



COMPANY ANNOUNCEMENT
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AUSTAL USA DELIVERS EPF-13; THE US NAVY'S LARGEST SURFACE SHIP WITH AUTONOMOUS CAPABILITY

Austal Limited (Austal) (ASX: ASB) is pleased to announce Austal USA has delivered Expeditionary Fast Transport USNS *Apalachicola* (EPF 13) to the United States Navy; the largest surface ship in the fleet with autonomous capability.

Building upon the highly automated hull, mechanical & electrical systems already installed on the *Spearhead*-class Expeditionary Fast Transport ships, designed by Austal Australia, the Austal USA team (in partnership with L3Harris and General Dynamics Mission Systems) added automated maintenance, health monitoring, and mission readiness to provide EPF 13 with the capability to conduct up to 30 days of operation without human intervention.

Austal Limited Chief Executive Officer Paddy Gregg said the delivery of EPF13 was a real game changer for both the US Navy and broader naval shipbuilding industry - demonstrating a capability to integrate autonomous technology into proven hull designs and create effective unmanned surface vessels.

"It's very exciting to see this advanced autonomous technology from our partners at L3Harris and General Dynamics Mission Systems working so well in our proven Austal hull design; to become what is now the US Navy's largest surface ship with autonomous capability," Mr Gregg said,

"EPF13 can operate for up to 30 days without human intervention, which opens up so many opportunities for unmanned missions in various operations, as an autonomous prototype."

Fundamental to the autonomy effort was Austal USA's highly automated in-house designed machinery control system (MCS), which allows the ship to be minimally manned by centralising machinery operations to the bridge. All *Spearhead*-class EPFs built to date incorporate the Austal USA MCS design, which is secure, scalable, distributive, and reconfigurable for multiple propulsion configurations.

EPF 13 went to sea five times over several months in 2022-23, allowing Austal USA and industry partners L3Harris and General Dynamics Mission Systems, to test and analyze not only its typical ship systems, but also the systems resulting from the autonomous design and construction contract modifications required by the US Navy to establish EPF 13 as an autonomous prototype.

Austal USA President Rusty Murdaugh said: “Austal USA is proud to deliver this ship to our Navy – it’s innovative and is going to be a critical asset as unmanned capabilities continue to push boundaries and redefine how missions are achieved. A lot of capability is being delivered to our warfighters with this ship and I’m incredibly proud of our team of shipbuilders.”

EPF 13 is the first Expeditionary Fast Transport vessel to be delivered to the Navy with enhanced capabilities to support V-22 flight operations and launch and recover 11 metre RHIBs. These upgrades, along with EPF’s proven high-speed, maneuverability and shallow water access are key enablers for support of future United States Navy Expeditionary Advanced Base Operations around the world.

Autonomous vessel capability has been identified as an area of strategic importance by the US Navy. Austal USA is working to advance autonomous capability and is partnered with L3Harris on the MCS upgrade of Overlord vessel, Mariner (OUSV 3), and construction of Vanguard (OUSV 4), and with Saildrone, Inc. on the manufacture of Surveyor unmanned surface vehicles. Combined with investments from academia in uncrewed technology, south Alabama is quickly becoming the epicenter of autonomous naval architecture.

This ASX announcement has been approved and authorised for release by Paddy Gregg, Austal Limited’s Chief Executive Officer.



Austal USA has delivered the EPF-13, the first Expeditionary Fast Transport and largest surface ship with autonomous capability in the United States Navy. (Photo: Austal USA)

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About Austal:

Austal is Australia's global shipbuilder and defence prime contractor designing, constructing and sustaining some of the world's most advanced commercial and defence vessels.

For more than 30 years Austal has contracted more than 340 vessels for over 121 commercial and defence operators in 59 countries, worldwide.

Austal is Australia's largest defence exporter and first ASX-listed shipbuilder. Austal has industry-leading shipyards in Australia, the United States of America, Philippines and Vietnam with service centres worldwide, including the Middle East.

Austal delivers iconic monohull, catamaran and trimaran commercial vessel platforms – including the world’s largest trimaran ferry and multiple defence programs such as the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) and Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF) for the United States Navy.

Austal is the only foreign-owned prime contractor designing, constructing and sustaining ships for the US Navy.

Austal has grown to become the world’s largest aluminium shipbuilder and is Australia’s largest defence exporter.

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