

**Naval Vessel Historical Evaluation**  
INITIAL DETERMINATION



This evaluation is unclassified

<b>Name</b>	<b>Hull Number</b>
USNS Spearhead	T-EPF-1
<b>Vessel Class</b>	<b>Previous Vessel Designation (if any)</b>
Spearhead-class Expeditionary Fast Transport	Joint High Speed Vessel, JHSV 1
<b>Vessel Location</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
Philadelphia Naval Yard	Out of Service, In Reserve

<b>Initial Evaluation Date</b>	<b>Initial Finding</b>
10 March 2026	Ineligible
<b>Final Evaluation Date</b>	<b>Eligibility for Listing to the National Register of Historic Places</b>
N/A	Ineligible

## Vessel Snapshot

<b>Lineage</b>	N/A
<b>Displacement</b>	2460 tons
<b>Length</b>	338 ft
<b>Beam</b>	93 ft
<b>Draft</b>	13 ft
<b>Speed</b>	43 knots (49 mph; 80 km/h) and a service speed of 35 knots (40 mph; 65 km/h).
<b>Propulsion</b>	4 MTU 20V8000 M71L Diesel Engines, each with a power of 9.1 megawatts (12,200 hp), driving four Wärtsilä WLD 1400 SR waterjets through ZF 60000NR2H reduction gears
<b>Armament</b>	N/A: Planned for non-combat missions, such as transportation of troops or equipment.
<b>Laid Down</b>	22 July 2010
<b>Launched</b>	12 September 2011
<b>Built By</b>	Austal USA
<b>Sponsor</b>	Kenneth Wahlman
<b>Delivered</b>	5 December 2012
<b>Commissioned</b>	N/A: Not commissioned like a typical Navy warship. Instead, as an expeditionary fast transport (EPF) operated by the Military Sealift Command, she was formally delivered to the U.S. Navy.
<b>Inactivated</b>	1 May 2025

<b>Decommissioned</b>	N/A: Never decommissioned, she was instead deactivated and stricken.
<b>Stricken</b>	1 May 2025

### Vessel History

<b>Deployment Summary</b>	<p><b>Early 2014</b> – First operational deployment to Europe and Africa, followed by Latin America.</p> <p><b>March 7, 2014</b> – Port visit Port of Monrovia, Liberia; embarked Marines conducted Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (RHIB) drills.</p> <p><b>July–October 2018</b> – Deployed to the Caribbean, South America, and Central America for Southern Partnership Station (SPS) 2018. Port visits included Port of Colón, Panama; Port of Cartagena, Colombia; Port of Puerto Cortés, Honduras; Port of Acajutla, El Salvador; Port of Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago; Conducted subject-matter expert exchanges and water well construction projects.</p> <p><b>Summer 2019</b> – Participated in U.S. Navy project to test Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF) design as a drone mothership with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).</p> <p><b>October 2022</b> – Moored at Philadelphia Naval Yard, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.</p>
<b>Noteworthy Events</b>	<p><b>July 22, 2010</b> – Keel laid down at Austal USA, Mobile, Alabama, in a ceremony attended by U.S. Navy, U.S. Army, state, and local officials. At the time, Spearhead was intended for Army service as United States Army Vessel (USAV) <i>Spearhead</i> with the 7th Sustainment Brigade. First-of-class EPF, modular multi-mission fast transport innovation.</p> <p><b>September 8, 2011</b> – Launched at Austal, Mobile, Alabama. Moved from construction shed onto floating dry dock; entered the water several days later. Delivery was delayed to early 2012 from the original September 2011 target.</p> <p><b>September 17, 2011</b> – Christened; sponsor Kenneth Wahlman, a former Army officer. His daughter Catherine Wahlman (Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, Class of 2013) broke the champagne bottle on the bow.</p> <p><b>Early 2012</b> – Delivered to the U.S. Navy (Military Sealift Command). First master: Captain Douglas D. Casavant Jr.</p> <p><b>August 2012</b> – Completed acceptance trials with a "clean sweep."</p> <p><b>December 5, 2012</b> – Formally delivered to the U.S. Navy, eight months late and \$31 million over budget.</p> <p><b>June 12, 2014</b> – Lightning struck a tethered aerostat aboard <i>Spearhead</i> during testing off Key West, Florida. The aerostat deflated, fell into the water, and sank.</p> <p><b>2015</b> – Sustained bow damage in rough seas; repairs cost \$500,000. Investigation revealed a design weakness in the bow due to late-phase Austal weight-saving modifications. The first five ships of the class required structural upgrades (approximately \$1.2 million each).</p>

	<b>October 1, 2020</b> – Status changed to Inactive, Reduced Operating Status.
<b>Awards</b>	None
<b>DANFS* Entry</b>	N/A

\**Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*

**Criteria Evaluation<sup>1</sup>**

<b>i. Was the vessel awarded an individual Presidential Unit Citation? (A Presidential Unit Citation is awarded to military units that have performed an extremely meritorious or heroic act, usually in the face of an armed enemy.)</b>	No
<b>ii. Did an individual act of heroism take place aboard the vessel such that an individual was subsequently awarded the Medal of Honor or the Navy Cross? (The Medal of Honor is awarded for valor in action against an enemy force. The Navy Cross is awarded for extraordinary heroism in action not justifying an award of the Medal of Honor.)</b>	No
<b>iii. Was a President of the United States assigned to the vessel during his or her naval service?</b>	No
<b>iv. Was the vessel the first to incorporate engineering, weapons systems, or other upgrades that represent a revolutionary change in naval design or warfighting capabilities?</b>	No
<b>v. Did some other historic or socially significant event occur on board the vessel?</b>	No
<b>Historic Evaluation Conclusion</b>	Ineligible

<b>Sources</b>	<a href="https://www.nvr.navy.mil">https://www.nvr.navy.mil</a>
	<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USNS_Spearhead">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USNS_Spearhead</a>
	<a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spearhead-class_expeditionary_fast_transport">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spearhead-class_expeditionary_fast_transport</a>
	<a href="https://navysite.de/epf/epf1.htm">https://navysite.de/epf/epf1.htm</a>

<sup>1</sup> Evaluation conducted using triggers established for naval vessels in *Program Comment for the Department of Navy for the Disposition of Historic Vessels*, issued by the Advisory Council for Historic Preservation on 15 March 2010.

	<a href="https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2226179/expeditionary-fast-transport-epf/">https://www.navy.mil/Resources/Fact-Files/Display-FactFiles/Article/2226179/expeditionary-fast-transport-epf/</a>
	<a href="https://www.southcom.mil/MEDIA/NEWS-ARTICLES/Article/1584882/spearhead-deploys-marking-the-start-of-southern-partnership-station/">https://www.southcom.mil/MEDIA/NEWS-ARTICLES/Article/1584882/spearhead-deploys-marking-the-start-of-southern-partnership-station/</a>
	<a href="https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2019/07/u-s-navy-testing-epf-as-drone-mother-ship/">https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2019/07/u-s-navy-testing-epf-as-drone-mother-ship/</a>
	<a href="https://www.cruisingearth.com/ship-tracker/united-states-navy-military-sealift-command/usns-spearhead/">https://www.cruisingearth.com/ship-tracker/united-states-navy-military-sealift-command/usns-spearhead/</a>

---

### Historic Preservation Stakeholder Comment

Historic preservation stakeholder comments received are considered when preparing final determinations. The initial determination for this vessel was made available for comment by historic preservation stakeholders for 60 days. During that time, the Navy received 0 written comments.

Comments Received	Comment Disposition
0	0