Navy Takes Delivery of Submarine North Carolina

WASHINGTON -- The Navy took delivery of its newest attack submarine, PCU North Carolina (SSN 777), from Northrop Grumman Newport News (NGNN) Feb. 21. North Carolina is the fourth Virginia-class submarine and the second delivered by NGNN.

“Eighteen months ago I estimated that North Carolina would deliver six months late, but thanks to the hard work of a lot of people at both NGNN and GDEB [General Dynamics Electric Boat] we were able to deliver only about seven weeks late to the original schedule – a 10-month improvement when compared to NGNN’s first Virginia-class submarine, USS Texas (SSN 775),” said Capt. Dave Johnson, Virginia-class program manager. “The Navy’s shipbuilding partners have brought the learning curve down and performance continues to improve.”

The Virginia-class is the Navy’s first major combatant designed and delivered specifically for the post-Cold War security environment. The class provides the ability to dominate across a wide range of missions including Strike; Special Operations; Anti-submarine and Anti-surface ship warfare; Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance; Battle Group Support; and Mine warfare in both shallow and deep-water environments.

“North Carolina’s delivery marks a major milestone for the program,” said Program Executive Officer for Submarines Rear Adm. William Hilarides. “It completed the last ship of the Block I contract and with Electric Boat’s and Newport News’ continued improvement and innovation we will reach our goal of 2 for 4 in 12 [buying two Virginia Class submarines for $4 billion as measured in Fiscal Year 2005 dollars, in Fiscal Year 2012].”

North Carolina will be commissioned May 3, 2008, in Wilmington, N.C. Mrs. Linda Bowman, wife of retired Adm. Frank Bowman, the former Director of Naval Nuclear Propulsion, is the ship’s sponsor.

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