updated regularly. The log on address for this page is Navy League of Australia WA Division @navyleaguewa. News regarding the HMAS Perth (I) Memorial Foundation Incorporated can be viewed at www.hmasperth1.com.au



HMAS STIRLING IN PICTURES Courtesy of CAPT Ainsley Morthorpe RAN Commanding Officer



The Italian Job: Italian Navy completes F-35B upgrade of Cavour aircraft carrier



Maritime and Undersea Warfare | 25 May 2020 | Stephen Kuper

The Italian Navy has celebrated a major milestone in the life of its LHD/aircraft carrier hybrid, the Cavour, following a 16-month complex overhaul and modernisation that will allow the vessel to embark the fifth-generation F-35B, conduct complex combat operations, transport marines and conduct humanitarian support and assistance in a single platform package.

At the end of the Second World War, the aircraft carrier emerged as the apex of naval prestige and power projection. Unlike their predecessor (the battleship), aircraft carriers in themselves are relatively benign actors, relying heavily at their attached carrier air-wings and supporting escort fleets of cruisers, destroyers and submarines to screen them from hostile action.

In recent years, nations throughout the Indo-Pacific have begun a series of naval expansion and modernisation programs with traditional aircraft carriers – and large-deck, amphibious warfare ships serve as the core of their respective shift towards greater maritime power projection.

Driving this change is an unprecedented period of Chinese assertiveness in the South China Sea and the growing capabilities of the People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), which has seen the Chinese fielding or preparing to field a range of power projection capabilities, including aircraft carriers and supporting strike groups, fifth-generation combat aircraft, modernised land forces, area-access denial and strategic nuclear forces, combined with growing political and financial influence throughout the region.

Japan has closely followed the modernisation of the Chinese armed forces and raised concerns about the nation's defence capabilities.

As part of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's commitment towards shifting the paradigm following continued Chinese naval build-up – particularly the growing capabilities of China's aircraft carrier and amphibious warfare ship fleets – Japan has initiated a range of modernisation and structural refits for the Izumo Class vessels to develop small aircraft carriers. Developing a blue-water navy has been a major focus of Korea's response to the mounting capabilities of North Korea and China's continued assertiveness in the South and East China Seas.

The centrepiece of Korea's transition towards a blue-water capable navy is the Dokdo Class vessels, which are slightly smaller than the Royal Australian Navy's Canberra Class amphibious warfare ships.

However, unlike HMA Ships Canberra and Adelaide, Korea is actively pursuing the acquisition and introduction of F-35B Joint Strike Fighters to provide an integrated fleet air defence and a flexible, medium-range maritime strike capabilities.

Italy upgrades its power projection and sea control capabilities

A world away, the Italian Navy has successfully completed a complex overhaul and modernisation of the Cavour, currently Italy's only aircraft carrier enabling it to effectively operate the short take-off, vertical landing (STOVL) variant of the fifth-generation F-35B, positioning the Italian Navy at the apex of the Mediterranean's strategic pyramid.

This modernisation will enable the Italian Navy to seamlessly integrate with both the United States and Royal Navies, respectively, and their Mediterranean detachments as they continue to conduct maritime security operations in the region while countering an increasing Russian presence in the eastern Mediterranean.

The Fincantieri-designed and built aircraft carrier Cavour and the recently launched Trieste are designed to fulfill a hybrid LHD/aircraft carrier role enabling the Italian Navy to conduct independent sea control, maritime and amphibious power projection operations without direct US or UK support.

The Cavour has a maximum displacement of 30,000 tonnes, maximum speed of 29+ knots with a range of 7,000 nautical miles (12,964 kilometres) at a speed of 16 knots. Cavour is designed to accommodate a combined fleet of 12 support helicopters and 10 AV-8B Harrier IIs or Lockheed Martin F-35Bs in the hangar with an additional six parked on the flight deck.

Additionally, Cavour combines the aircraft carrier capability with the capacity to serve as a traditional LHD with accommodation for a maximum capacity for 450 amphibious infantry.

This combination of LHD/aircraft carrier roles encapsulated in the modernised Cavour and Trieste serve an increasingly similar role to that of Australia's own Canberra Class LHDs, the HMA Ships Canberra and Adelaide – albeit, minus the aircraft carrier role.

A precedent to follow?

Recognising this changing regional environment, what carrier options are available to Australia should the nation's leaders elect to pursue a return to fixed-wing naval aviation for the Royal Australian Navy?

The notion of Australia acquiring a third, F-35B dedicated Canberra Class LHD has been discussed at great length by both strategic policy analysts and politicians since the RAN acquired the vessels.

Currently, the HMA Ships Canberra and Adelaide lack a number of structural and technical modifications that would enable the ships to safely and effectively operate the aircraft, and any third vessel would need to incorporate the modifications from the keel up, in a similar manner to the Turkish Navy's recently launched TCG Anadolu (based on the Canberra/Juan Carlos Class vessels).

Despite the apparent structural limitations of HMA Ships Canberra and Adelaide, the vessels' base design, the Juan Carlos I, was designed from the keel up to accommodate a fixed-wing naval aviation capability.

The Spanish vessel, when acting in the light carrier role, is capable of accommodating 10-12 AV-8B Harrier IIs or Lockheed Martin F-35Bs combined with an additional 10-12 helicopters by using the light vehicles bay as an additional storage space.

Meanwhile, despite continuing issues with Turkey's access to the F-35, Turkey fully expects to operate a small fleet of the Lockheed Martin F-35B from the TCG Anadolu, providing interesting avenues for Australian consideration as the regional dynamic continues to evolve.

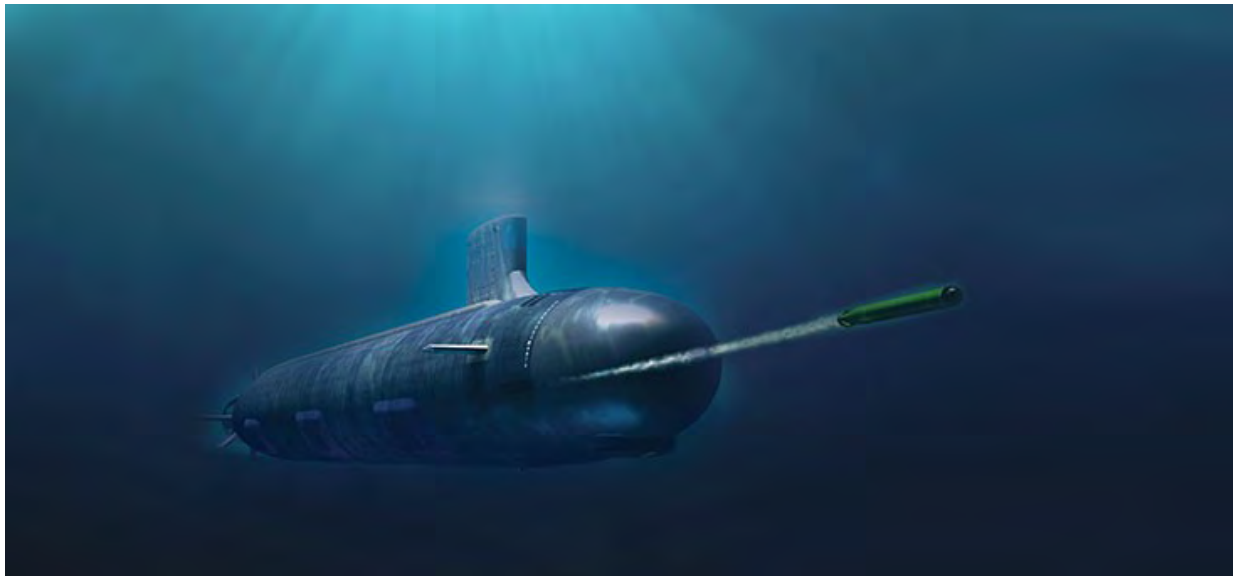
Your thoughts

The introduction of a dedicated aircraft carrier benefits Australian industry as well, through increased procurement programs for support and escort vessels, larger F-35 supply chain contributions and larger sustainment and maintenance contracts, which are key to keeping the Navy "battle-ready and deployed".

Australia's security and prosperity are directly influenced by the stability and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific, meaning Australia must be directly engaged as both a benefactor and leader in all matters related to strategic, economic and political security, serving as either a replacement or complementary force to the role played by the US – should the US commitment or capacity be limited.

Both fixed-wing naval aviation and amphibious capabilities are among the key force multipliers reshaping the Indo-Pacific. The growing prevalence of fixed-wing naval aviation forces in particular serves to alter the strategic calculus and balance of power.

DSCA Approves MK48 Torpedoes for Taiwan



May 20, 2020 – The State Department has made a determination approving a possible Foreign Military Sale to TECRO of eighteen (18) MK-48 Mod6 Advanced Technology (AT) Heavy Weight Torpedoes (HWT) and related equipment for an estimated cost of \$180 million. The Defense Security Cooperation Agency delivered the required certification notifying Congress of this possible sale today.

TECRO has requested to buy eighteen (18) MK-48 Mod6 Advanced Technology (AT) Heavy Weight Torpedoes (HWT). Also included are spare parts, support and test equipment, shipping and shipping containers, operator manuals, technical documentation, training, U.S. Government and contractor engineering, technical and logistics support services; and other related elements of logistics support. The total estimated program cost is \$180 million.

This proposed sale is consistent with U.S. law and policy as expressed in Public Law 96-8.

This proposed sale serves U.S. national, economic, and security interests by supporting the recipient's continuing efforts to modernize its armed forces and to maintain a credible defensive capability. The proposed sale will help improve the security of the recipient and assist in maintaining political stability, military balance, and economic progress in the region.

The proposed sale will improve the recipient's capability in current and future defensive efforts. The recipient will use the enhanced capability as a deterrent to regional threats and to strengthen homeland defense. The recipient will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of this equipment and support will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

There are no prime contractors associated with this case as all materials will be procured from U.S. Navy stocks. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale is estimated to require assignment of a number of U.S. Government and contractor representatives to the recipient or travel there intermittently during the program.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

This notice of a potential sale is required by law and does not mean the sale has been concluded.

Raytheon graphic

HMS Medway Conducts Trials with Merlin Helicopter

May 21, 2020 admin



May 20, 2020 – The Navy’s largest helicopter has debuted on its global patrol ships for the first time, during three days of intensive training in the Caribbean.

Commando-carrying Merlin Mk4s touched down on HMS Medway during a concerted period of aviation training for the new patrol ship in preparation for the imminent hurricane season.

Medway is currently working side-by-side with support ship RFA Argus which has been deployed to the Caribbean to provide vital aid and assistance to British – and other – citizens in the region should their islands be hit by a severe tropical storm.

Embarked on Argus are specialist Royal Marines and soldiers, equipment and aid, plus one Wildcat and three Merlin helicopters to move personnel and kit around any disaster zone.



There’s no helicopter assigned to HMS Medway, but there is a flight deck, allowing the ship to serve as a ‘lily pad’ – hosting helicopters temporarily, refueling them, giving crews a break, transferring personnel and equipment. The ship is the second of five River-class patrol ships built for long-term operations around the globe, deploying from the UK for years on end and operating from overseas ports and bases under the Royal Navy’s growing Forward Presence program.

To date the four ships in Royal Navy hands have worked exclusively with the smaller, nimble Wildcat.

Merlin is more than twice the weight, can carry 16 commandos/troops, casualties on stretchers and substantial loads both in the back of the cab and slung beneath the 14-tonne helicopter in huge net sacks.

As well as landing Merlin and Wildcat, Medway conducted ‘vertical replenishment’ drills – transferring loads between the ship and Argus – and also practiced the response of the bridge and flight deck teams to helicopter emergencies in what was a hugely successful three days of flying.

The flight deck team guiding the aircraft safely on to Medway’s deck hadn’t worked with a live helicopter since the ship underwent training in the UK last year, when conditions were neither so sweltering or challenging.

“It’s been really interesting being involved in the flying operations over the past few days,” said Able Seaman Claire Walker, one of Mersey’s seaman specialists.

“I wasn’t sure what to expect as I had never done it on board before, however it was a really enjoyable experience. Especially getting the experience of both Wildcat and Merlin. Adding a vertical replenishment as well. I managed to gain a lot of experience from all the different training serials”

Medway’s Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Jim Blythe was proud of his crew’s efforts – and for laying the groundwork for the ship’s four sisters:

“The first landing of a Merlin Mk4 on a Batch 2 Offshore Patrol Vessel is a momentous day for both the ship and 845 Naval Air Squadron and enhances our operational capability,” said Lieutenant Commander Jim Blythe.



Future US Navy LCS Oakland completes acceptance trials
By Baird Maritime - May 25, 2020



The future USS Oakland as it sails out of Austal USA's Mobile shipyard for acceptance trials on May 20, 2020
(Photo: Austal USA)

The future US Navy littoral combat ship (LCS) USS Oakland successfully concluded acceptance trials on Friday, May 22, following a series of in-port and underway demonstrations in the Gulf of Mexico.

During the trials, the navy and shipbuilder Austal USA conducted comprehensive tests of the vessel's systems including the main propulsion, auxiliaries, and electrical systems.

The ship also performed critical capability tests, including a full-power demonstration, steering and quick reversal, anchor drop test, and combat system detect-to-engage sequence.

Following delivery and commissioning, the future Oakland will sail to California to be homeported in San Diego with Independence-class sister ships USS Independence, USS Coronado, USS Jackson, USS Montgomery, USS Gabrielle Giffords, USS Omaha, USS Manchester, USS Tulsa, USS Charleston, USS Cincinnati, and USS Kansas City.



Written by Baird Maritime on May 25, 2020. Posted in Commercial Mariner - Maritime Security, Ships (Naval).



The San Antonio-class landing platform

dock USS Portland at its commissioning on April 23, 2018 (Photo: Oregon National Guard)

The US Navy San Antonio-class landing platform dock (LPD) USS Portland successfully disabled an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) using a Laser Weapon System Demonstrator (LWSD) Mark II Mod 0 on May 16.

The LWSD is a high-energy laser weapon system demonstrator developed by the Office of Naval Research and installed on Portland for an at-sea demonstration. The system's operational employment on a Pacific Fleet ship is the first system-level implementation of a high-energy class solid-state laser.

The laser system was developed by Northrop Grumman, with full system and ship integration and testing led by Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) Dahlgren and Port Hueneme.

The navy expects that future iterations of the LWSD and other directed-energy weapons (DEWs) will be employed primarily by its surface warships against asymmetrical threats such as armed small boats and unmanned vehicles.



Written by Baird Maritime on May 25, 2020. Posted in Non-Naval (Maritime Security).



Japan Marine United (JMU) recently delivered a new patrol vessel to the Japan Coast Guard.

The vessel has been named Tsuruga after a peninsula and a nearby bay in Fukui Prefecture.

The newbuild measures 96 by 11.5 metres and has a displacement of approximately 1,500 tonnes.

Industry partner congratulates Navy on commissioning of HMAS Sydney



The crew of HMAS Sydney 'cheer ship' inside Jervis Bay, NSW following the ship's commissioning ceremony at sea (Source Dept of Defence)

Maritime and Undersea Warfare | 25 May 2020 | Stephen Kuper

Lockheed Martin Australia has officially congratulated the Royal Australian Navy on the commissioning of the third and final Hobart Class guided-missile destroyer, HMAS Sydney, which marks a major milestone in the modernisation of the RAN fleet.

This major industry and fleet milestone marks the culmination of the Air Warfare Destroyer program, which sees the complete fleet of Hobart Class destroyers joining the global Aegis fleet.

Joe North, chief executive of Lockheed Martin Australia and New Zealand, congratulated the Royal Australian Navy on this significant event, saying, "I commend the Royal Australian Navy on the commissioning of HMAS Sydney and the successful delivery of the Aegis Combat System to the Hobart Class destroyers."

North added, "It is a terrific outcome for the Royal Australian Navy, for Australia, and for Australian industry who worked on the Air Warfare Destroyer program to build Australian sovereign maritime capability. Importantly, the Aegis-equipped Hobart Class destroyers will further enhance the Royal Australian Navy's situational awareness on the high seas to detect and defend against critical threats."

With more than 100 Aegis-equipped ships deployed worldwide, the Royal Australian Navy is enabled to unite with the wider family of Aegis allied nations, ensuring greater global interoperability, increased maritime domain awareness and safeguards for our collective navies' missions.

"Lockheed Martin pioneered systems integration more than 50 years ago, and we continually provide proven solutions as Australia's premier naval systems integrator for the nation's newest surface and subsurface fleets and rotary wing aircraft. We look forward to our ongoing relationship with the Royal Australian Navy and working hand-in-hand to sustain the Aegis Combat System onboard the Hobart Class destroyers," North said.

As the developer of the Aegis system, Lockheed Martin said it is proud to continue its legacy as the combat system engineering agent (CSEA) for the US Navy to design, develop, integrate, test and sustain Aegis-equipped ships globally.

In support of the Commonwealth and Australia's national security interests, Lockheed Martin Australia also said it looked forward to continuing its close collaboration with the RAN, the US Navy and local industry to ensure the successful delivery and maintenance of Australia's Aegis Combat System.

HMAS Sydney, alongside HMA Ships Hobart and Brisbane, will primarily provide air defence for accompanying ships, in addition to land forces and infrastructure in coastal areas. The Hobart Class' Spanish counterparts entered service with the Spanish Navy beginning in the early 2000s, working alongside key NATO and US maritime assets.

When deployed to the Persian Gulf, the F100s became the first foreign Aegis-equipped ships to fully integrate into a US Navy Carrier Strike Group, while the class has also successfully deployed as the flagship of NATO's Maritime Group Standing Reaction Force, highlighting the individual and interoperable capabilities of Navy's new destroyers.

The vessels will be capable across the full spectrum of joint maritime operations, from area air defence and escort duties, right through to peacetime national tasking and diplomatic missions.

The Hobart Class combat system is built around the Aegis weapon system. Incorporating the state-of-the-art phased array radar, AN/SPY 1D(V), will provide an advanced air defence system capable of engaging enemy aircraft and missiles at ranges in excess of 150 kilometres.

While based upon the Spanish F100s, the Australian vessels incorporate a number of modifications and Australian-specific structural/design and combat system modifications to provide a uniquely Australian surface combatant with international provenance. Industry partner congratulates Navy on commissioning of HMAS Sydney



Written by Baird Maritime on May 21, 2020. Posted in Commercial Mariner - Marine Projects, Commercial Mariner - Maritime Security, Pollution/Rubbish Cleanup, Ships (Naval).



The cruiser USS Philippine Sea (foreground) and the destroyer USS Bulkeley in 2008 (Photo: US Navy/Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Jonathan Pankau)

Captain Erica Hoffman, commanding officer of the US Navy guided missile cruiser USS Philippine Sea, was relieved of her posting by the commander of Carrier Strike Group Two on Monday, May 18, due to a “loss of confidence in her ability to command.”

The removal of Captain Hoffman as commanding officer of Philippine Sea comes after approximately 15,000 litres of diesel fuel had accidentally spilled from the cruiser while it was docked at Naval Weapons Station Yorktown in Virginia on May 7.

Around 90 per cent of the spilled bunker was successfully contained within hours through the combined efforts of Philippine Sea’s crew, a navy oil recovery team stationed at Yorktown, and the US Coast Guard.

The navy is continuing to investigate the circumstances that led to the spill, which occurred while the cruiser was loading ammunition at the weapons station.

Captain Hoffmann had served as the commanding officer of Philippine Sea since April 2019. Captain Robert Thompson, assigned to Commander, Naval Surface Force Atlantic, will assume temporary duties as commanding officer until a permanent relief is identified.

Captain Hoffmann will be temporarily reassigned to the staff of Commander, US Fourth Fleet.



HMS Hurworth is set to undergo a refit that will make her "one of the most advanced and capable minehunters" in the Royal Navy.

The ship, which entered service 35 years ago, has now returned to HM Naval Base Portsmouth - seven years after her last major refit.

BAE Systems will carry out the work which will include an upgraded combat system, the Navy said in a statement.

Lieutenant Commander Neil Skinner, the ship's Commanding Officer, said: "We're looking forward to seeing HMS Hurworth at the conclusion of a refit which will keep her at the forefront of mine warfare for years to come and a return to overseas operations."

HMS Hurworth has sailed nearly 47,000 nautical miles since her previous refit - almost far enough to complete two laps of Earth.

The ship has been deployed across the UK and northern Europe, and has also escorted Russian warships through the English Channel.

The refit, which includes modernising living accommodation areas, is set to be completed next year, according to the Navy.

The minehunter will then undergo extensive sea trials and regeneration training before deploying to the Gulf.

Cover image: Library picture of HMS Hurworth (Picture: MOD)

Navy

Investigation Launched After Leak On HMS Prince Of Wales

It is understood the incident took place on Friday while the aircraft carrier was at Portsmouth Naval Base.

17th May 2020 at 2:45pm



The Royal Navy has launched an investigation into a pipe leak which caused an ankle-high flood aboard HMS Prince of Wales.

15th May 2020

A video of water pouring through the ceiling into an accommodation area of the 65,000-tonne aircraft carrier was posted on Facebook.

It is believed the leak took place on Friday while the £3 billion ship was at Portsmouth Naval Base.

A Royal Navy spokesman said: “Following a minor issue with an internal system on HMS Prince of Wales, the ship’s company were required to remove a small volume of water from the ship.

“An investigation into the cause is now under way but this will not affect the ship’s programme.”

It is understood the pipe was isolated quickly and the water was mopped up by the crew.

The leak comes after [*sister ship HMS Queen Elizabeth had to cut short sea trials last July*](#) – a seal burst, causing water to pour from a pipe and to flood through several decks.

Cover image: Library picture of HMS Prince of Wales (Picture: PA).

Permanent Mark of Respect at HMAS Sydney (II) Memorial
May 14, 2020 May 14, 2020 admin



May 13, 2020 – The HMAS Sydney (II) Memorial at Geraldton in WA has become a place of pilgrimage for 65,000 visitors each year, and a recent decision by the Chief of Navy has added a final special touch to the important commemorative site. Some 20,000 arrive by sea on cruise ships that come to Geraldton specifically to allow passengers to visit the Memorial. Many others come because of the reputation of the Memorial as an outstanding example of commemorative art. It was designed by Western Australian sculptors Charlie and Joan Smith and opened by the then Governor of Western Australia, Lieutenant General John Sanderson, on 19 November 2001.



The Australian White Ensign flies permanently at the HMAS Sydney (II)

Memorial at Geraldton, Western Australia.

That was on the 60th anniversary of the loss of the Royal Australian Navy's cruiser in battle with the German raider Kormoran off the coast of Western Australia in 1941.

The annual commemoration each November has become a major occasion in the life of Geraldton and attracts relatives of Sydney's sailors, among many others from far and wide who wish to pay their respects to the 645 members of the ship's company who died with HMAS Sydney (II).

Until April 2020, the flags flown at the memorial permanently did not include the Australian White Ensign.

Last month, the Warden of the memorial, Mr Don Rolston, made a special request to the Chief of Navy for permission to fly the Australian White Ensign at the Memorial, alongside the Australian National Flag, the State Flag of Western Australia and the flag of the City of Greater Geraldton.

Chief of Navy gave his permission for the Australian White Ensign to fly permanently at the entrance to the memorial.

It was duly hoisted by Geraldton's Navy Cadet Unit TS Morrow in line with naval traditions in the presence of the Warden and Volunteer Guides, who fulfil an ambassadorial role at the Memorial.

Flying of the Australian White Ensign in the order approved by the Chief of Navy ensures that the protocols of the Royal Australian Navy and the Australian Defence Force are upheld.

The Warden, Mr Rolston, said it was an important addition to the Memorial.

"Permission by the Chief of Navy to permanently fly the Australian White Ensign at the HMAS Sydney (II) Memorial in Geraldton greatly enhances the status and relevance of this outstanding Memorial," he said.

Mr Rolston, having been associated with the Memorial for more than two decades, was its initial Warden – a role he still proudly fulfils today.

“To see the Australian White Ensign permanently flying pays the highest respects to the 645 men lost and who are now at rest with their ship,” he said.

“The HMAS Sydney (II) Memorial in Geraldton was designed to memorialize those lost and is recognized as one of the most outstanding in its class.



“It converts its message and focus to all who visit both in-person and through various websites throughout the world.

“The Memorial is an absolute credit to the proponents of the Memorial, the Rotary Club of Geraldton and the creators and designers, Smith Sculptors – Charles Smith and Joan Walsh-Smith.

“Flying the Australian White Ensign adds the final touch so justly deserving of this Memorial of national significance as formally declared so by the Prime Minister of Australia,” he said.

The HMAS Sydney (I) Mast on the northern shore of Sydney and the HMAS Sydney (II) Memorial at Geraldton are two of the few places, outside the gates of a Royal Australian Navy shore establishment, where the Australian White Ensign can be permanently flown, by Chief of Navy’s permission, on land.

Pending the lifting of physical distancing requirements, there will be a major commemorative event at the Memorial on 19 November 2021 on the 80th anniversary of the loss of HMAS Sydney (II).

Written by Baird Maritime on May 12, 2020. Posted in Commercial Mariner - Marine Projects, Maritime Archaeology, Ships (Naval).



The battleship USS Nevada in 1943 following its return to service after being sunk in the Pearl Harbor attack (Photo: US Department of the Navy)

Underwater and terrestrial archaeology firm Search and marine robotics company Ocean Infinity recently discovered the wreck of USS Nevada, one of the US Navy’s longest serving dreadnought battleships.

Nevada was located 65 nautical miles southwest of Pearl Harbor at a depth of over 4,600 metres.

The mission was jointly co-ordinated between Search’s operations centre and the Ocean Infinity vessel Pacific Constructor, which had an embarked assortment of robotic vehicles.

Pacific Constructor set sail for a range of commercial tasks in the Pacific in early 2020, ahead of the Covid-19 pandemic. As a result of the global health crisis, the ship has remained at sea on a range of taskings.

Completed in 1914 as the lead ship of its class, Nevada served in both world wars and even survived the Pearl Harbor attack on December 7, 1941, despite suffering the loss of 60 of its crew and sustaining bomb damage that resulted in its sinking in shallow waters. The battleship was eventually raised, repaired, and placed back in service in time for it to participate in the D-Day landings in Normandy in 1944 and the Iwo Jima and Okinawa invasions in the Pacific the following year.

After World War II, Nevada was assigned to be a target ship in the first Bikini Atoll atomic experiments in 1946, which it survived. Finally, in 1948 it was used as a gunnery practice target, finally going down in July of that year after having been hit by an aerial torpedo.

Future HMAS Arafura Hull Sections Come Together May 6, 2020 admin



May 6, 2020 – The Morrison Government’s Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) program has reached another milestone with the two halves of the first Arafura Class OPV coming together to form a complete hull.

Built by Luerssen Australia and its South Australian partner ASC, it marks the largest industrial manoeuvre at Osborne Naval Shipyard in South Australia.

Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC said the Australian Naval Infrastructure (ANI) operations team manoeuvred the two mega-blocks of the ship together, weighing 1,000 tonnes in total, with only millimetres between them.

“It is a source of great pride to see a unified purpose among industry partners Luerssen, ASC and ANI, with defence industry continuing to show resilience to deliver during these challenging times,” Minister Reynolds said.

“The Morrison Government is forging ahead with our landmark naval shipbuilding programs to not only deliver the important capabilities needed for the ADF, but provide a significant positive impact to the economy and continue to deliver jobs.”

The first of the OPVs, Arafura, is planned to enter service from the early 2020’s and will conduct border protection and maritime patrol missions alongside other Australian and regional partners.

Minister for Defence Industry, the Hon Melissa Price MP congratulated ANI on its continued development work in South Australia.

“It is great to see new investments and innovations made as part of this program, with ANI undertaking significant expansion and modernisation of the Osborne Naval Shipyard,” Minister Price said.

“The OPV program is delivering benefits across Australia, with the first two vessels under construction at Osborne in South Australia and the remaining 10 vessels to be built at Henderson in Western Australia.”

Luerssen Australia is the Prime Contractor working with key shipbuilding partners ASC in South Australia and Cvmec in Western Australia to deliver the OPV capability for Defence.

The program of 12 vessels will replace and improve upon the capability delivered by the Armidale Class and Cape Class Patrol Boats.



The future of China's nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine force

Written by Adam Ni on May 8, 2020. Posted in Submersibles (Naval), Work Boat World Features.



Jin-class (Type

094) ballistic missile submarine. Photo: US Navy

China finally achieved an operational underwater nuclear capability in recent years, almost six decades after it first launched its nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) program in the late 1950s.

The deployment of the Jin-class (Type 094) SSBNs armed with JL-2 submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) marks a new stage in the evolution of China's sea-based nuclear force. According to the Pentagon's 2018 annual report to Congress on China's military capabilities, this recent development constitutes 'China's first credible sea-based nuclear deterrent'.

However, the effectiveness of China's current sea-based nuclear force still faces serious challenges from geographic, operational and technological factors. But if China develops a larger and more invulnerable SSBN capability, incorporating continuous at-sea deterrence (CASD), how would this build-up affect strategic stability in the Indo-Pacific?

Driven by Beijing's perceived nuclear insecurity, and enabled by the availability of resources to the People's Liberation Army, China's SSBN fleet, SLBM program, and supporting capabilities and systems have developed quickly since the early 2000s. Chinese military experts believe that developing an effective sea-based nuclear force is critical for ensuring the credibility of China's overall nuclear deterrent.

The steady growth in the size and sophistication of China's SSBN fleet will continue. Indeed, by all indications, a larger and more survivable SSBN force is high on the PLA Navy's list of priorities.

China had at least four operational Jin-class SSBNs in 2018, and two more have reportedly just joined the fleet. The PLA Navy will likely build a total of six to eight Jin-class SSBNs before shifting production towards its next (third) generation SSBN, the Type 096, from the early 2020s. From the mid- to late 2020s onwards, it will likely operate an SSBN fleet consisting of both the Type 094 and Type 096.

The future of China's SSBN force depends largely on China's threat perception. At one end of the spectrum, Beijing may believe that a small SSBN fleet that complements its land-based nuclear force is enough to maintain the credibility of its nuclear deterrent. On the other end, China may seek to address perceived vulnerabilities in its land-based force with a significant build-up of its SSBN force with supporting infrastructure and systems.

Another important determinant is whether China intends to pursue a CASD capability with one or more SSBNs on patrol at all times. China is unlikely to adopt such a posture in the near term due to operational constraints.

Even if the PLA Navy was operationally capable, there are serious doubts as to whether Beijing is ready to make such a major shift in its nuclear posture.

The precise number of SSBNs required for CASD would depend on a variety of factors, including the efficiency of the PLA Navy's logistics support for its SSBN fleet, and the technical specifications of Chinese nuclear reactor cores. But if Beijing's aim is to achieve CASD with at least two or three SSBNs on patrol at all times, China's SSBN force will need to expand to around 12.

The growth of China's SSBN fleet, as part of its broader nuclear modernisation effort, has a number of implications for China's nuclear strategy and strategic stability in Asia. First and foremost, China's SSBN force has become more important to its nuclear strategy and posture than at any time in the past. With the diversification away from an exclusive reliance on land-based nuclear missiles, SLBMs have grown to constitute about half of China's total number of ballistic missiles that could target the continental US.

This relative importance is likely to grow along with the size and survivability of China's SSBN fleet as China progresses along the path towards building an effective nuclear triad. Currently, China possesses a well-established, albeit relatively small, land-based nuclear force, a nascent sea-based nuclear force, and a program to develop a new strategic bomber, the H-20.

Given the growing importance of China's SSBNs, decisions about how they're deployed may have far-reaching strategic implications. For instance, if Beijing decided to adopt CASD, that would constitute an important shift in China's nuclear posture. Currently, nuclear authority is highly centralised under the Central Military Commission, with nuclear warheads stored separately from missile launchers. In addition, China's land-based nuclear force doesn't maintain a high alert status under normal peacetime conditions.

With CASD, patrolling Chinese SSBNs would carry nuclear weapons to sea, and Beijing would need to work out crucial command and control questions, such as how much authority to delegate to submarine commanders. Such a shift in posture might be interpreted by other states as evidence that Beijing was moving away from its policy to refrain from the first use of nuclear weapons.

In the short to medium term, the PLA Navy will continue to adopt a strategy that heavily emphasises SSBN deployments to selected "bastions" near the Chinese mainland, including areas of the South China Sea, East China Sea and Yellow Sea. However, over the longer term, Chinese SSBNs are likely to be increasingly active in conducting open-ocean patrols in the Pacific Ocean.

Given the advantages of open-ocean deployment, the PLA Navy will continue to develop the capabilities and experience required for effective deterrence patrols, especially in the Pacific Ocean.

A key risk to strategic stability is that Beijing's self-perceived defensive build-up could be interpreted by the US and others as aggressive efforts aimed at altering the relative strategic balance of force in China's favour. This would be especially likely if Beijing rushes to adopt CASD in the near future.



Type 42 destroyer ARA Santísima Trinidad of the Argentine Navy shortly after she sank in Puerto Belgrano Base due to a lack of maintenance.



EX HMAS Darwin being cut up at Henderson Western Australia

EX HMAS Melbourne and EX HMAS Newcastle on their way to a new home and navy



FS Champlain Donates Fuel to Madagascar Navy
May 26, 2020May 26, 2020 admin



May 25, 2020 (Google Translation) – On May 16, the overseas support and assistance building (BSAOM) Champlain made a technical stopover in Diego-Suarez, Madagascar, in order to supply the Malagasy patrol vessel Trozona. Twenty cubic meters of diesel fuel for navigation were thus delivered free of charge.

Despite the constraints imposed by the current health situation in terms of physical exchanges usually practiced with partners, the armed forces in the southern Indian Ocean area (FAZSOI) continue to provide assistance within the framework of the regional partnership .

The objective of this particular action is to support Madagascar in its efforts to increase its capacities to exercise its sovereignty in its territorial waters. The partnership between FAZSOI and the Malagasy authorities is part of the formal agreement signed on October 31, 2019.

The barrier gestures were scrupulously respected throughout the maneuver, in particular the wearing of a mask for the on-board personnel of the Champlain as well as the sailors of the Trozona. At the request of the Malagasy doctor from Diego-Suarez, all BSAOM personnel were taken to take the temperature as soon as they got off the ship to eradicate any suspicion of contamination.

Blue Tree Project - a Stirling initiative for mental health

 Published on 29 May 2020 LEUT Gary McHugh (author), LSIS Ronnie Baltoft (photographer), LSIS Ernesto Sanchez (photographer)

Location(s): Garden Island, WA

Topic(s): [HMAS Stirling](#), [Health, Fitness and Wellbeing](#)



Chief Petty Officer Marine Technician Glenn Askew from HMAS Stirling assists in positioning a Blue Tree as part of an Australia-wide mental health initiative, at the side of Dampier Road on Garden Island, WA.

Garden Island, Western Australia is not only home to Navy's largest base, [HMAS Stirling](#), but also to a variety of unique fauna and flora. But visitors to Garden Island may recently have come across a variety of tree that stands out from the rest, mainly because of its bright blue paint. HMAS Stirling Adventure Training Facilitator, Chief Petty Officer Marine Technician Glenn Askew, said the new addition to the island's flora collection was part of an Australia-wide mental health initiative called the [Blue Tree Project](#). "I saw my first ever blue tree some time ago on a large country property," Chief Petty Officer Askew said. "After that I saw a couple more on various golf courses and decided to investigate the reason behind them. "Since I realised they were part of a mental health project I can't pass a blue tree without thinking about the importance of asking people "Are you okay?". Chief Petty Officer Askew decided to approach HMAS Stirling's Executive Officer (XO) Commander Guy Lewis, about the possibility of establishing a blue tree on Garden Island. "The XO was very positive about the idea, so I got the ball rolling by finding an appropriate tree to work with," he said. Being an A-Class Nature Reserve, introduced flora and fauna species are prohibited on Garden Island, so Chief Petty Officer Askew searched for a suitable tree already located on the island.

"I was lucky to find a nine-metre downed tree just north of the Armaments Wharf, and after obtaining the necessary permissions, Commander Andrew Nelson from Fleet Logistics Support Element and I, who are both chainsaw-qualified, set about preparing the tree," he said.

After selecting and preparing a prominent site at the southern end of Garden Island, the tree was painted, a soak-well was buried and the latest addition to the Blue Tree Project was installed.

Stirling Commanding Officer Captain Ainsley Morthorpe congratulated Chief Petty Officer Askew on the successful completion of the project.

“Mental health is obviously an extremely important issue, not only for Navy but for all Australians,” Captain Morthorpe said.

“By having a tangible reminder such as this, I hope that mental health will remain at the forefront of people’s minds, and I thank Chief Petty Officer Askew and Commander Nelson for their commitment to this cause.”

The Blue Tree Project began in the Western Australian country town of Mukinbudin and has rapidly spread across Australia with the latest count indicating more than 400 trees across the country.

Imagery is available on the Navy Image Gallery: <https://images.navy.gov.au/S20201812>.



Rising tide: NAVICS immersed and successful
May 27, 2020 admin



May 27, 2020 – Communications for submarines is one of the main means to achieve strategic information superiority. With Rohde & Schwarz being at the forefront of naval communication systems, the company offers full integrated communication systems (NAVICS) including line of sight (LOS) and beyond line of sight (BLOS) communications. Here, the company masters the most critical aspect of underwater communications: the communication between the submerged platform and surface vessels, shore stations and airborne assets.

NAVICS is an operationally proven, secure and fully IP based communications system that ensures reliable and secure information exchange and brings the advantages of modern IT technology to today's vessels. A multilevel security architecture allows secure, trusted and tamper-proof communications between multiple domains of different security classification, such as unclassified, restricted and secret.

The company has equipped Type 214, Type 212 and Type 209 submarines and further submerged platforms with Rohde & Schwarz communication solutions.

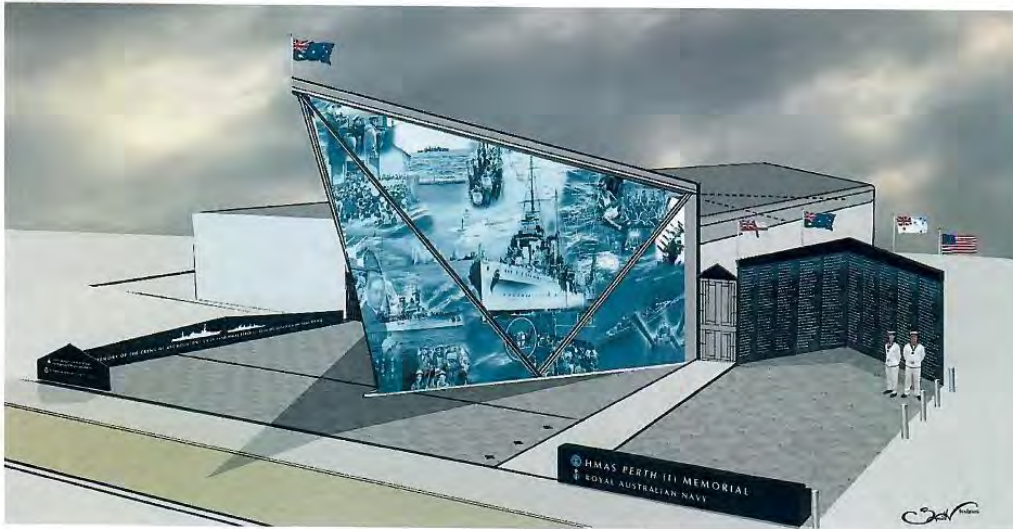
"The Rohde & Schwarz equipment provides advanced performance and reliability as well as long-term spare-part supply," Hansjörg Herrbold, Vice President Market Segment Navy Rohde & Schwarz, says. "Our integrated IP-based communications systems solution is smaller and lighter than TDM based systems, thus saving space, power and weight. Our advanced wireless communications solution provides communications whilst on-the-move."

The comprehensive range of solutions that Rohde & Schwarz offers, ensures high connectivity and secure and interoperable LOS and BLOS communications for all naval platforms, be they submerged, on the sea, on land or in the air. Rohde & Schwarz meets challenging naval requirements by providing outstanding reliability that enables customers to maintain information superiority in any type of scenario. All Rohde & Schwarz equipment is in line with the relevant MIL-STDs for naval applications and proven in more than 40 navies.

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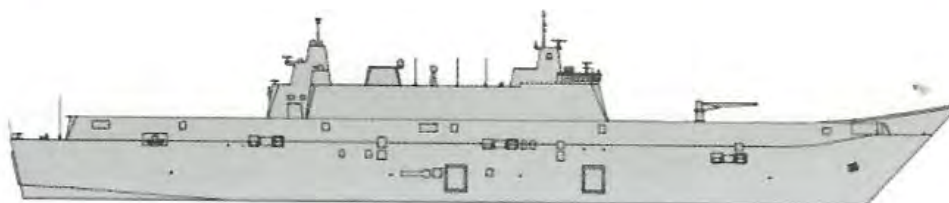


THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA

The Navy League of Australia was established in Australia in 1900, and in 1950 became an autonomous national organisation with a Federal Council and Divisions covering all States and Territories. Its aim today, as it was in 1900, is to create an interest in the sea and to keep before the Australian people the fact that we are a maritime nation and that a strong Navy and a sound maritime industry are indispensable elements to our national well-being and vital to the freedom of Australia.

The Navy League of Australia invites you to join us in this important national task.

For more information visit www.navyleague.org.au



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To become a Member of The League, you do not need to have had any previous maritime experience. You merely need an interest in maritime affairs. Simply complete the Application Form below, and post it, together with your first annual subscription of \$35.00 (which includes the four quarterly editions of The Navy), to the Hon Secretary of the Division of the Navy League in the State in which you reside, the address of which are as follows:

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For information on how to join the ANC, email

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NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA, GPO Box 1719, Sydney NSW 2001



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