



COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENT
14 SEPTEMBER 2022

FUTURE USNS APALACHICOLA (EPF-13) COMPLETES ACCEPTANCE TRIALS

Austal Limited (ASX:ASB) is pleased to announce that the future USNS Apalachicola (EPF-13) has successfully completed acceptance trials for the United States Navy.

Constructed at Austal USA's Mobile Alabama shipyard, EPF-13 is the first *Spearhead*-class Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF) ship with capabilities for V-22 Osprey flight operations and enhanced medical support. It is also the United States Navy's largest ship with the capability to operate as an unmanned surface vessel (USV).

Austal Limited Chief Executive Officer Paddy Gregg said the completion of acceptance trials for EPF-13 was a significant milestone, being the first surface vessel constructed by Austal USA with autonomous capability.

"Apalachicola is the first EPF we have delivered with autonomous capability that demonstrates new technologies that will ultimately enable unmanned missions for the United States Navy, Mr Gregg said.

"We're very pleased with the performance of the ship, which was rigorously tested over several months by the Navy and teams from Austal USA, L3Harris and General Dynamics.

"We're looking forward to seeing what she can do when she commences operations with Military Sealift Command following delivery later this calendar year."

During acceptance trials comprehensive testing is conducted on the ship's major systems and equipment to demonstrate their successful operation and mission readiness. The United States Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey participates throughout the trials to validate the quality of construction and compliance with Navy requirements.

In addition to builder's trials, EPF 13 went to sea five times over the past several months allowing Austal USA, L3Harris and General Dynamics Mission Systems to test and analyze not only her typical ship systems but those resulting from autonomous design and construction contract modifications required by the Navy to establish EPF 13 as an autonomous prototype.

The work included installation of a perception and situation awareness suite, an autonomy controller, an autonomous machinery control system, and automation enhancements to the machinery plant improving hull, mechanical, and electrical reliability. The enhancements will allow EPF-13 to operate autonomously for up to 30 days while retaining the capability for manned operation.

USNS Apalachicola is planned for delivery by the end of the calendar year and will be the 13th EPF ship to join the United States Military Sealift Command's global fleet.

Austal USA is currently constructing Cody (EPF-14) and Point Loma (EPF-15) and is under contract to build EPF-16. Each of these ships are being constructed to "Flight II" specifications that incorporate Role 2E medical capability and capabilities to support V-22 Osprey flight operations.



USNS Apalachicola (EPF-13) has successfully completed acceptance trials, including the demonstration of technology that will enable unmanned operations and autonomous missions (Image: Austal USA)

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About Austal:

Austal is Australia's global shipbuilder and defence prime contractor designing, constructing and sustaining some of the world's most advanced commercial and defence vessels.

For more than 30 years Austal has contracted more than 340 vessels for over 121 commercial and defence operators in 59 countries, worldwide.

Austal is Australia's largest defence exporter and first ASX-listed shipbuilder. Austal has industry-leading shipyards in Australia, the United States of America, Philippines and Vietnam with service centres worldwide, including the Middle East.

Austal delivers iconic monohull, catamaran and trimaran commercial vessel platforms – including the world's largest trimaran ferry and multiple defence programs such as the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) and Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF) for the United States Navy.

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