

POLAR ICEBREAKERS



Acquisition
Directorate



Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star



Coast Guard Cutter Healy



PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Coast Guard has determined that recapitalization of the service's polar icebreaker fleet is necessary to meet existing and projected mission demands and has initiated a program to acquire a heavy icebreaker. Polar icebreakers enable the U.S. to maintain defense readiness in the Arctic and Antarctic regions; enforce treaties and other laws needed to safeguard both industry and the environment; provide ports, waterways and coastal security; and provide logistical support – including vessel escort – to facilitate the movement of goods and personnel necessary to support scientific research, commerce, national security activities and maritime safety.

The operational polar icebreaking fleet currently comprises Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star, a 399-foot heavy icebreaker commissioned in 1976, and Coast Guard Cutter Healy, a 420-foot medium icebreaker commissioned in 2000. Polar

Star underwent a three-year reactivation and returned to operations in late 2013. Since then, it has completed two Operation Deep Freeze deployments to resupply McMurdo Station in Antarctica. The Coast Guard expects the reactivated Polar Star to remain in service through approximately 2020 but will need at least one more new heavy icebreaker to meet its mission requirements and ensure coverage when Polar Star nears the end of its service life.

The Coast Guard is now in the Analyze/Select phase of acquiring a new polar icebreaker. This phase involves establishing asset requirements, evaluating the alternatives for achieving the requirements and assessing the merits of each alternative to select a solution. The Coast Guard is also refining its acquisition strategy during this phase.

For updates on the polar icebreakers, visit the program's website at <http://www.uscg.mil/acquisition/icebreaker/>

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Mission execution begins *here*.