

# The USW Role in Strategic Competition

*Presented by:*

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# Agenda

## **Strategic Completion – Activities short of war & expectations if a broader war breaks out**

- The USW forces are extremely engaged in Strategic Competition and are very busy

## **Navy Leadership and Guidance to the Forces**

- USW forces play a huge role in deterrence and combat with Strategic Competitors

## **USW Leadership Guidance**

- Submarine Force Commander instructed the force to be ready for combat by 2027 – Aligned to the CNO guidance.

## **Fleet Demand Signals**

- We all must understand the warfighting challenges and work with the operators.

# Evolving National Defense Strategy (NDS)

## 2012 National Defense Strategy

- Countering terrorism and irregular warfare
- Deter and defeat aggression
- Project power despite anti access/area denial challenges
- Counter weapons of mass destruction
- Operate effectively in space and cyberspace
- Maintain a safe, secure, effective nuclear deterrent
- Defend the homeland and provide support to civil authorities
- Provide a stabilizing presence
- Counter stability and counterinsurgency operations
- Conduct humanitarian, disaster relief and other operations

*USW played  
key roles in  
4-5 priorities*

## 2022 National Defense Strategy

- Defending the Homeland, paced by the growing, all-domain threat posed by the PRC
- Deterring strategic attacks against the United States, allies, and partners.
- Deterring aggression, while being prepared to prevail in conflict when necessary – prioritizing the PRC challenge in the Indo-Pacific region, then the Russia challenge in Europe
- Building a resilient Joint Force and defense ecosystem

*USW is  
the key to  
success in  
all NDS  
Priorities*

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# Leadership Guidance



## CNO's Navigation Plan – Project 33 Targets

- Ready the force by eliminating ship, submarine, and aircraft maintenance delays
- Scale robotic and autonomous systems to integrate more platforms at speed
- Create the command centers our fleets need to win on a distributed battlefield
- Recruit and retain the force we need to get more players on the field
- Deliver a quality of service commensurate with the sacrifices of our Sailors
- Train for combat as we plan to fight, in the real world and virtually
- Restore the critical infrastructure that sustains and projects the fight from shore



## SUBFOR Commander's Intent Lines of Effort

- Modernize Our Strategic Deterrent
- Prepare for the Fight in the "Decade of Maximum Danger"
- Maintain Our Overmatch in the Undersea Domain
- Evolve Our People Strategy to Sharpen Our Competitive Edge
- Enhance U.S. Alliances and Partnerships

***"Our Undersea Force must be ready to go to war at all times. This perspective should govern all we do from our submarines operating forward to those in long term maintenance availabilities fighting their way back to sea."***

***"You are important – in preparing our team for combat – arm them for the fight with every ounce of your effort"***

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# Other Key Insights from the CNO Navigation Plan

- The Chairman of the People's Republic of China (PRC) has told his forces to be ready for war by 2027—we will be more ready.
- The PRC's defense industrial base is on a wartime footing, including the world's largest shipbuilding capacity now at the hands of the PLA navy
- A wounded and isolated Russia remains dangerous. Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine drew global condemnation and prompted Finland and Sweden to join NATO. On the battlefield, however, Russia has demonstrated operational learning, adapting technologically and tactically to Ukrainian innovations.
- Moscow, Beijing, Tehran, and Pyongyang have strengthened their linkages and are actively targeting the U.S., our Allies, and our partners in the information domain. Damage to undersea pipelines and cables underscored how seabed infrastructure has become targetable.
- Despite Black Sea losses, Russia's fleets retain combat power in the High North and Atlantic, Mediterranean, Baltic, and North Pacific. The Kremlin also holds the world's largest nuclear stockpile. We must continue to support credible deterrence alongside Allies and partners in the Euro-Atlantic area.
- Highly interconnected threats make peace brittle. Hamas's 2023 assault on Israel required a Navy presence across the Middle East to deter attacks by other Iranian proxies and reduce the risk of a wider conflict. Emboldened by Hamas and armed by Iran, Houthi forces target merchant shipping along the Bab al-Mandeb, a key chokepoint in the Red Sea, exposing our Sailors to the most persistent hostile fire we have faced since World War II.
- Iran, which is also supplying arms to Russia, further launched hundreds of drones and missiles at Israel, bringing the entire region to the verge of war.
- These events prove how quickly the security environment can shift through seen and unseen linkages, and how essential our Navy is to providing flexible response options to our Nation's decision-makers.

**The Navy must address fundamental challenges to our force—ship, submarine, and aircraft construction, recruiting, munitions production, software acquisition, infrastructure, and platform maintenance—at the same time as we continue to outpace learning, adaptive adversaries.**

# What do we read about Strategic Competition?

Chinese SSBN to be fitted with JL-3 missiles capable to Strike the US Coast

Russia Moves Nuclear Weapons to NATO Borders – threatens escalation on war in Ukraine

Treaties – Russia Violates the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty  
US and Russia leave the INF Treaty  
Russia leaves the START treaty

USS Georgia sails through the Straits of Hormuz to send a signal to Iran

US Launches most advanced stealth submarine amid undersea rivalry

Report to Congress (2022) – “The PRC has the largest Navy in the world with an overall Battle Force of 350 ships and submarines, including over 150 major combatants”.

Russia could have its most powerful and quiet submarines on persistent patrols off either US Coasts in the next 2 years

China Dispatches Nuclear Armed Submarine on First Combat Patrol

Shifting the U.S.-Japan Alliance from Coordination to Integration

Russia deploying hypersonic missiles on new nuclear submarines

US Navy Sails 2 Vessels through the Taiwan Straits

US Shrugs as WW III Looms

US Ballistic missile submarine & doomsday-plane-take-part-in-rare-show-of-force-off-Norway

The military should be able to “Credibly threaten to sink all Chinese military vessels, submarines, and merchant ships in the South China Sea within 72 hours”  
*Michele Flouronoy (Previous OSD Policy)*

Chinese scientists work on powerful new ‘submarine killer’ with eye on the US far into South China Sea

Monster sub participates in Yemen Strike

China Indo-Pac military power trumps US, but US remains more influential  
*Lowy Institute*

The US might lose a war with China, congressional commission says  
Insufficient industry, readiness, innovation, and funding hamper military’s ability to prevail in conflict, key experts find.

US SSBN makes port call in South Korea to assure key US Ally

INDOPACOM boss testifies that only about half of his demand signal for SSNs is being met

China engaged in “breathtaking” nuclear expansion warns STRATCOM Commander

Russia Submarine Captain Gave Order to ‘Arm’ Torpedoes in Brush With US Sub

US and China wage war beneath the waves – over internet cables

Russia has modernized all aspects of its nuclear weapons arsenal and seeks asymmetric options

In the dark depths of the Pacific, US submarines patrol with an eye fixed firmly on China

China Surrounds Taiwan during Taiwan Inauguration – Operation Joint Sword 24

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CNO urges China to avoid confrontations, refuses to back down on Taiwan Straits

Russia has completed “Key stages of Trials” of nuclear capable Poseidon underwater drone



# 1938 to 2024 Comparisons

## 1938

- Germany Invades Austria
- Germany Annexes Sudetenland (Czechoslovakia)
- Britain, Italy, France agree with German partition of Czechoslovakia (Munich pact)
- Japan goes to war with China
- Internal purges in various countries – more than 25M deaths

## 2024

- Russia takes the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine (2014)
- Russia invades Georgia (2014)
- Russian invades Ukraine – 2022
- Russia abrogates from various Treaties with the US
- China South China Sea (SCS) territorial expansions
- China exerts control over Hong Kong
- North Korea nuclear testing and missile testing, supplying Russia with weapons
- Iran supporting various states/non state actors in the Middle East ( Hamas, Hezbollah, Houthis, Syria, Iraq)

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# USW Roles



# WWII Submarine Roles

- The attack on the U.S. Pacific fleet at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 significantly disabled our force of battleships in addition to killing and wounding thousands of Americans.
- Consequently, U.S. strategic plans and tactics to engage the Japanese military in battle were made obsolete nearly overnight.
- Recognizing how handicapped U.S. forces were in fighting the Japanese Navy, and how dependent the Japanese Islands were on maritime supply, the Navy Department ordered our fleet to conduct **“Unrestricted air and submarine warfare”** against the Japanese Empire. This meant that both Japanese warships and Japanese merchant ships were now considered fair targets.

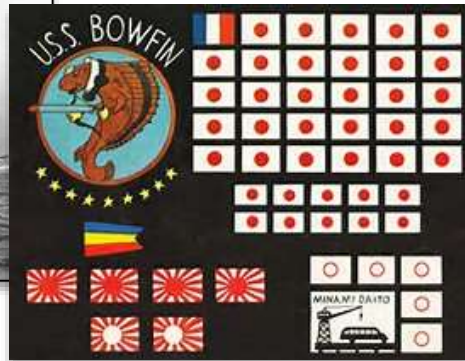
“ In carrying out the tasks in Operational Plan 29-42, you will be governed by the principles of calculated risk, which you shall interpret to mean avoidance of exposure of your forces to attack by superior enemy forces without a good prospect of inflicting, as a result of that exposure, greater damage to the enemy”

**C.W. Nimitz**

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# WWII Submarine History

## WWII Submarine Actions Drawing From the Commander's Intent



"Fluckey's crew was on its 12<sup>th</sup> war patrol – now they were excited about bagging a train"

### "Reconnoiter"

*Wahoo* left Brisbane, Australia, in mid-January 1943, with orders to reconnoiter Wewak, a Japanese base on the northern side of New Guinea,

By the time he was done, "Mush the Magnificent" had sunk a heavy destroyer and laid the groundwork for 2 kills the next day.

After creeping nearly blind for some nine hours through the unknown and uncharted Wewak Harbor looking for ships and with land now on three sides of them, this prize target finally presented itself.



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**52 US Submarines and 3500 submarine sailors lost in WWII**

- US manufactured 17,000 torpedoes in WW2 – employed 14,000
- US built 280 submarines in WW2
- Germany built 700 Submarines in WW2



The classic movie *Das Boot*, released in 1981, chronicles the ultimate demise of a force that was outnumbered and overmatched in technology.

German submarine losses were staggering — of the 40,000 submariners who went to sea during the war, almost 30,000 perished.

ADM Jamie Foggo - 4th Battle of the Atlantic



# Cold War Submarine Roles and Facts

- Following the defeat of Nazi German and Imperial Japan, it was not long before the United States and her allies entered a bipolar contest with the Soviet Union resulting in the Cold War.
- This Cold War resulted in a nuclear and naval armaments race between the United States and the Soviet Union. Ours was a cost-imposing strategy, which neither the industrial base nor the Communist Party could keep up with, ultimately contributing to the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. *ADM Jamie Foggo - 4th Battle of the Atlantic*
- The U. S. and Soviet Union faced off against each other with more than 25,000 strategic nuclear Warheads on each side. The U.S. had an inventory of 42 SSBNs at its peak.
- During peak years, the U. S. fielded more than 100 Fast Attack Submarines and the Soviet Union Fielded more than 300. During peak years, the U.S. industrial base produced 7 Nuclear submarines per year.



# Strategic Competition – USW Forces are Completely Aligned to the National Defense Strategy

“The PRC is the only country with the intent to reshape the international order, and increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to do so”

*2022 National Defense Strategy*

“Russia could have its most powerful and quiet nuclear attack submarines on persistent patrols off of either U.S. Coasts in the next 2 years. The risk is absolutely increasing. Within the last year, Russia has also placed their Yasens in the Pacific. Not only in the Atlantic, but we have also seen them in the Pacific and its just a matter of time – probably a year or two – before that’s a persistent threat, 24 hours a day...”

*General Glen VanHerck (Commander NORTHCOM) testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, March 2023)*

“We face a world of rising nationalism.. (a) growing rivalry with China, Russia, and other authoritarian state. We are in a heated completion with adversaries who do not share our values, do not respect national sovereignty, and are actively working to undermine the international rule of law that we have safeguarded since 1949”

*VADM Houston, Commander Submarine Force – Commander’s Intent 4.0*



# Spectrum of Submarine Warfare

Stealth... Agility... Endurance... Firepower



PEACE

Intelligence:  
Battlespace Preparation

Pre-Hostilities

Conflict Escalation

WAR

## Subsea & Seabed Warfare

Precision Strike

Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW)

Anti-Ship Warfare (ASUW)

Offensive Mining

Special Operations Forces Support (SOF)

Mine Reconnaissance

Information Operations (IO)

Intelligence Preparation of Battlespace (IPB)

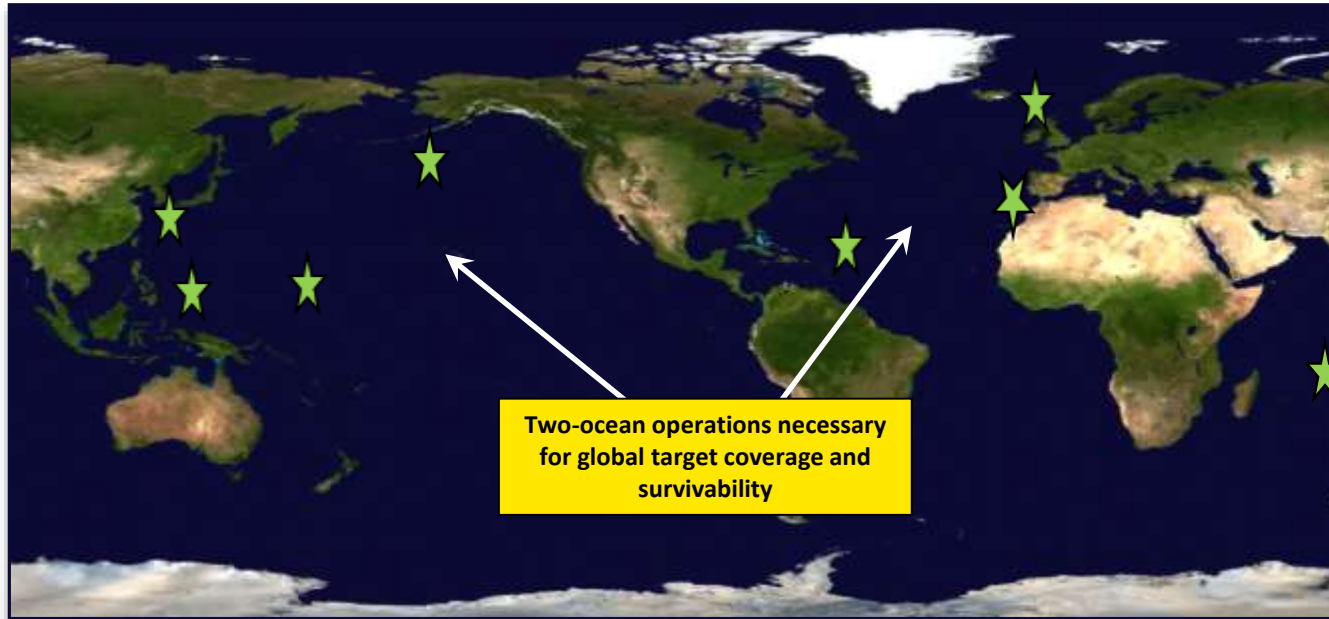
Indication and Warning (I&W)

Intelligence/Surveillance/Reconnaissance (ISR)

Strategic Deterrence (conducted by SSBNs)

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★ SSBN Visits



“Every operational plan in the Department of Defense and every other capability we have rests on an assumption that strategic deterrence is holding, and in particular that nuclear deterrence is holding. If ...deterrence fails, no other plan and no other capability in the Department of Defense is going to work as designed.”

*ADM Chas Richard - USSTRATEGIC COMMAND*

**SSBNs - Sea-Based Strategic Deterrence**  
Providing the nation's Survivable Strategic Nuclear Deterrence

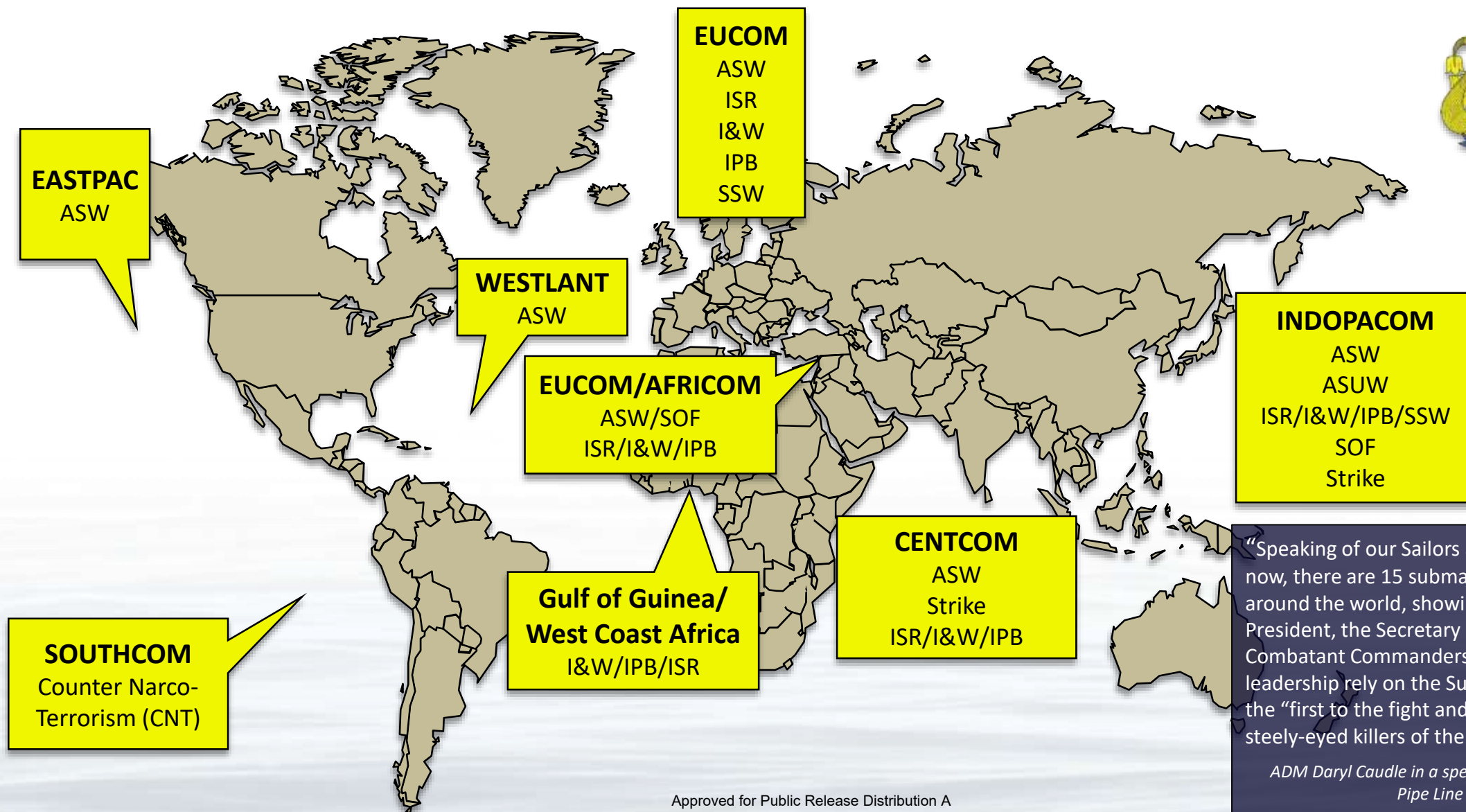
Survivability is enabled by **stealth**, **force size** and **CONOPs**.  
Force structure is at optimum minimum size – each SSBN must be survivable

(From 2021 – 2023) The SSBN Force has Demonstrated:  
“A unique set of SSBN operations, coordinating with US allies and partners to showcase the ability to maneuver unimpeded and undetected around the globe, then pop up at places of our choosing, placing our competition and adversaries on notice that today, or any other day, is the absolute wrong day to challenge the United States or her allies”

*ADM Daryl Caudle – Fleet Forces Commander*

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# World Wide Submarine Operations



“Speaking of our Sailors and families, right now, there are 15 submarines deployed around the world, showing firsthand why the President, the Secretary of Defense, the Combatant Commanders, and Navy leadership rely on the Submarine Force as the “first to the fight and last to leave as the steely-eyed killers of the deep.”

ADM Daryl Caudle in a speech to the Virginia Talent Pipe Line Graduation - 3 June 2023

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# SUBFOR Priorities

## Warfighting

- Improve shipyard performance to increase combat ready submarines
- Deploy on plan in support of STRATCOM and Geographic CCDRs
- Develop tactics to defend Taiwan and maintain a free and open Pacific
- Develop tactics to defend the Homeland and counter RFN aggression
- Leverage our allies and partners to deter adversaries from conflict

## Warfighter

- Apply fundamental watchstanding principles in all we do
- Provide our Sailors the tools needed to operate and maintain our forces
- Improve Quality of Service for our Sailors by removing barriers
- Build on our strong Submarine culture and history

## Foundation

- SubSYD (SUBFOR Role in delivering submarines from maintenance)
- AUKUS
- Posture for the Future
  - Unmanned/Hybrid
  - Artificial Intelligence
  - Additive manufacturing
  - Cross Domain Command and Control (C2)
  - Provide a safe industrial environment for our units in maintenance
- Operate safely at sea
- Protect our Sailors and their families in-port

### Report Card:

*(Proceedings Magazine, Oct 2024)*

The submarine force is honing its edge with new technologies, intensive training scenarios, better maintenance practices, and expanded partnerships with allies and partners. Specifically:

- Exceeding STRATCOM readiness requirements.
- Deployed USS Florida for 730 days
- Demonstrated pier side STARLINK,
- Delivered “Day one ready sailors”
- Deployed better in port fire fighting,
- Executing SSBN crew Swaps
- Executed Ice Camp 2024
- Improving material readiness for availabilities
- Integrating Royal Australian Navy Sailors on US Subs
- Preparing for a deployment with Torpedo tube launch and recovery of a UUV
- Instituted AM on submarines/Industrial Base
- Developed common AI development environment
- Improved cross domain C2 options to maintain submarine stealth

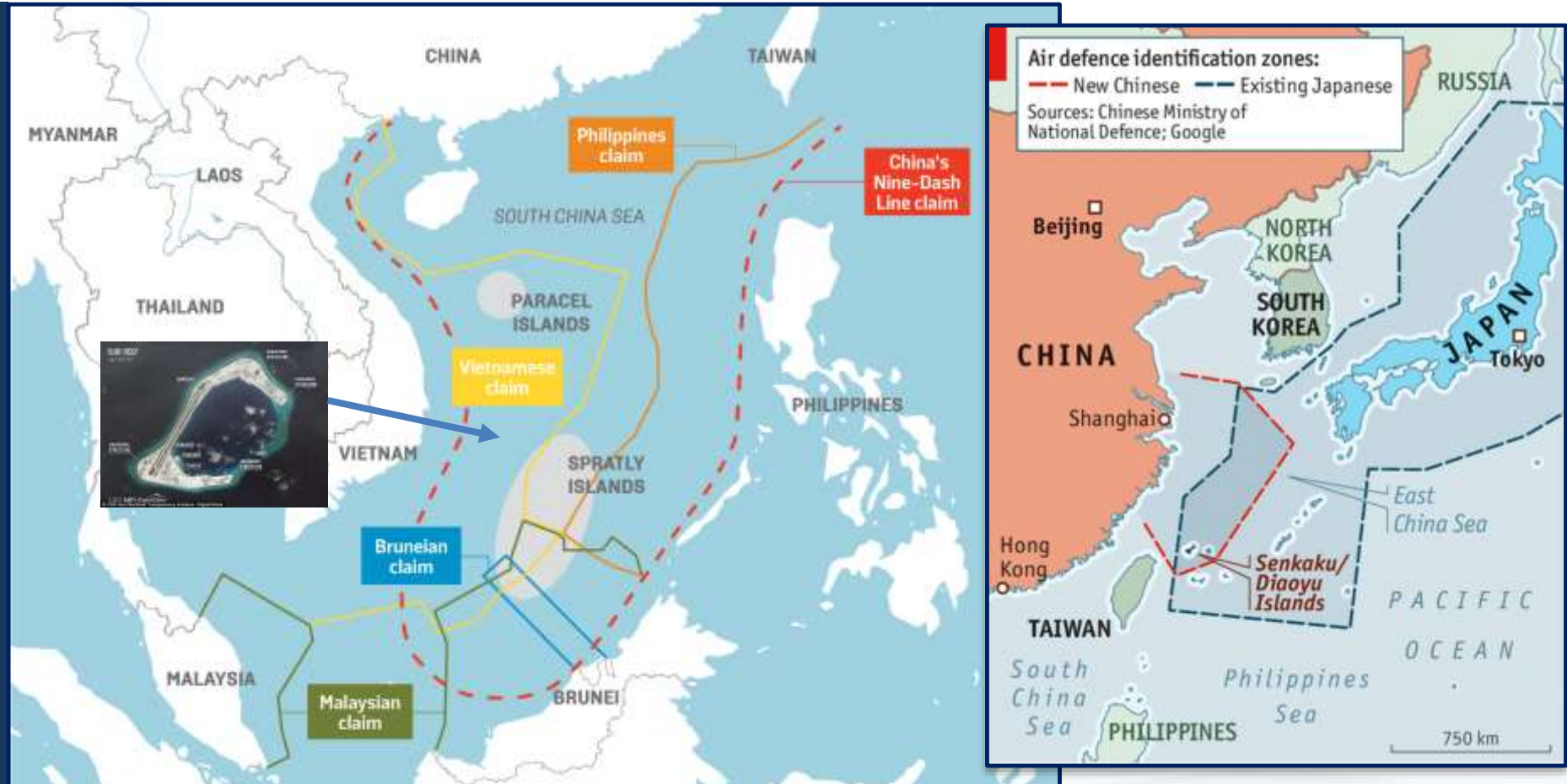


# China – Our Pacing Strategic Competitor

# Western Pacific Flash Points

## BLUF

The nine-dash line is a resource rich territorial claim of China which lays in direct conflict to the territorial claims of six other nations; two (Philippines and Taiwan) of which hold mutual defense ties with the United States (U.S.). An escalation between these nations and China could warrant direct involvement of the U.S. government.



**China Bullying Regional Competitors as the world hunkers down during COVID - The US Navy Sends the Submarine Force to the South China Sea in a Show of Strength to China**

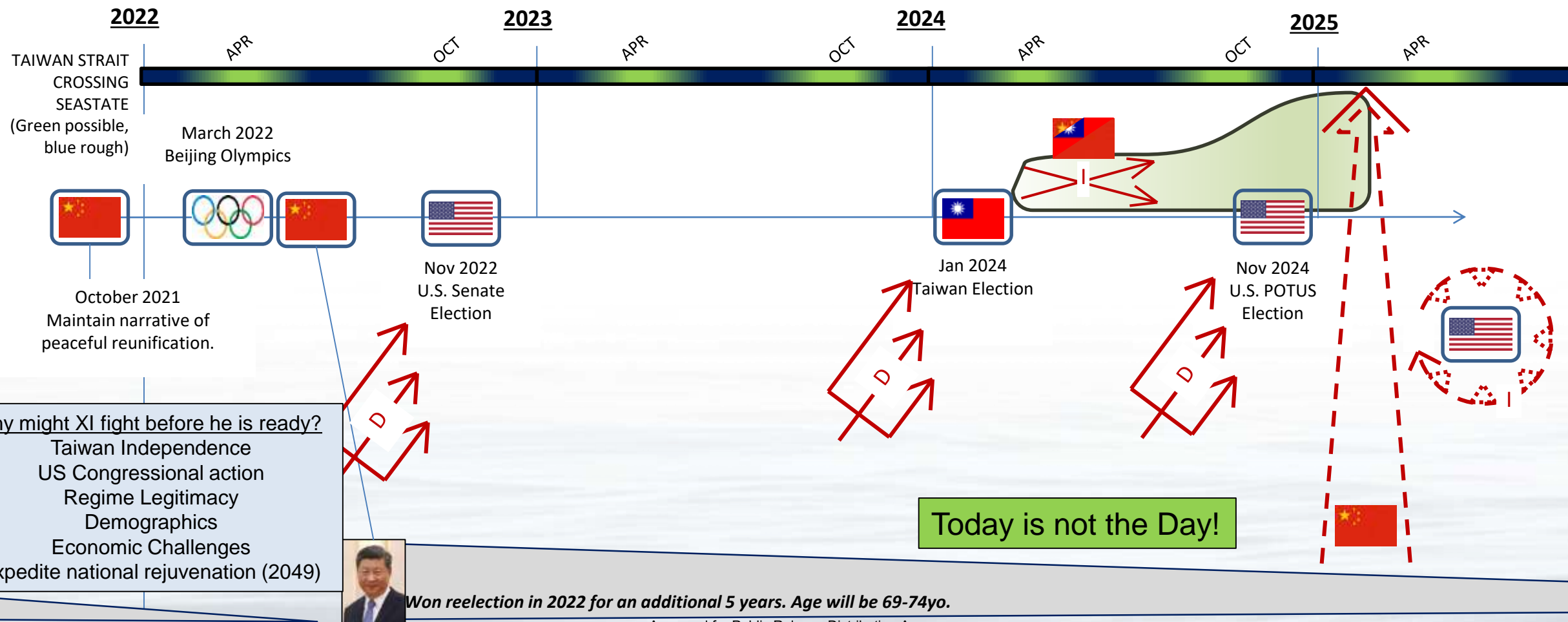
“Our operations are a demonstration of our willingness to defend our freedoms under international law”

Approved for Public Release Distribution: *PADM Blake Converse, COMSUBPAC*

# China / Taiwan – Timeline Wargame



***This could be closer than we think.***



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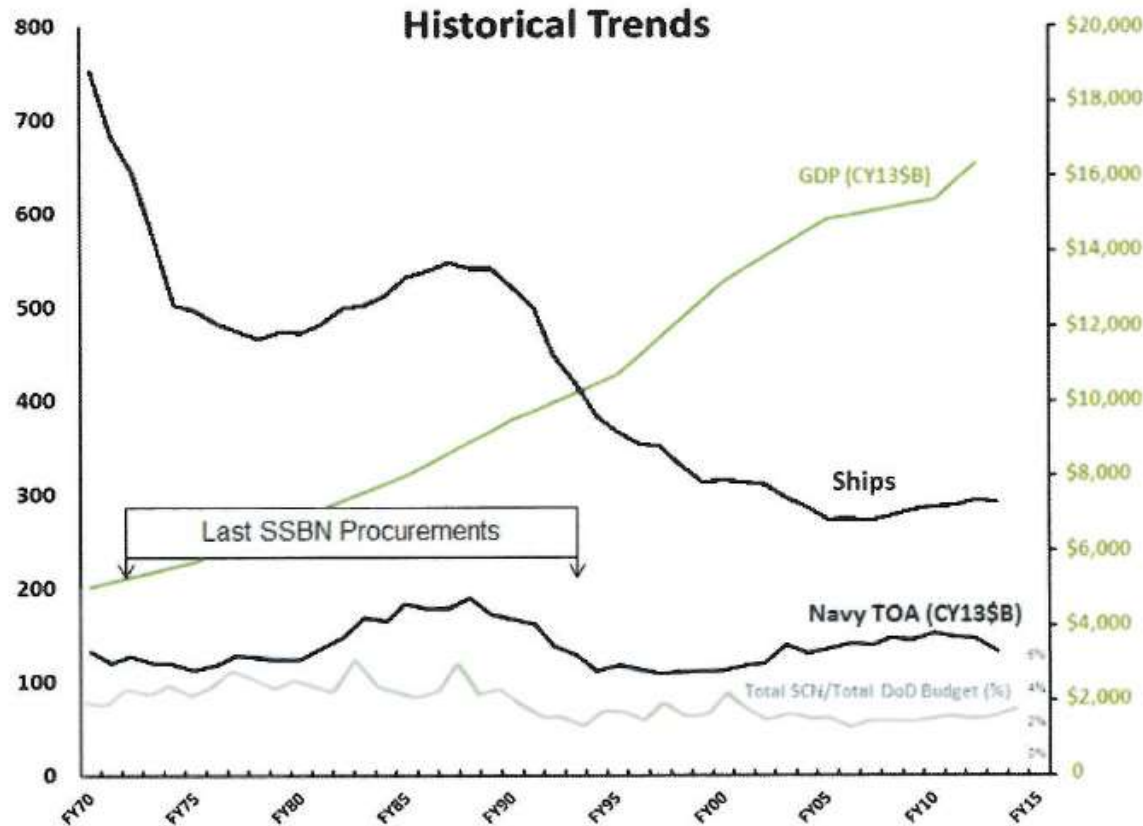
# Challenges and Opportunities



# Navy Ship Inventory



## (U) US Navy Historical Trends



### Over the Last 45 Years

- US wealth tripled
- Navy Budget (TOA) ~ flat
- Navy size declined 60%
- SCN small % of DoD

*"It follows then as certain as the night succeeds the day that with out a decisive Naval force we can do nothing definitive, and with it everything honorable and glorious"*

President George Washington

National Security Spending is down from 63% (Late 1950s) of total government outlays to <15% in 2020

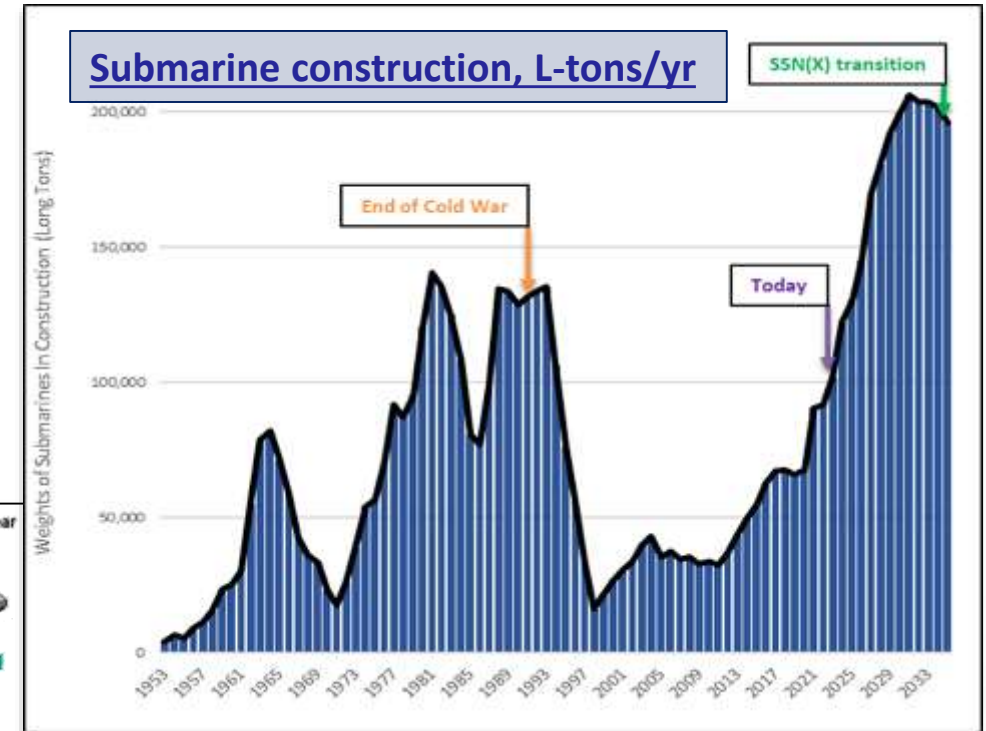
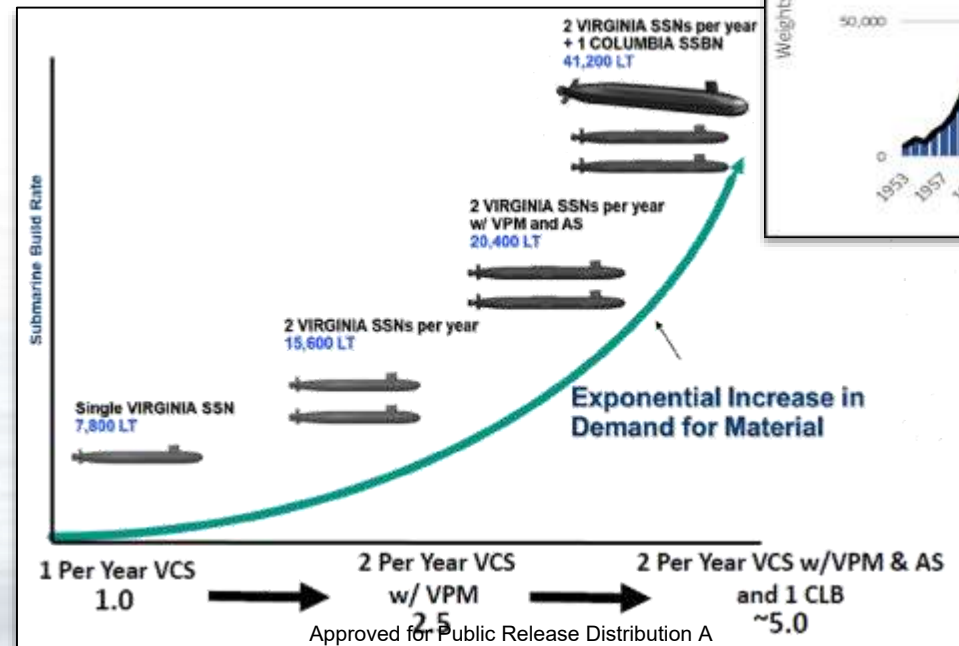
**Navy Ship building Topline Needs to be Increased to Preserve Robust Strategic Deterrence and to Meet Navy's Regional and Global Challenges**

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# Rising to the Challenge

## Submarine Industrial Base Resurgence

- SIB Investment to Achieve 1 + 2 build rate
- +\$2.3B PB23 FYDP
- DoN–Industry partnering critical to success
  - Shipbuilding Infrastructure
  - Supply Chains Capacity
  - Advanced Manufacturing
  - Workforce Trade-Skills
  - Strategic Outsourcing
  - Government Oversight





# USS District of Columbia

## *"The Strength of a Nation"*



- **#1 DOD acquisition priority**
- *No margin for delay*
- Fully funded
- **SSBN 826 On patrol Oct '30**
  - Construction start Oct '20
  - Keel Laying Jun '22
  - Delivery FY28
- **Sustaining OHIO SSBNs:**
  - Pre-Inactivation Restricted Availabilities on up to 5 hulls.



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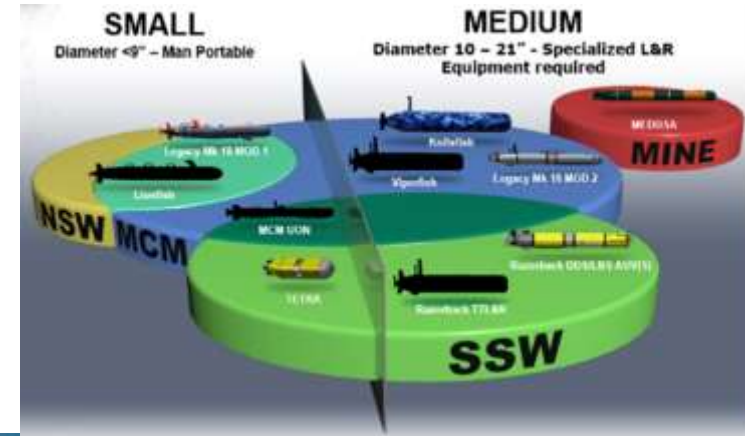
# USW Enterprise Priorities

## Attack Submarines

Restoring Readiness  
Extending SSN capability  
Evolving VCS Lethality  
Enhancing the Industrial base  
Defining Future Capability - SSN(X)



**Enabling the Undersea Forces:**  
Improving Future Capability  
Extending Organic Sensor Range and Enabling  
Distributed Undersea Warfare



**Undersea Weapons Development**  
Capacity and Capability



**Undersea Advantage is key to Integrated Deterrence and Decisive Victory**



# PACFLT Intent to the Fleet

**Mission Command – “Our success in out thinking our adversary will be enabled by our willingness to embrace institutional Mission Command concepts at all levels.”**

*Mission Command is the decentralized execution of military operations through mission orders*

“We need empowered Commanding Officers that understand my operational level of intent, methods, and approach to achieve decisive victory in the event of armed conflict.”

“This will require a cultural shift that demands we grow comfortable taking measured risks bolstered by mutual trust so that we can continue the fight when the lights go out and there is silence on the net.”

“Success involves making bold decisions and taking action under uncertain conditions.”

“This conflicts with a peacetime view that seeks to drive out uncertainty and remove all risk from operations.”

*ADM Swift – PACFLT Commander*

# What Can We Do?

Yes...if..

Get in the conversation at the classified levels – understand that red gets a vote

Work through the challenges within and outside of government

Develop our workforce to solve problems

Figure out how we might do business in wartime



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# Our Warfighting Navy

Recent CBS reporting on our Navy operations in the Middle East left the audience with the following words

***“To see the work of Navy sailors ... is nothing short of awe inspiring. ...this is the new, finest generation. These men and women are the very best of America, serving their country selflessly. And with honor, they put themselves in harm's way and they leave their loved ones for months at a time in the defense of freedom.”***

# Backup