

# SAC NEWSLETTER



10.31.2022

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)



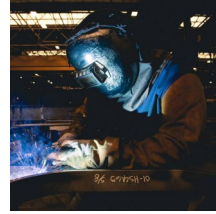
Senators confident defense budget work will finish this year



Biden Signs Continuing Resolution Keeping Government Running Through Dec. 16



White House 'Strongly Opposes' Navy Provisions in FY 2023 Defense Bill



Defense firms outsource sub, carrier construction amid labor woes



New Report Says US Navy Capacity Is "Very Weak"

## Senators confident defense budget work will finish this year



(Mariam Zuhaib/AP)

"The chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee said he is confident that lawmakers will be able to finish work on the annual defense authorization bill by the end of the year, despite the long list of challenges to overcome between now and then.

At Tuesday's Senate session, lawmakers formally began floor debate on the authorization bill, which outlines \$817 billion in Defense Department spending policies and priorities for fiscal 2023. The House passed its draft of the legislation in July.

The two versions contain some significant differences, including differing spending targets for the military. Both are far above the roughly \$770 billion defense budget proposed by the White House in the spring.

Debate on the measure is expected to resume the second week in November, when lawmakers return from the midterm elections."

## Biden Signs Continuing Resolution Keeping Government Running Through Dec. 16



"President Joe Biden, on Friday 9/30, signed a stopgap funding bill into law, preventing a government shutdown on the last day of the fiscal year.

The continuing resolution keeps the government funded through Dec. 16, giving lawmakers more time to pass Fiscal Year 2023 funding bills, including the annual defense appropriations legislation.

Both chambers are in recess until after Election Day, meaning both the FY 2023 defense spending and policy bills will not pass until November at the earliest.

Under a CR, the Pentagon cannot spend money on new-start programs and its funding is limited to the prior fiscal year's levels.

While the Senate Appropriations Committee in its mark of the FY 2023 spending bill sought to increase the defense topline \$30 billion over the Biden administration's request, the House Appropriations Committee met the Biden administration's request for \$762 billion.

The committees will need to work out the differences during the conference process."

## NASSCO Lays Keel for Future Expeditionary Sea Base USS Robert E. Simanek



The Oct. 21, 2022 keel laying ceremony for the future Robert E. Simanek (ESB-7). US Navy Photo

"General Dynamics National Steel and Shipbuilding Company recently laid the keel for the Navy's next Expeditionary Sea Base, the service announced today.

NASSCO on Friday laid the keel for the future USS Robert E. Simanek (ESB-7) at its San Diego, Calif., shipyard.

We are honored this ship will celebrate the late Robert E. Simanek's legacy as a Medal of Honor recipient and Korean War veteran and his dedication to our country," Tim Roberts, the program manager for strategic and theater sealift within the Program Executive Office Ships, said in the Navy news release. "ESBs provide a critical capability to the fleet and provide for increased flexibility."

---

## White House ‘Strongly Opposes’ Navy Provisions in FY 2023 Senate Defense Bill



Navy Photo

“The White House objects to several naval provisions in the Senate’s Fiscal Year 2023 policy bill that prevent cuts in fleet force structure, extend the San Antonio-class amphibious warship and set a minimum number of amphibious warships in the Navy’s fleet.

The eight-page statement of administration policy from the Office of Management and Budget singles out several initiatives in the Senate’s version of the FY 2023 National Defense Authorization Act that would stop planned decommissionings of Littoral Combat Ships, some Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruisers and the first two expeditionary sea bases – USNS Montford Point (ESD-1) and USNS John Glenn (ESD-2). The White House also objects to Senate language that matches a House provision to set 31 as the minimum number for amphibious warships the Navy should maintain.

The White House “strongly opposes multiple provisions that would limit DoD’s ability to divest or retire lower-priority platforms and certain Navy littoral combat ships, amphibious ships, and expeditionary transport dock ships,” according to the Oct. 18 memo.

“The Administration particularly opposes excessive authorization levels for platforms and systems that cannot be affordably sustained or modernized in order to provide survivable, lethal, and resilient forces in the current threat environment. The President’s Budget for FY 2023 was developed in a thoughtful and deliberate way to match resources to strategy and strategy to policy.”

“The Administration urges Congress not to add Advanced Procurement funding to Landing, Platform, Dock (LPD)-33. The Department remains focused on investing in the right mix of capabilities, including future amphibious platforms, to deliver the ships the Joint Force needs to campaign in the Indo-Pacific region and implement the 2022 NDS,” reads the memo.”

---

## Defense firms outsource sub, carrier construction amid labor woes



Albert Nelson structural welds on an aircraft carrier Enterprise unit. (Ashley Cowan/ Newport News Shipbuilding)

“VIRGINIA BEACH, Va. — The U.S. Navy is pouring billions of dollars into shoring up the companies that help build nuclear-powered submarines and aircraft carriers.

But these companies, and especially prime contractors General Dynamics Electric Boat and HII’s Newport News Shipbuilding, cannot hire enough people to keep up with demand.

So they’re outsourcing work that was previously done in-house, two admirals said.

Rear Adm. Jon Rucker, the program executive officer for attack submarines, said the Navy spent more than \$1 billion between fiscal 2018 and fiscal 2022, and that the service is committed to \$2.4 billion from fiscal 2023 to fiscal 2027.

Rucker said the Navy is trying to target its investments where it can make the most impact: 350 companies are considered “critical suppliers” in the submarine-industrial base, and 55% of those are located in six states. So workforce development dollars are focused on those states to do the most good for critical suppliers in need of more workers. This effort could see the establishment of new training sites in Virginia and Pennsylvania.

“We are saturated in certain areas of the country. The Northeast is one of those. If we cannot bring the people to the work, we’re going to take the work to the people,” Rucker said.

Rucker also said at the conference that this trend applies to submarine repair work performed at Navy public shipyards. He added that the service is trying to get submarine maintenance work completed on predictable and repeatable timelines — which isn’t possible today — but level-loading the work at the yards by outsourcing some tasks may help achieve that goal.”

---

## Quick Link Resources Included for the Benefit of the Members



Contact Monica at  
mpot@sandiegosh  
iprepair.com to  
advertise open  
positions on the  
PSDSRA Website



Information on  
CMMC 2.0



LOST DBIDS Report-  
ing Memo



CalChamber Job  
Killers



Two Factor Authen-  
tication Turnstile  
Access at NBSD

---

## Navy Wants 100 Unmanned Ships Monitoring Middle East Waters by Next Year



US Navy Photo

“The United States and its allies want a force of 100 unmanned surface vessels patrolling waters from the Red Sea into the Persian Gulf by next summer, the commander of U.S. 5th Fleet said on Tuesday.

For the last year, U.S. Central Command has been the test bed for an experimental force of long-endurance unmanned systems at sea married with artificial intelligence tools on shore to look for military threats or illegal activity. Unlike some of the high-end drones used by the U.S. military, the information and sensors for each individual system are unclassified, with their output beamed back to a maritime operations center for a human to make a decision when the AI system detects something out of the ordinary. The effort is known as Task Force 59.

The largest test of the underlying Task Force 59 concept was earlier this year as part of the International Maritime Exercise 22. Fifty USVs were part of the 60-nation exercise that worked to create a unified picture of 5th Fleet.”

---

### 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](mailto: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.

---

## New Report Says US Navy Capacity Is “Very Weak”



(U.S. Navy photo by Pat Morrissey)

“By Captain John Konrad (gCaptain) US Congressman Mike Gallagher, a Republican member of the House Armed Services Committee, delivered a stark warning to American citizens yesterday in response to a new report by the Heritage Foundation that ranked the US Navy “very weak” in terms of capacity and under immense strain to maintain readiness.

“For the first time in the history of the Heritage index the overall rating of the US Navy was downgraded to “weak” relative to the force needed to defend national interests on a global stage,” said Gallagher. “But here’s the problem: we’ve tried everything to improve the rating and none of it seems to work.”

In his remarks, Gallagher acknowledged that while “long-term investments to rebuild American military superiority in general—and maritime superiority in particular—are critical, the reality is that we will not be able to build the ships the Navy needs within the next five years.”

According to the Heritage report, the Navy’s weak 2023 Military Strength Index score was driven by “very weak” capacity (the number of ships) and a “weak” level of readiness (training and availability). The US Navy received a “marginal score” in capability but Heritage claims this is also trending down.

According to Gallagher time is not on the side of America and Taiwan because we have entered the window of maximum danger, or the “Davidson Window,” which is a reference to former Indo-Pacific Commander Admiral Phil Davidson’s assessment that China may make a move on Taiwan within the next five years. Gallagher believes to Navy’s current “divest to invest” plan – decommissioning ships and hard assets to pay for new technologies – within the Davidson Window is dangerous.

Republican leaders lay some of the blame on Biden, claiming the President’s defense budget would force the Navy to bottom out at 280 ships and the Air Force to cut over 1000 airplanes by 2027, just in time for the Peaople Liberation Army’s 100th anniversary and target date for China having the capability to invade Taiwan.

Much of the Navy’s plan – as outlined by the Chief Of Naval Operations Admiral Gilday – currently rests on increasing weapons capability (instead of building more ships) and accelerating the pace of new technology (e.g. autonomous warships, laser defense systems and hypersonic weapons) but some naval analysts believe new technology would arrive too late and could possibly be stolen by China. .”

---

### Prepared By:

Kyle Wilkinson—SAC Committee Chair

Disclaimer: The images, articles, and quotes used within this newsletter are the property of their respective creators. Credit for images is provided above, if applicable. Any and all request to remove images, articles, and quotes will be complied with and should be submitted to [KWilkinson@delphinus.com](mailto:KWilkinson@delphinus.com).