Acquisition Directorate

# National Security Cutter (NSC)

July 2008

*Bertholf*

The USCG Acquisition Directorate is committed to delivering and supporting state-of-the-market platforms and systems that are affordable, efficient and mission-capable.

**Mission execution begins *here.***

**Any Mission, Anytime, Anywhere**

At 418 feet, the Legend-class of new national security cutters is designed to be the flagship of the U.S. Coast Guard's fleet, capable of executing the most challenging maritime security missions including supporting the mission requirements of joint U.S. combatant commanders. The National Security Cutter (NSC) is the largest and most technically advanced class of the Coast Guard recapitalization program's three major classes of cutters and will replace the aging 378' High Endurance Hamilton class cutters that have been in service since the 1960s.

**Capability**

Compared to legacy cutters, the NSC's design will provide better sea keeping and higher sustained transit speeds, greater endurance and range, and the ability for launch and recovery – in higher sea states – of improved small boats, helicopters, and, eventually unmanned aerial vehicles – all key attributes in enabling the Coast Guard to implement increased security responsibilities. Such duties include exerting more effective jurisdiction over foreign-flagged ships transiting U.S. waters. The more capable national security cutters, for example, will enable the Coast Guard to screen and target vessels faster, more safely and reliably before they arrive in U.S. waters – to include conducting onboard verification through boardings and, if necessary, taking enforcement-control actions. The NSC will serve as an integral part of the Coast Guard's collaborative inter-agency effort to achieve maritime domain awareness and ensure the safety of the American public and sovereignty of U.S. maritime borders.

**Evolving Mission Requirements**

Just as the multiple maritime and military roles of the U.S. Coast Guard have grown in scope

and significance since the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States, so too have the NSC's capability requirements evolved to be responsive to today's ever-more challenging operational missions and threats. " The Coast Guard's recapitalization existed prior to 9/11", said Rear Admiral Gary Blore, Assistant Commandant for Acquisition and Chief Acquisition Officer, at the keel-laying ceremony for *Waesche*, the Coast Guard's Second NSC, "as did our Coast Guard, as did this shipyard. For Deepwater to modernize and recapitalize the Coast Guard, we need to change with the threat."

The NSC is designed to achieve a 30-year fatigue life and built to deliver 21st Century capabilities to the Coast Guard in a way that will enhance the safety of its crew and allow the Coast Guard to execute its central missions more effectively, efficiently, and safely.

**Status:**

The NSC program is one of the most rapid ship-building programs in the Coast Guard's history. The first NSC, *Bertholf* (WMSL 750), was christened on November 11, 2006, and the U.S. Coast Guard conducted preliminary acceptance (delivery) of *Bertholf*, May 8, 2008 in Pascagoula, Miss. The delivery is a major milestone in *Bertholf's* transition to full operational status in the Coast Guard's fleet and represents preliminary acceptance of the cutter. *Bertholf* will be formally commissioned on Aug. 4, 2008. NSC No. 2, the *Waesche* (WMSL 751), had its keel laid on September 11, 2006, and is more than 63 percent complete. Christened on July 26, 2008, *Waesche* is on track for delivery in 2009. Keel laying for NSC No. 3, *Stratton* (WMSL 752) is scheduled for summer 2009 with delivery scheduled for 2011.

## Features

- Increased range and endurance (60–90 day patrol cycles)
- Automated weapons system
- Medium caliber deck gun (57MM) capable of stopping rogue merchant vessels far from shore
- Larger flight deck
- State-of-the-art Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) equipment enhancing interoperability between Coast Guard and U.S. Navy
- Detection and defense capabilities against chemical, biological, or radiological attack
- Advanced sensors for intelligence collection and sharing
- Real-time tracking and seamless Common Operational Picture/Maritime Domain Awareness

## Characteristics

Number Planned: 8

Prime Contractor: Integrated Coast Guard Systems

Length: 418ft.

Beam: 54ft.

Draft: 21ft.

Full Load Displacement: 4,500lt.

Total Enclosed Deck Area: 54,139sq. ft.

Fuel: 659lt.

Propulsion Plant: Combined diesel and gas turbine; with two 9,655hp diesel engines and one 30,565bhp gas turbine

Max Sustained Speed: 28kts.

Range: 12,000nm.

Endurance: 60 days

Berthing: 148

Armament: One MK110 57mm gun; one 20mm Close In Weapon System; one Mk53 NULKA active expendable decoy system

Sensors: X&S band surface search radar; EADS 3D air search radar; SPQ-9B fire control radar; Mk46 electro-optical/infrared sensor; SLQ-32 electronic warfare system

Communications: HF, VHF & UHF; radio direction finder

Stern Launch: Two cutter boats (Long Range Interceptor and/or Short Range Prosecutor)

Aviation Facilities: One MH-65C or MH-60T and two vertical launch unmanned aerial vehicles, or other combinations