

SAC NEWSLETTER



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A monthly newsletter brought to you by The Strategic Affairs Committee of the PSDSRA

Top stories in this newsletter (Helpful Hint: click the pictures to be taken to the articles/links)



Senate pushes action on defense bill to after Thanksgiving



Vaccine mandate is last straw for US shipyards already facing labor short-



Senate Approves Bill to Raise Debt Ceiling and Avert Default, for Now



Navy Issues Contracts in First Step Toward \$8B to Rebuild Two Public Shipyards



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Senate pushes action on defense bill to after Thanksgiving



(Andrew Harnik/AP)

"The Senate on Friday pushed off further action on its annual defense policy bill until after the Thanksgiving break, having failed to strike a deal on which amendments will get votes. Armed Services Chairman Jack Reed, D-R.I., filed cloture Friday on the underlying bill and his substitute placeholder amendment to the fiscal 2022 National Defense Authorization Act, teeing up procedural votes for Nov. 29.

Some of the amendments require the Defense Department to produce reports or conduct studies. Mazie Hirono, D-Hawaii, has one that tasks the Defense Department with creating a report on the readiness of the Virginia-class submarine fleet. Another, proposed by Arkansas Republican John Boozman, would require the Pentagon to conduct a study on the incidence of breast cancer among active duty service members.

While senators in some cases know the Senate will reject their amendments, they are still eager to secure votes in order to get senators on the record on issues they see as important."

Vaccine mandate is last straw for US shipyards already facing labor shortages



(MC3 Samuel Gruss/U.S. Navy)

"U.S. shipbuilding, with its associated industries, is an important part of America's defense. China already has the world's largest standing army, navy, coast guard, maritime militia and missile force. Chinese shipyards crank out new ships at a breakneck pace, with the People's Liberation Army Navy commissioning three new warships a day earlier this year — or "almost half as many as the US will induct in one year."

While America's shipyards need to increase production, the last straw for an industry already confronting labor shortages is the federal vaccine mandate implemented by the Biden administration. Despite the deadline being delayed and softened, shipbuilders (and other supply chain firms across the aerospace- and defense-industrial base) are still feeling the effects.

Today, these strained workforces are near breaking point. This impacts not just employers nationwide, but those in uniform who are waiting for combat power to arrive — be it afloat, on the ground or in the air.

The administration is requiring employers with 100 or more employees to ensure their workers are vaccinated by Jan. 4, 2022, or else they are forced to produce a negative COVID-19 test on a weekly basis. This does not help. The Pentagon and White House should instead provide more accommodations within its vaccination mandate to support strategically relevant firms as they make efforts to retain highly skilled blue-collar workers — particularly shipbuilders and maintainers.

Even before the pandemic, shipyards were relying on "excessive use of overtime" due to understaffing. A lack of workers has contributed to delayed maintenance periods across the U.S. Navy's four public yards, ranging from 113 days for aircraft carriers to 225 days for submarines.

The vaccine mandate is poised to aggravate these labor shortages: In late September 2021, two Navy shipbuilders — Fincantieri Marinette Marine and General Dynamics Electric Boat — reported that only about half of their workforces were vaccinated, despite offers of paid time off to receive vaccinations. A month later, the largest union at Bath Iron Works reported it might lose about 30 percent of its membership as a result of the mandate.

Now is not the time to take risky gambles with necessary workforces. The administration should institute flexible requirements for defense contractors, such as offering financial support to select companies instituting more expansive testing regimes or continuing strict social distancing policies. More exemptions for medical and religious reasons should be approved. Because these mandates affect the ability of companies to perform, Congress should support equitable adjustments for "time and cost" on defense contracts. The White House needs to select and appoint quickly a Pentagon acquisition boss to oversee the impacts of this mandate.

Why would Washington want to cede more ground to China and reinforce its quantitative military advantages further by instituting costly mandates when simpler alternatives exist?"

The Senate's year-end to-do list is 'going to be a train wreck'



Anna Moneymaker/Getty Images

"The Senate is only scheduled to be in three weeks for the rest of 2021, with a recess set to start Dec. 10. There's almost no chance that schedule holds at this point, with the Democratic majority facing a to-do list more daunting than a Black Friday sales rush. Congress has to fund the government past Dec. 3, pass a massive defense policy bill, finish out a \$1.75 trillion party-line social spending bill and potentially maneuver around a U.S. credit default.

Each of those four bills could take several days of Senate floor time, not to mention the myriad negotiations still left to hash out Biden's GOP-free domestic agenda with Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.), who wants to slow things down. Already some senators are anticipating a short-term government funding patch for a few weeks, potentially right up until Christmas. And in a worst-case scenario, the debt limit would need to be raised right around that same time — something Republicans say they won't help with.

While Democrats still sound bullish on closing out their social safety net and climate measure by Thanksgiving, 2022 may be the real hard deadline. That's when Democrats' expanded child tax credit expires anyway — and when lawmakers will really, truly be desperate to get home after months of protracted negotiations.

The December time crunch might as well be a holiday tradition at this point. Last year, the Senate left right before Christmas Eve, after funding the government and passing a \$900 billion coronavirus relief bill. And even after leaving Washington, then-President Donald Trump kept Congress in suspense over whether he would sign that bill. He did eventually, but also vetoed the defense policy bill, prompting the rare New Year's Day session."

Navy Issues Contracts in First Step Toward \$8B to Rebuild Two Public Shipyards



US Navy Photo

"The Navy issued the first contracts to companies that will compete for about \$8 billion worth of military construction projects at shipyards in Hawaii and Washington state, two of its four public shipyards long overdue for modernization that can support the fleet's growing repair and maintenance backlog.

Each of the five companies — Bechtel National Inc. of Reston, Va.; Dragados/Hawaiian Dredging/Orion JV of Honolulu, Hawaii; ECC Infrastructure LLC of Burlingame, Calif.; Kiewit-Alberici SIOP MACC AJV of Vancouver, Wash.; and TPC-NAN JV of Sylmar, Calif. — received firm-fixed-price, indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity, multiple-award construction contracts for Naval Sea Systems Command's Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program.

The plan also will modernize its other public shipyards: Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Va., and Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Maine. No contract has been announced yet for those facilities, which are the oldest of the four shipyards, dating back to 1767 and 1800, respectively.

The shipyard modernization program grew out of a shipyard improvement plan the Navy initially gave Congress in 2013, and it submitted Phase 1 of SOIP to lawmakers in 2018"

Navy prepares to issue major unmanned research, development contract



The unmanned ships Sea-hawk, front, and Sea Hunter launch for the Pacific Fleet's Unmanned Systems Integrated Battle Problem 21. (File)

"A "The Navy is planning to issue a major research and development contract focused on autonomous and unmanned vehicles, according to a new notice that also schedules an industry day later this month.

"The Naval Surface Warfare Center Carderock Division (NSWCCD) announces an industry day for unmanned vehicles (UxV) and unmanned systems (UxS) development, experimentation, demonstration, acquisition, operations, and employment resulting in products and/or services that are within thirteen functional areas," according to a public Navy notice published this week.

The service anticipates it will use a multiple award, indefinite-delivery, indefinite-quantity contract to award the work. Also called MAC IDIQs, such contracts effectively allow the military to create a finite pool of qualified companies who are then permitted to compete amongst themselves for individual task orders. These contract vehicles allow industry easy access to work in their respective areas of expertise and provide the Navy an outlet to quickly identify appropriate companies for narrowly-scoped tasks."

Quick Link Resources Included for the Benefit of the Members



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Information on
CMMC 2.0



Cal/OSHA COVID-
19 ETS Update



CalChamber 2021
Job Killer Legisla-
tion List



PSDSRA Toy Drive
Flyer

Federal Contractor Vaccine Deadline Postponed, DoD Civilians to be Vaccinated by Nov. 22



US Navy Photo

"The deadline for federal contractors to get vaccinated against COVID-19 has been pushed back to Jan. 4 to line up with new requirements for health care workers and other employers, the White House announced on Thursday.

Federal contractors will either need to have their second-dose of the FDA-approved Pfizer vaccine, the second dose of the emergency authorization use Moderna or the single-dose Johnson and Johnson version by Jan. 4, according to a White House statement.

The deadline was delayed in order to better match the timeline set by the White House Thursday, according to the statement.

Employers, under OSHA, who willfully violate the vaccination requirements could face a penalty of approximately \$14,000 per citation.

As with military members, DOD civilians can apply for medical and religious exemptions. Those who are not fully vaccinated after Nov. 22, including those who are exempted, will be subject to weekly testing unless they work remotely, according to DOD guidance from Oct. 29."

About the SAC:

The Strategic Affairs Committee's charter is to monitor current events and news relevant to the Ship Repair Industry and provide the Association's board of directors with items of interest that may affect the industry and / or the membership. The information includes but is not limited to current events, geopolitical information, budget news, political information and upcoming legislation.



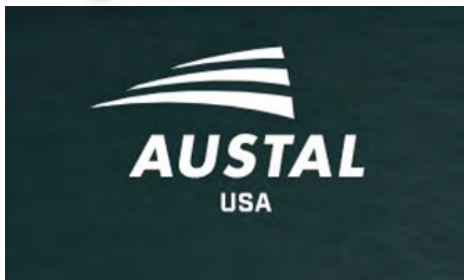
The PSDSRA's Facebook page is regularly updated with news, which is focused on, timely and relevant information of value to our members in the Maritime Industry. To view, like, and/or follow the PSDSRA's page, click the Facebook logo.

The SAC meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month.

To join the Committee - Email KWilkinson@delphinus.com and you'll be added to the committee distributions and meeting invitations.

Current Active Committee Members include: Kyle Wilkinson, Derry Pence, Terry Buis, Marcel Becker, Kyle Clapp, Kelvan Hall, Michael Curtain, Michael Bice, Ed Zajonc, Morgan Miller, Lorenzo Ramirez, Patrick Mooney, Ross Shook, Desiree Waldon, David Widener, Chris Hill, and Dan Cummins.

Members Featured



SAIC
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Prepared By:

Kyle Wilkinson—SAC Committee Chair

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Austal USA's advanced ship manufacturing extends to its **GLOBAL SERVICES** division where the company offers on-time and on-budget technical support. Today, Austal USA is providing services and support to the U.S. Navy's Littoral Combat Ship and Expeditionary Fast Transport programs at the company's service centers in Mobile, Alabama, San Diego, California, and Singapore. Austal USA also provides service and support through its fly-away teams to meet the needs of our customers anytime and anywhere in the world.

SERVICE CENTERS

GULF COAST

Austal USA has expanded the company's modern state-of-the-art facility in Mobile, Alabama to include a 15-acre ship repair operation and 20,000 ton Panamax-class floating dry dock on the west bank of the Mobile River, as well as advanced infrastructure, equipment, vehicles and software that is reducing post-delivery cost and dwell time to our customers. The company is also offering service and support to U.S. Navy ships in Jacksonville, Florida.

WEST COAST

Austal USA's west coast service center has steadily increased its capability and capacity to meet growing customer demand. Austal USA's service center includes warehouse and production space along with a large office footprint dedicated to technical and support services. Austal USA also recently acquired the lease for a 15-acre waterfront site, immediately adjacent to U.S. Naval Base San Diego, which will provide full-service ship repair services, primarily for U.S. Government ships. The site will provide maintenance and modernization services for manned and autonomous U.S. Navy, Military Sealift Command, and U.S. Coast Guard ships. The site will include a purpose-built dry dock designed to service small surface combatants, to include both variants of the Littoral Combat Ship and the Constellation-class Frigates. With work being performed in San Diego as well as Seattle, Austal USA's team is reducing cost and increasing capability to west coast home-ported ships.

SINGAPORE

Austal USA's Asia-Pacific headquarters offers an expanding array of deployed technical services and support to ships and crews operating in the region to include maintenance work in Guam. Austal USA's expansion to Singapore provides responsive support to our Navy and Military Sealift Command (MSC) customers in the region.

CAPABILITIES

Electrical

Structural

Mechanical

Integrated Systems

Crew training and course development

Post Delivery Availability (PDA)

Post Shakedown Availability (PSA)

Docking Selected Repair Availability (DRSA)

Planned Maintenance Availability (PMAV)

Continuous Maintenance Availability (CMAV)

Emergent Repair (EM)

Program Management

- Engineering, work control/tagout, logistics, project scheduling, progressing, and quality control
- Planning, estimating, forecasting, budgeting

Integrated Logistics Support

- Identification and procurement of spare parts
- Crew training and indoctrination
- Technical and service manual update



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MARITIME COMMUNICATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS (MCATS)

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Ingenuity®

- **Location:**

MCATS resides at 7580 Metropolitan Drive, San Diego, Ca. 92108, Suites 205 and 206. Each suite is approximately 1500 sq. ft. and is used for assembly of our Antenna Tilt Systems, Power Distribution Unit, material storage, inventory of finished parts and manufacturing. Within the space, we also have blueprint control, an inspection office and a grinding room for heavy rust removal. The space also serves as offices for the team.

- **What we do:**

MCATS is a state of the art manufacturing, repair and fabrication facility with over 50 years of experience located in San Diego, Ca. We supply depot level support in fabrication, manufacturing, training, installation of shipboard to shore site C4ISR systems. MCATS is ISO-9001-2015 Certified for manufacturing and engineering. MCATS is the main supplier of antenna tilt machines to US Navy along with Fan wire antennas and their components.

- We repair antenna tilt machines that are part of combat system's on US Navy ships
- We repair and build new fan wire antennas that are on 95% of US Navy ships
- We build new motor controllers for most US Navy ships
- We train US Navy sailors on operation and maintenance of antenna Tilt machines and fan wire antennas.

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