



Press Release

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Navy Accepts Delivery of Future USS Freedom

WASHINGTON -- In a simple-yet-historic ceremony, Cmdr. Walt Coppeans, Supervisor of Shipbuilding Gulf Coast, officially accepted delivery of Freedom (LCS 1) on behalf of the Navy from the Lockheed Martin/Marinette Marine/Gibbs and Cox team in Marinette, Wis., Sept. 18.

“This is a truly exciting day for the Navy. Today marks a critical milestone in fulfilling the need and realizing the vision we began just a few years ago,” said Capt. James Murdoch, the LCS program manager. “Despite our challenges, the Navy and industry have continued to press on to build and deliver the first ship of a unique class, a ship class that will give our Nation asymmetric advantages against maritime threats.”

Since Builder’s and Acceptance Trials this summer, the Navy and the Lockheed Martin team have been working to prepare the ship for delivery, sail away and commissioning. With acceptance by the Navy, the LCS crew will move aboard and prepare the ship to depart Marinette Marine for Milwaukee, the location of the ship’s Nov. 8 commissioning. Upon commissioning, the ship will sail out of the Great Lakes and down the East Coast for Norfolk, Va., making a number of port calls along the way.

Prior to delivery, the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) conducted Acceptance Trials aboard LCS 1 Aug. 17-21. INSURV found the ship to be "capable, well-built and inspection-ready" and recommended that the Chief of Naval Operations authorize delivery of the ship. Because the trials were conducted in Lake Michigan, some ship systems, including aviation and combat systems, could not be demonstrated. Systems not demonstrated during recent trials will be presented to INSURV in early 2009 trials in Norfolk, Va., and in the open ocean.

The second ship of this class, Independence (LCS 2), is currently being built by General Dynamics in the Austal USA shipyard in Mobile, Ala. Independence is scheduled to be christened next month in Mobile.

Freedom class ships will help the U.S. Navy defeat growing littoral, or close-to-shore, threats including mine warfare, anti-submarine warfare and surface warfare. Littoral combat ships are fast, easy to maneuver, and are equipped with interchangeable mission modules that allow commanders to meet changing warfare needs.

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