



# The Sentinel Class Acquisition Strategy and the 123 Foot Patrol Boat Conversion: A Comparison

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## **Sentinel Class Acquisition Strategy**

In order to rapidly acquire a patrol boat with the capability to meet our mission requirements, the Coast Guard employed a proven strategy of requiring industry to take the design of an operational parent craft and tailor that design within defined parameters. This modified, parent craft patrol boat acquisition strategy has been used very successfully by the Coast Guard on past ship classes. Specifically, the Coast Guard had previously contracted with Bollinger Shipyards, Inc. to deliver two patrol boat platforms: forty-nine 110 foot Island Class patrol boats (based on a Vosper Thornycroft parent craft design) and sixty-seven 87 foot Coastal Patrol Boats (based on the Damen STAN 2600 patrol boat). Both of these platforms have proven to be outstanding successes operationally. The most recent of these, the 87 foot Coastal Patrol Boat, is particularly notable because Bollinger delivered 65 patrol boats that met all performance requirements on time and under budget.

The Sentinel Class strategy is inspired by these successes. These patrol boats will be based on the Damen STAN Patrol 4708, a successful, in-service design already performing Coast Guard equivalent missions for the government of South Africa. Versions of this design have been built within Damen Shipyards and by other shipyards under licensing arrangements. Like the 110 foot and 87 foot parent craft designs, the STAN Patrol 4708 design will be modified to meet specific mission requirements. As with those acquisitions, the Coast Guard contracted with Bollinger to perform this work only after a full and open competition. For the Sentinel Class, a total of six offerors competed.

The Coast Guard already has an on-site Project Resident Office (PRO) at Bollinger Shipyards. Originally established to oversee the 87 foot Coastal Patrol Boat project, this PRO will also house the Sentinel Class Contracting Officer and his staff. Coast Guard Technical Authorities and Damen Shipyards Group will be extensively involved in ensuring that detailed technical requirements are met. The Coast Guard will also use Navy partnerships and the American Bureau of Shipping for thorough review of the design, building and classing of the Sentinel and to ensure best production practices are followed.

## **The 123 foot Patrol Boat Conversion**

The Coast Guard is of course aware of Bollinger's involvement in the failed 123 foot patrol boat conversion program. However, it is very important to recognize that the contracting approach and nature of the work were significantly different for that project. Rather than leveraging Bollinger's expertise in construction based on a parent craft, the 123 foot conversion was a complex retrofit to an existing hull already at the end of its expected service life. Regarding that project's contracting approach; Bollinger was a second tier sub-contractor to the Deepwater prime contractor, Integrated Coast Guard Systems. The Coast Guard's contract oversight relied heavily on industry self-certification, which compounded the effects of the limited involvement of the original ship designer.

It is important to understand that the Coast Guard did consider past performance on the 123 foot conversion contract in the evaluation of Bollinger's proposal. The fundamental differences between the Sentinel Class project and the 123 foot conversion, coupled with Bollinger's previous successes in parent craft-based ship construction, significantly reduce the risk of future unsatisfactory performance. The new construction work (versus a complex retrofit of an older vessel), establishing a direct contract/management relationship, the use





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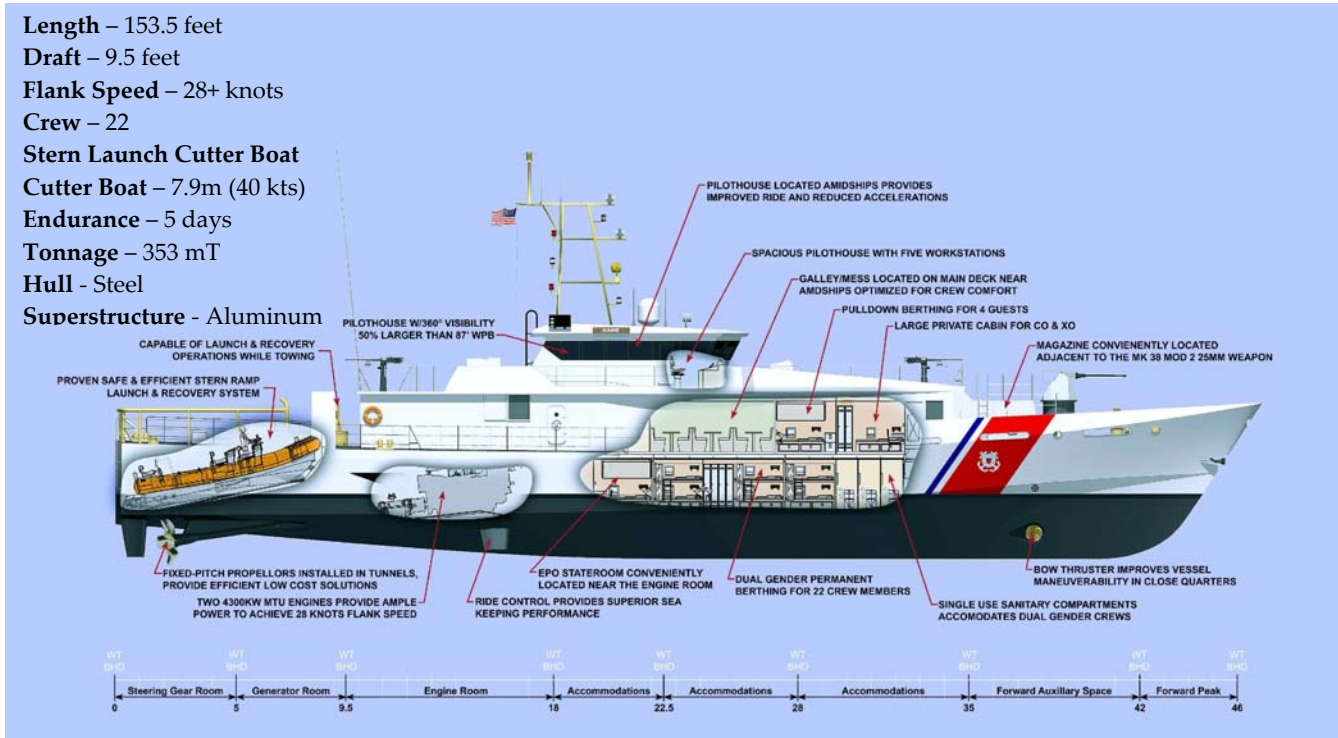
of outside experts in performance reviews and an independent organization classing the vessel are significant improvements from 123 foot conversion approach.

The Department of Justice, with Coast Guard assistance, has begun an investigation into the failed 123 foot patrol boat conversion under the Deepwater contract. That effort continues unabated and is not impacted by the Sentinel award decision.

## Bottom Line: A Superb New Patrol Boat Platform

Bollinger Shipyard has built over 110 patrol boats for the Coast Guard since 1985. These boats have been the mainstay of coastal security, safety and defense operations for nearly three decades and have provided tremendous value to the country.

The Sentinel Class patrol boats will similarly deliver vital capabilities to the Coast Guard and help meet the service’s critical need for additional patrol boats. They will give Coast Guard men and women a capable new resource to save lives, enforce U.S. and international maritime law, and ensure national security along the United States’ 95,000 nautical miles of coastline. An extremely capable ocean going patrol boat platform, the Sentinel Class will equip our Coast Guard crews with the latest in 21<sup>st</sup> Century patrol boat technology, so that they might successfully and effectively serve the American public for many decades to come.



For more information on this and other Coast Guard Acquisition programs, please visit our website: <http://www.uscg.mil/acquisition>

