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February 11, 2010

Littoral Combat Ship – Independence Commissioned, Freedom Deploys

“What this ship class will do, because of its modular capabilities, its speed, its shallow draft...will take the banner of American independence to the seas and shores of every continent and ensure the freedom and security of the seas upon which all nations rely”

– Adm. Gary Roughead, Chief of Naval Operations

Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) is a fast, agile, mission-focused ship that demonstrates the latest in naval warfighting technology and is primed to become a key component of the 21st century Navy. The ship is specifically designed to defeat anti-access threats in shallow, coastal water regions, including fast surface craft, quiet diesel submarines, and mines. The Navy remains committed to the LCS program and the requirement for 55 of these ships.

USS Freedom (LCS 1) Early Deployment

- The Navy will deploy USS Freedom (LCS 1) Feb. 16 to Southern and Pacific Command areas of responsibility, approximately two years ahead of her originally scheduled maiden deployment.
- This early deployment is a tremendous opportunity to learn key lessons in an operational setting, and to integrate those lessons into the larger LCS fleet. The lessons that the Navy is learning from accelerating Freedom’s deployment will inform follow-on ships and the larger LCS Fleet Integration Strategy.
- Freedom will deploy with a tailored surface warfare mission package, including a maritime security module to provide visit, board, search, and seizure capability.
- Early deployment of Freedom has no bearing on the LCS acquisition strategy for the design down select in fiscal year 2010.

USS Independence (LCS 2) Commissioned

- USS Independence (LCS 2) was commissioned in Mobile, Ala., the city where the ship was built, on Jan. 16. Independence is the second of two LCS seaframes, and the first LCS of the General Dynamics variant. USS Freedom (LCS 1), the Lockheed Martin variant, was commissioned Nov. 8, 2008 in Milwaukee, Wis.
- Independence will be at Austal shipyard in Mobile, Ala. through mid-March. Once all crew certifications are achieved, blue crew will sail the ship into various East coast ports for further systems testing. The ship is on track to meet all planned testing and evaluation milestones.
- Independence is currently “in commission–special” status because industrial and fitting out work remain that must be completed prior to the ship reporting to the fleet. In March, upon completion of crew certifications and just prior to sail away, the ship will be “in commission.”
- Independence will be homeported in San Diego, Calif., as a part of the Pacific Fleet.

Key Messages

- LCS is a fast, agile, focused-mission ship designed for operation in near-shore environments yet capable of open-ocean operation.
- LCS crews are part of an innovative manning reconstruct that reduces crew size, demanding each Sailor maintain high levels of proficiency in multiple fields, and optimizing operability with multiple crews.
- To meet the combatant commander’s increased demand for mission-tailored forces packages, LCS features an interchangeable modular design that allows the ship to be reconfigured to meet mission requirements.

Facts & Figures

- There are two LCS hull forms: a semi-planing monohull and an aluminum trimaran.
- LCS is manned by two rotational crews, “blue” and “gold,” of 40 Sailors each. These crews are further augmented by detachment specialists for each of the mission modules.
- Fort Worth (LCS 3) and Coronado (LCS 4) are under construction and are expected to be delivered to the fleet in 2012.
- Freedom is scheduled to arrive in its homeport in San Diego, Calif. in late spring 2010.