

**1945 - 2020**

*Historical Booklet*

# 75<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary



U.S. NAVY  
MINE COUNTERMEASURES  
STATION

U.S. NAVY  
MINE DEFENSE LABORATORY

***Celebrating 75 Years of the U.S. Navy in Panama City***



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## COMMANDS ABOARD THE BASE



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# FOREWORD

Team,  
The year 2020 marks NSWC PCD's celebration of its 75th anniversary when our predecessor, the U.S. Navy Mine Countermeasures Station was commissioned on September 1, 1945! Beginning with a small cadre of military and civilian personnel focusing on mine countermeasures, the command has grown to over 1,550 civilian employees supporting a variety of missions in the littoral battlespace for the Navy and Marine Corps.

But did you know? The Navy roots in our local area go back to 1943, when a base responsible for maintenance of inshore patrol vessels and training of their crews was commissioned in April of that year. In February 1944, it was redesignated as the Naval Amphibious Training Base. Within a year, the Navy ordered it closed.

Our story first began in July 1945 when Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal ordered the former amphibious base designated as a mine countermeasures station. During World War II, research had been conducted at a test station in Solomons, Maryland, but milder temperatures and a warmer climate were needed to conduct year-round testing. Equipment, facilities, and personnel were transferred to Panama City to prepare the base for its new mission.

Today, our mission set is broader, but our roots in these critical mission areas remain the same. Just as we did in when the base was first established, NSWC Panama City continues to provide products and direct Fleet support to the nation's warfighters. NSWC PCD has a national reputation for innovation, particularly with regard to coastal defense technologies. However, the actual success has always been due to the resiliency and patriotic dedication from its workforce at every level, whether you are either a technical or business professional.

As the current Commanding Officer and Technical Director serving at NSWC PCD, we are very proud of our command's history and heritage, and we look forward to our future. We are confident that the next 75 years of excellence and support Panama City provides will be the best yet.

Happy 75th Anniversary NSWC PCD!



**CAPT David Back, USN**  
Commanding Officer  
NSWC PCD



**Dr. Peter Adair, SES**  
Technical Director  
NSWC PCD





The Station was growing up rapidly. The rapid growth would continue. As an organization, the Station was establishing both a business character and a technical character that were to dominate corporate thinking and operations for years to come.

**- Henry A. O'Neal  
Scientific Director, 1954**







# About Us

Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division is celebrating 75 years in Panama City, Florida, since its humble beginnings and establishment of a permanent presence on St. Andrew Bay with a small test and evaluation organization known as the Mine Countermeasures Station.



1945-1955



1955-1968



1968-1972



1972-1978



1978-1992



1992-2003



2003 - Current



CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF THE U.S. NAVY IN PANAMA CITY

# 75TH ANNIVERSARY



## 1940

### REDESIGNATED

1944 ○

The Navy roots in our local area go back to 1943, when a base responsible for maintenance of inshore patrol vessels and training of their crews was commissioned in April of that year. In February 1944, it was redesignated as the Naval Amphibious Training Base. Within a year, the Navy ordered it to be closed.

*Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division is celebrating 75 years in Panama City, Florida, since its humble beginnings and establishment of a permanent presence on St. Andrew Bay with a small test and evaluation organization known as the Mine Countermeasures Station.*

## Our story begins

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# 1950



## September 1, 1945

The U.S. Navy Mine Countermeasures Station was

**officially commissioned**

with an initial complement of 30 officers and 150 enlisted sailors. Mine Division 43 would subsequently be homeported at the new research and development station, which would ensure ship services were immediately available to the Research and Development (R&D) community emerging over the coming months.

The station began as a military organization in the months immediately after the end of World War II. In the ensuing years, it transitioned to a mainly civilian workforce focused on research and development of mine countermeasures systems; however, the need for strengthening the nation's mine countermeasures became crucial when the U.S. Navy attempted to bring forces and supplies ashore at Wonsan Bay during the Korean War in 1950.

1950

## Wonsan Bay during the Korean War

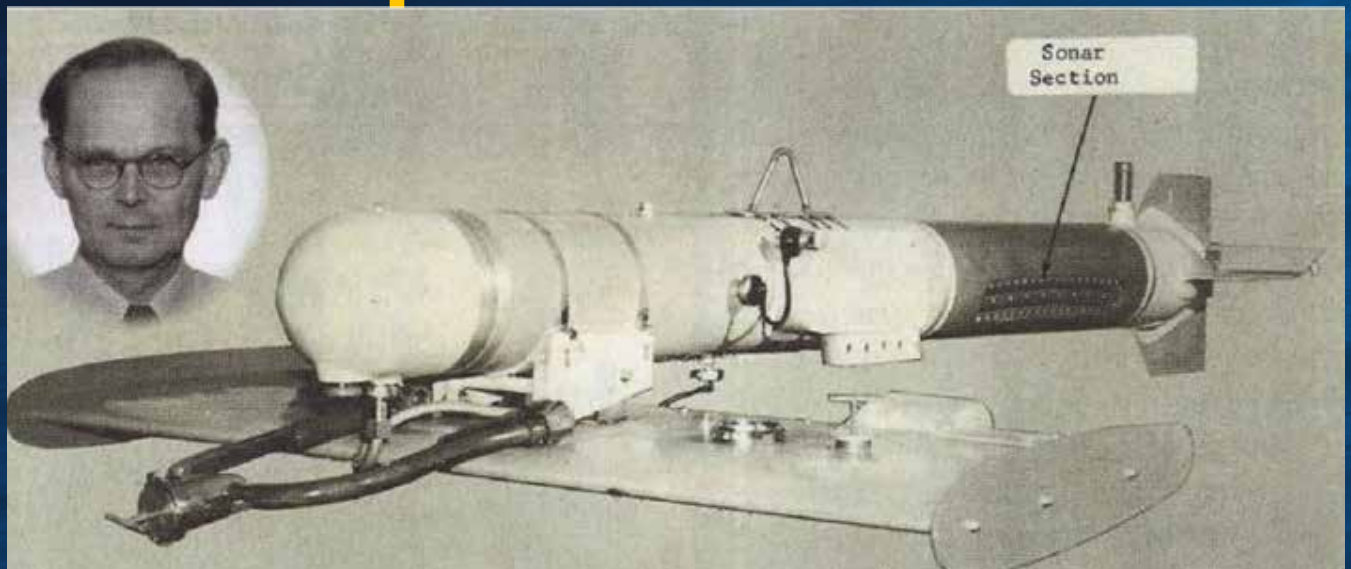
It was at Wonsan Bay, where 50,000 allies in a powerful 250-ship armada were held at bay for nearly a week by sea mines.



1954

## SHADOWGRAPH

By 1954, MCM Pioneer Dr. Julius Hagemann developed and patented the first side scan sonar known as the SHADOWGRAPH to meet fleet minehunting demands. His specialized research would eventually be known as Acoustic Minehunting and set the stage for future minehunting capabilities.





1957-Stage Section



1952  
HRP-1 Helo



# 1960

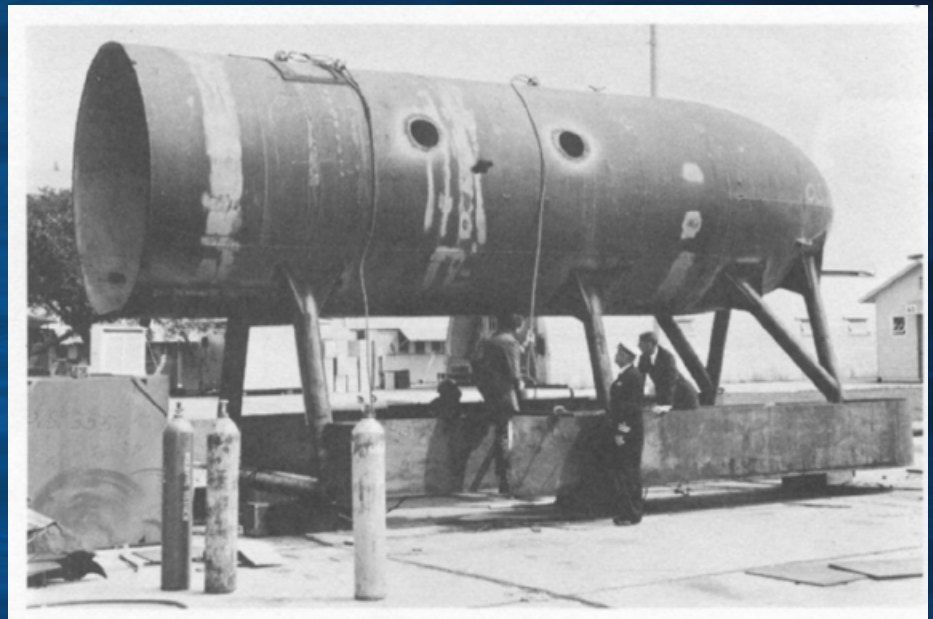
## SEALAB

Early 1960s

In the early 1960s, the Navy embarked upon an aggressive **MAN-IN-THE-SEA PROGRAM**. Its principle aim was to demonstrate that man could live and work undersea at extreme depths.

This endeavor initiated three separate projects: SEALAB I, II, and III. These Diving and Life Support/ Saturation diving experiments, later transferred to a controlled environment known as the Ocean Simulation Facility, which is now part of Navy Experimental Diving Unit in Panama City.

### SEALAB I ATTRACTS ATTENTION OF NATION'S PRESS



1955



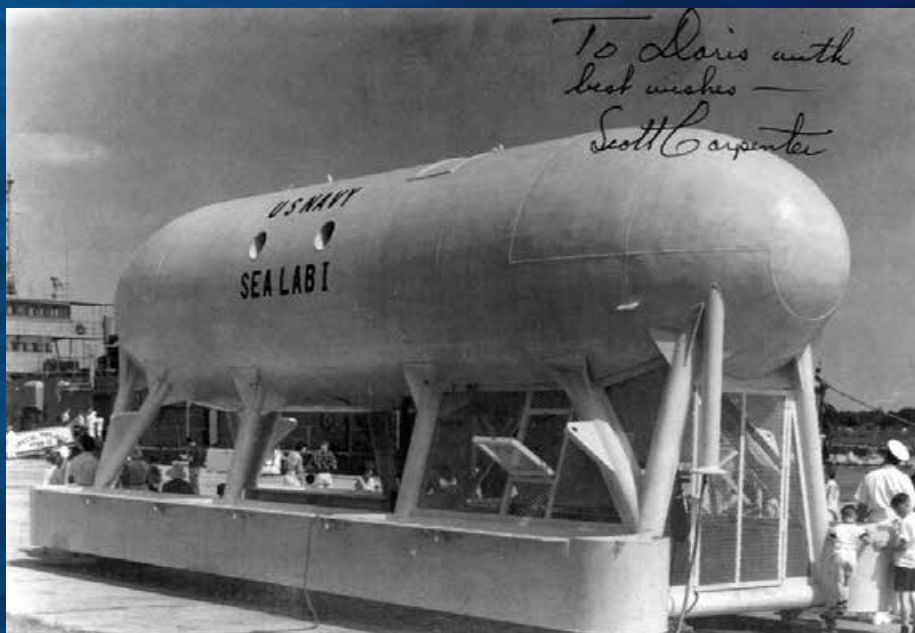
## RENAMED

the U.S. Navy Mine Defense Laboratory

In 1955, the station achieved laboratory status and was renamed the U.S. Navy Mine Defense Laboratory. Its mission expanded to include torpedo mine countermeasures, helicopter mine countermeasures, minehunting and minewatching study projects, as well as other advanced countermeasures. During the Korean War, helicopters were used to visually spot minefields.



SEALAB Continued  
(early '60s)



1966 (c.a.) – SEALAB I Armed Forces Day Exhibit

## Two-Man SDV System 1964

In 1964, Panama City's laboratory developed the first two-man SEAL Swimmer Delivery Vehicle (SDV) system. This was a clandestine vessel with the capability to transit long distances underwater by carrying large payloads.

The program firmly established NSWC PCD as the nation's principal activity associated with the design and development of the SDVs. Today, the laboratory continues to produce a series of SDVs that are used worldwide by the special operations forces.



**Renamed** 1967-68  
Naval Ship Research  
and Development



# 1970



## Renamed Naval Coastal Systems Laboratory

1972

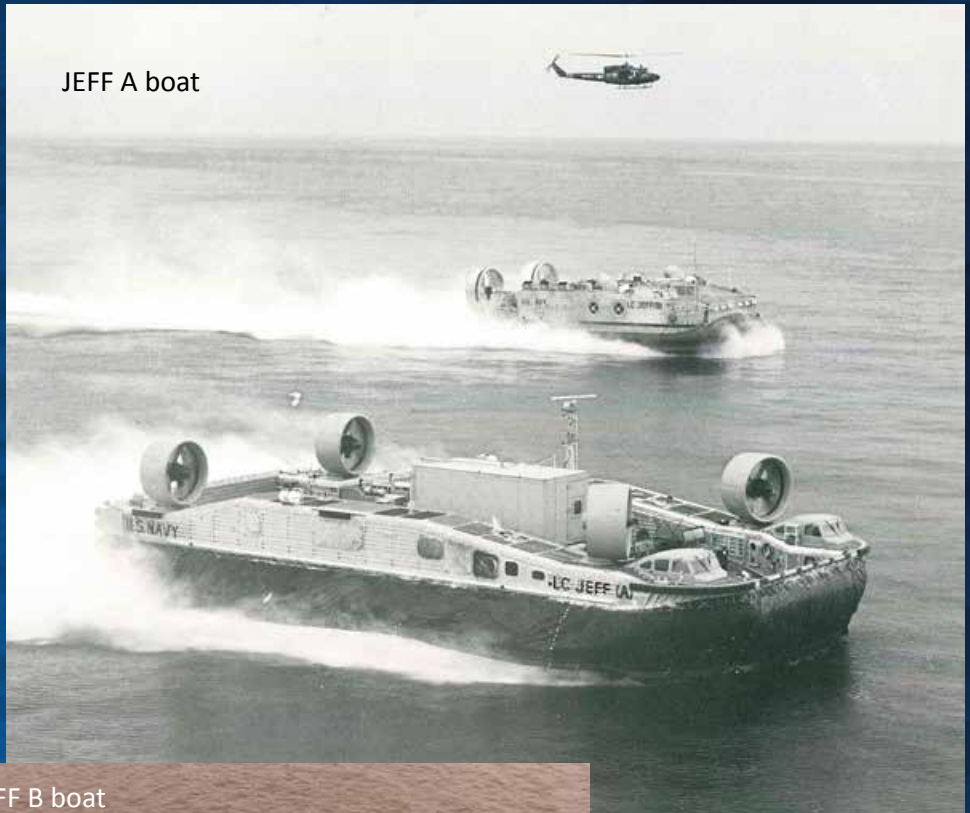
In February 1972, it was renamed the Naval Coastal Systems Laboratory. Its mission expanded to include naval special warfare areas, such as inshore undersea warfare and amphibious operations. In its separate command status, the laboratory reported directly to the Chief of Naval Material (NMC).

○ Mid 1970s

## LCAC

By the mid 1970s, NSWC PCD was selected as the test and evaluation site for the air cushion amphibious assault vehicles program. After participating in the trials of experimental vessels, the command was employed as the Technical Direction Agent for the amphibious assault ship program office, and the first **Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC)** was delivered to the Fleet in 1984. In 1986, NSWC PCD was designated as the LCAC In-Service Engineering Agent.

JEFF A boat



JEFF B boat



○ Mid 1970s

A naval internal reorganization effort to combine several of the closely related R&D laboratories resulted in the Panama City and Annapolis laboratories combining with the David Taylor Naval Ship Research and Development Center at Carderock.



○ 1985-1991

## Realignment

Upon disestablishment of the NMC in 1985, NCSC reported to the Office of the Chief of Naval Research. From 1986 to 1991, NCSC reported to the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command. In October 1991, it was realigned under the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA).



# 1980



○ 1978

## Renamed

Naval Coastal Systems Center



The name changed to Naval Coastal Systems Center (NCSC) in March 1978 to more accurately reflect the broad range of products and services provided and to bring its name into alignment with the other (then) seven Research, Development, Test and Evaluation (RDT&E) centers commanded by the Chief of NMC.



# 2000

## 2003 Reorganized

In 2003, CSS was reorganized as part of the base realignment under Commander, Navy Installations Command in which the NSWC PCD we know today, would divide as a tenant command of the base.

2007

## Renamed

By October 2007, CSS Panama City was brought out from under Dahlgren Division and established as its own echelon four division within NAVSEA known as Naval Surface Warfare Center Panama City Division.



# 1990

## Renamed Coastal Systems Station

1992



In January 1992, NCSC was redesignated the Coastal Systems Station (CSS), Dahlgren Division, Naval Surface Warfare Center, and reported to NAVSEA. Its mission was to support the mission of the Dahlgren Division by providing RDT&E and in-service engineering for mine warfare, special warfare, amphibious warfare, diving and other naval missions that take place primarily in the coastal region.

# 2010

2018

## Hurricane Michael

In October 2018, Hurricane Michael became the strongest hurricane ever to hit the Florida Panhandle, and the first Category 5 storm to make landfall wreaking havoc over a wide swath from the Gulf Coast to the Georgia border and beyond. The hurricane resulted in 82 of NSWC PCD's 88 buildings damaged.



# Today



A force for good, NSWC PCD embodies all the characteristic traits needed to be an essential part of the Naval Sea Systems Command's One Warfare Center Team, which combines the strength of all ten of its Warfare Centers. It truly exemplifies the U.S. Navy's Core Values of honor, courage and commitment.



*That is what will enable us to continue providing world-class warfighting support for the next 75 years to come from seabed to space.*



As our mission has grown over the years, so has the installation, which now totals 657 acres. The unique conditions of the Gulf of Mexico, coupled with mission synergy, make Panama City an ideal location for fleet training and littoral warfare missions.

NSWC PCD has a national reputation for innovation, particularly with regard to coastal defense technologies. However, the actual success has always been due to the resolve, resiliency, and patriotic dedication from its workforce at every level, serving as scientists, engineers and/or a person serving in a support role.





# did you KNOW?



In 1955, Congressman Sikes and Admiral Manseau laid the cornerstone of Building 110, ten years after the U.S. Navy was established in Panama City, Florida. Time flies! U.S. Navy photo.

U. S. Naval Amphibious Training Base precedes U.S. Navy Mine Countermeasures Station

Although used as a Naval Section Base in 1942, in 1944 it was restructured and re-designated as the U.S. Naval Amphibious Training Base, which was inactivated in June 1945. It was later established as the U.S. Navy Mine Countermeasures Station in July 20, 1945. Before ground-level construction began on building the new docks and port services along Alligator Bayou in the late '40s, there already existed the Amphibious Boat Repair Docks as this 1943 photo illustrates. U.S. Navy photo.







In 1955, the U.S. Navy Mine Countermeasures Station achieved laboratory status and was renamed the U.S. Navy Mine Defense Laboratory. This year, we celebrate 75 years of the U.S. Navy in Panama City since our humble beginnings in 1945.

By April in 1955, the U.S. Navy Mine Countermeasures Station was renamed the U.S. Navy Mine Defense Laboratory. And by 1959, the laboratory received one of its first computers. At a glance, it's hard to imagine these computers were what evolved into the era of cell phones and computers that we can hold in our hands today. U.S. Navy photo.

Photo: The Origins of Today's Digitalized Age of Technology



The need for clandestine SEAL Delivery Vehicle (SDV) system with the ability to transit long distances underwater while carrying large payloads has existed throughout the history of the Naval Special Warfare Forces.

NSWC PCD completed development in 1964 of the first two-man free-flooded submersible capsule of transporting combat swimmers for long distances underwater. The success of the program firmly established NSWC PCD as the principal activity associated with the design and development of swimmer delivery vehicles.

## FIRST SDV

PRODUCED AT NSWC PCD, 1964



Over the ensuing years, the laboratory produced a series of SDVs that have been used world-wide by the Special Operations Forces.



# did you **KNOW?**



**1952 (c. a.) – Building 49 Folks**

*(L to R): Kathy Williams, Betty Helms (?), Doris Richards, Ethyl Wilcox, Margaret Catrett  
(TCW 3-11)*



In these photos, U.S. Navy Mine Countermeasures Station Physicist Howard Neaseth accepts Superior Accomplishment Awards from Capt. W. J. Richter, April 10, on behalf of a team of four MCM subject matter experts. The team was recognized for deploying in theatre to assist the Fleet in Mine Countermeasures operations – a historical first occurrence for Navy civilians being deployed to front lines of battle as technical advisors during war time. Also pictured is a historical photo exemplary of mine clearance operations in Wonsan Bay, Korea. (US. Navy courtesy photos).



Although used as a Naval Section Base in 1942, the U.S. Naval Amphibious Training Base in 1944 was inactivated in June 1945 and later established as the U.S. Navy Mine Countermeasures Station July 20, 1945. Before ground-level construction began on building the new docks and port services along Alligator Bayou in the late '40s, there already existed the Amphibious Boat Repair Docks as this 1943 photo illustrates. U.S. Navy photo.



Where is this? Oh, the scenery has changed.

The Highway 98 and Thomas Drive Intersection, photographed in 1956, illustrates early stages of the local area development surrounding the U.S. Navy Mine Defense Laboratory.

U.S. Navy photo.

# did you **KNOW?**

Pay day was a totally different experience for employees at the Navy base during the 1960s. Pictured are U.S. Navy Mine Defense Laboratory employees waiting in line to conduct banking and payroll inside, what was back in the mid 1960s, a newly-built main administration Building 110. U.S. Navy photo.



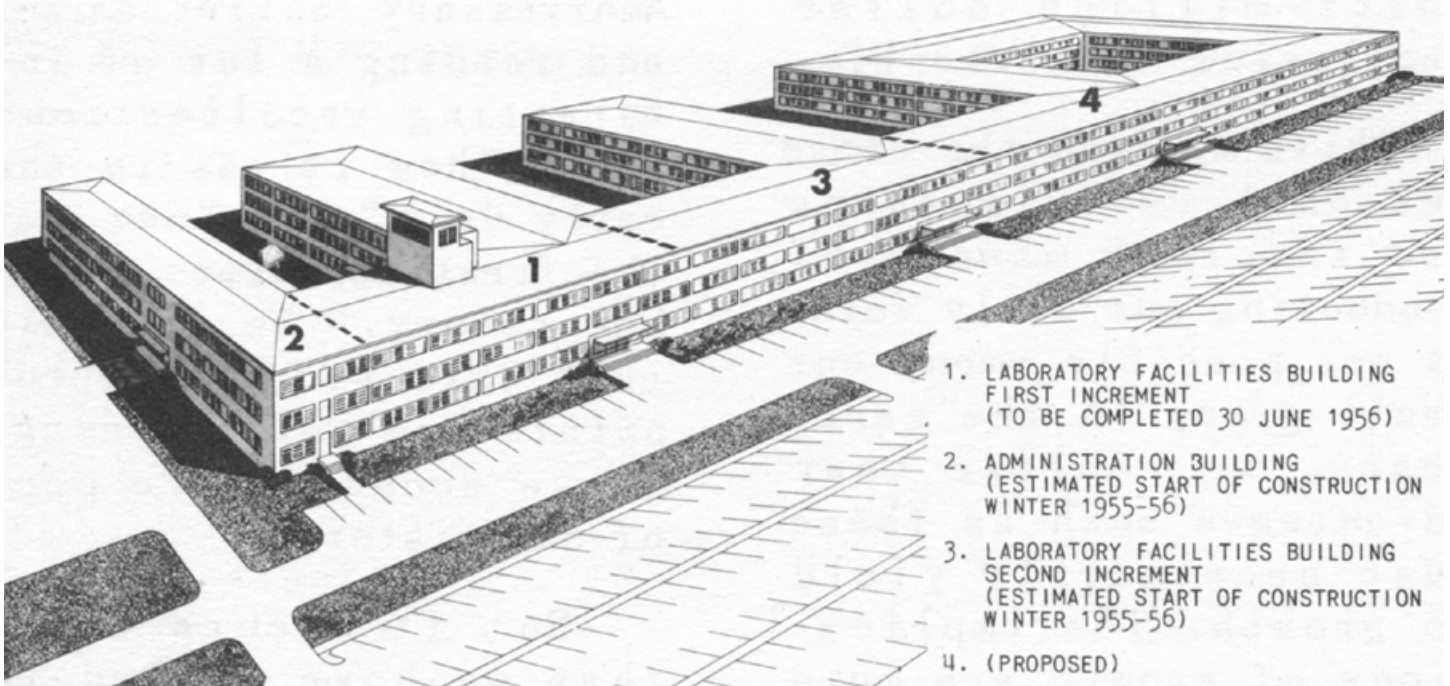
Lobby - Bldg 110 - Mid '60s  
Commercial Bank - Payday Operation





# BUILDING 110 construction

## USNMDL LABORATORY BUILDING



In 1955 - 1956, the initial construction of Building 110 began. The ground breaking and laying of the cornerstone of the new laboratory building (Building 110) in July 1955 served as the focal point for the Station's 10-year anniversary celebration.

The second and third phases of the Building 110 project were started in 1956. The second phase -- the west end of M-Wing and C-Wing -- provided additional laboratory space for the scientific and technical personnel. The first two phases provided a total of 80,000 square feet of permanent laboratory space.

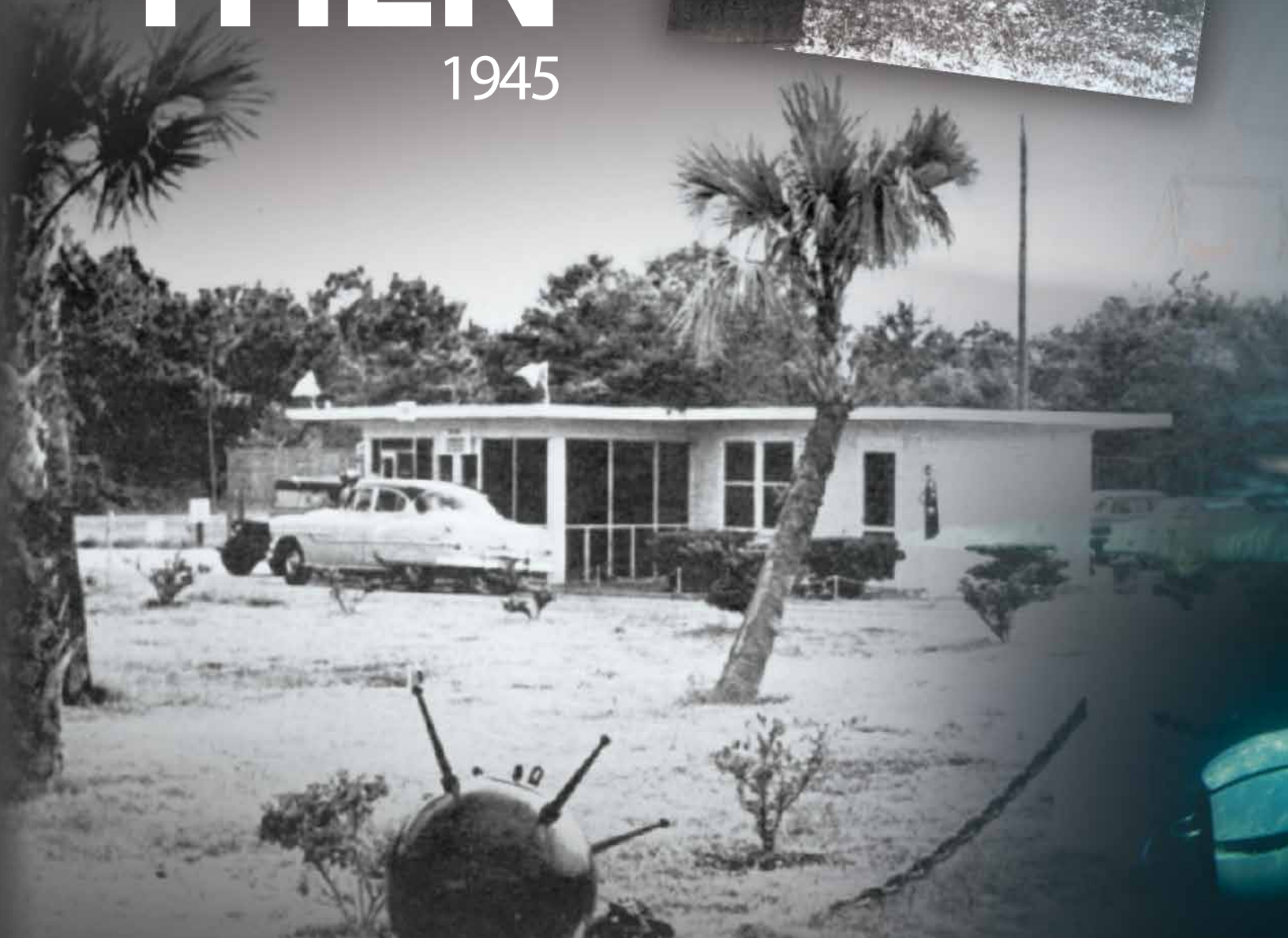






# from THEN

1945





An aerial photograph of a U.S. Navy ship, likely a minesweeper, moving through the water and leaving a white wake. The ship is dark grey with a red flag on its mast. In the background, a coastal town with various buildings and a large body of water are visible. The sky is a clear blue.

# until TODAY

2020

***Celebrating 75 Years of the U.S. Navy in Panama City***



# NSWC Panama City Division 2020



## MISSION

The mission of NSWC PCD is to conduct research, development, test and evaluation, and in-service support of mine warfare systems, naval special warfare systems, diving and life support systems, amphibious-expeditionary maneuver warfare systems, other missions that occur primarily in coastal (littoral) regions and to execute other responsibilities as assigned by Commander, Naval Surface Warfare Center.

## VISION

Ensuring Warfighting Dominance in the Littoral Battlespace

As of August 2020



1,570  
WORKFORCE

200  
NEW HIRES

74  
DOCTORATE  
DEGREES

394  
MASTER'S  
DEGREES

777  
BACHELOR'S  
DEGREES

47  
STATES  
REPRESENTED





# TODAY

our scientists, engineers, acquisition specialists, technicians, and support staff are working hard towards realizing the future. NSWC Panama City Division has a business base of more than \$550 million and employs nearly 1,600 people.

We recruit the best and brightest people from the nation's top colleges and universities, as well as the most seasoned experts from military service, and we collaborate with the world's best academics and industry partners to ensure we deliver what the Fleet needs to maintain our global dominance. As we look back today on the last 75 years of technical achievements delivered by our experts, ask yourself,

*"What will we deliver in the next 75 years?"*



# WE *reflect*

Today in the year 2020, we reflect on recent projects within the last 5, 10, and 15 years. We are proud of all the many projects and accomplishments of our workforce. There have been thousands of hours and hundreds of projects and initiatives at NSWC PCD. We have compilation local resources about our Command, our recent projects, and our great history.



Visit the 75th Anniversary  
Wiki Page:

<https://wiki.navsea.navy.mil/display/PCD75>



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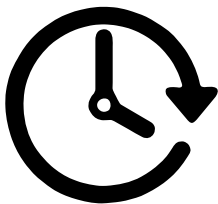
Current  
*Strategic Campaign Plan*  
FY19-23

# SUCCESS STATES

To achieve these results, we must have goals.

You, as an employee at NSWC PCD, make a direct contribution to the Navy's success. We believe our organization must focus on finding ways to work smarter and more efficiently to meet the current and future needs of the Warfighter.

To achieve this vision, we will identify and focus on three main goals, or "Success States" to better support the Warfighter and the needs of the Sailors.



**Rapidly Deliver**  
**Solutions to Ensure**  
**Warfighting Dominance**



**Be the Undisputed**  
**Technical Expert**  
**throughout the Littoral**  
**Battlespace**



**Be Recognized as a**  
**Model Organization**



# what's **NEXT?**

Ensure **WARFIGHTING DOMINANCE** in the Littoral Battlespace

*Present State* ➤



16

## EXPANDED FUTURE STATEMENT

At NSWC PCD, we solve warfighter challenges in the Littoral Battlespace. To expand the advantage for our Naval Forces, we will become a rapid and agile organization, creating an environment where innovation can flourish, leading to rapid solutions that meet the warfighter's challenges within the Littoral Battlespace. We will push the boundaries of science and technology, enhance business and engineering capabilities, remove obstacles and barriers to success, and instill a culture of affordable solutions across all our mission areas.

We will embrace a One Team approach in developing these solutions, collaborating with partners across the Naval Research and Development Establishment, industry, and academia to solve technical issues to meet warfighting challenges. We will be a model organization, setting the standard for technical and business operations. We will accomplish this by continually expanding our technical and business excellence across the organization; by exchanging ideas with our partners, and rapidly implementing those ideas into solutions using state-of-the-art innovative facilities, tools, and processes.



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We will be the employer of choice for the “best and brightest” workforce where inclusion and engagement is celebrated and opportunities abound for all. We will be the provider of choice for the customer, relied on for first time quality; exercise our technical authority and engineering agent responsibilities; and be committed to serving the Navy as collaborator of choice, bridging the gap between Fleet needs and the technical community to ensure the best product for the warfighter.

We will extend our core expertise to include the entire Littoral Battlespace, from seabed to space. We will be leaders in unmanned systems, automation, and asymmetric solutions, providing the warfighter with solutions balanced across risk, time, cost, and performance. We will be branded as an organization known for delivering excellence and ensuring warfighting dominance through empowered people who exhibit integrity, commitment, courage, and respect.

– Excerpt from the NSWC PCD FY 19-23 Strategic Campaign Plan





NSWC Panama City Division  
Approved for Public Release  
September 2020