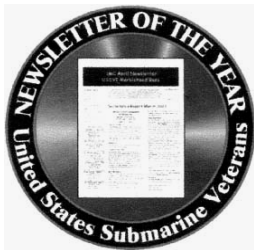


American Submariners Inc.
4370 Twain Ave.
San Diego, CA 92120-3404



The Silent Sentinel MARCH 2014



Our Creed and Purpose

To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds, and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.

In addition to perpetuating the memory of departed shipmates, we shall provide a way for all Submariners to gather for the mutual benefit and enjoyment. Our common heritage as Submariners shall be Strengthened by camaraderie. We support a strong U.S. Submarine Force.

The organization will engage in various projects and deeds that will bring about the perpetual remembrance of those shipmates who have given the supreme sacrifice. The organization will also endeavor to educate all third parties it comes in contact with about the services our submarine brothers performed and how their sacrifices made possible the freedom and lifestyle we enjoy today.

Navy To Take Larger Role In Arctic Region *Yasmin Tadjeh, National Defense, Feb 25*

As ice melts in the Arctic, the Navy anticipates that it will have to increase its presence in the harsh northern region, but not until after 2020, according to a new roadmap released by the service Feb. 24.

There will be low demand for additional naval involvement in the Arctic through the end of this decade, stated the "U.S. Navy Arctic Roadmap: 2014-2030." After then, increased periods of ice-free conditions in the region could expand the Navy's involvement in the region, the report said.

The move would be a shift from the current status quo, where Navy engagement is limited to submarine missions, while the Coast Guard maintains responsibility for Arctic security.

Since the first roadmap was issued in 2009, melting in the Arctic has rapidly increased, said Rear Adm. Jonathan White, oceanographer of the Navy.

"Ice in the Arctic has been receding faster than we previously thought back in 2009. It was a new record for ice melt back in 2012, and it offers an increase in activity," he said during a media roundtable.

The Arctic region holds a plethora of undiscovered fossil fuels and natural resources, including an estimated 90 billion barrels of oil, 1,669 trillion cubic feet of natural gas and 44 billion barrels of natural gas liquids, the roadmap said.

Commerce and tourism throughout the area will increase as ice melts, creating new waterways for ships to move through. When that happens, the Navy's presence will likely be needed, the roadmap said.

The Navy, as it increases its presence, will have to overcome operational gaps ranging from unreliable weather data to degraded communication capabilities and sparse infrastructure, the roadmap said.

"Environmental information, safety at sea and in the air, communication and data challenges, infrastructure and regional expertise are some, but not all, of the current gaps and seams that must be overcome to operate in the Arctic region," it said.

The Navy will also face logistical challenges. The service will need to examine ways to distribute fuel in the region to air and surface platforms. Deployed personnel will need to be trained in energy conservation and environmentally sustainable practices, the roadmap said. **Continued on Page 5**

Overcoming unpredictable weather forecasts is one of the most urgent needs, said White.

"One of the big gaps is being able to predict weather [and] wind ... in the Arctic to the extent we do everywhere else in the world today," White said.

Weather conditions can be so erratic in the region that 72-hour forecasts in the United States can have the same reliability as 24-hour or less forecasts in the Arctic, he said.

Even when ice is scarce and vessels can pass through waterways, conditions can still be hazardous, said Rear Adm. William McQuilkin, director of the Navy's strategy and policy division.

While the Navy anticipates a larger presence in the Arctic, White said it was too early to speculate on potential operating bases. Naval Air Facility Adak in Alaska, the last base the Navy operated in the state, was shuttered in 1997. The Navy could possibly look into reopening the base if requirements necessitated it, White said. **Continued on Page 5**

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The Silent Sentinel via Email

To all of my Shipmates and families who currently receive our Great newsletter via the mail who would like it sent via email or continue to receive it via mail, please fill out the form and mail it to the base or myself. We are trying to cut the cost of the newsletter down from \$3700 to about \$1900 a year. By receiving the Silent Sentinel via email will cut down the printing and mailing cost. The other plus to receiving it via email is you can save it on your computer and not have the paper lying around the house.

A subscription to the Silent Sentinel newsletter will be available to surviving family members via internet email, at no charge, upon notification of the Membership Chairman. If a printed hard-copy is preferred, via US Post Office delivery, an annual donation of \$5.00 will be requested to cover costs.

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DUE TO LOGISTICS CONSTRAINTS, ALL INPUTS FOR THE SILENT SENTINEL MUST BE IN MY HAND NO LATER THAN **ONE WEEK** AFTER THE MONTHLY MEETING. IF I DO NOT RECEIVE IT BY THIS TIME, THE ITEM WILL NOT GET IN. NO EXCEPTIONS! MIKE

March Meeting

Our monthly meeting is held on the second Tuesday of the month at VFW Post 3787, 4370 Twain Ave., San Diego. Our next meeting will be on March 11, 2014. The post is located one-half block West of Mission Gorge Road, just north of I-8. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. The E-Board meets one hour earlier at 6 p.m.

Check us out on the World Wide Web
www.ussvisandiego.org

BINNACLE LIST

Al Strunk, Benny Williams

ETERNAL PATROL

Submarine Losses in February

Originally Compiled by C J Glassford



- “
- SHARK # 2 . (SS 174) - 58 Men on Board
Sunk, on 11 Feb 1942, by Japanese Destroyer, in Makkasar Strait, 120 Miles East of Mendoa, in the Celebes Sea
: “ ALL HANDS LOST “
- AMBERJACK (SS 219) - 74 Men on Board
Probably Sunk, on 14 Feb 1943, by Combined Efforts of a Japanese Seaplane, Torpedo Boat, and Submarine Chaser, off Cape St. George, New Britain: “ ALL HANDS LOST “
- GRAYBACK (SS 208) - 80 Men on Board
Probably Succumbed, on 27 Feb 1944, to Damage Inflicted, by Land Based Japanese Naval Aircraft suffered the day before in the East ChinaSea: “ ALL HANDS LOST “
- TROUT (SS 202) - 81 Men on Board
Most likely Sunk, on 29 Feb 1944, by Japanese Destroyer, in the Philippine Sea Area, Off Formosa:
“ ALL HANDS LOST “
- BARBELL (SS316) - 81 Men on Board
Sunk, on 4 Feb 1945, by Japanese Naval Aircraft, In the South China Sea, Palawan Passage:
“ ALL HANDS LOST “

POMODON (SS486) - Duty Section on Board
 Battery Explosion and Fire, on 21 Feb 1955, from Hydrogen
 Buildup during recharging of Battery Cells, at San Francisco
 Naval Shipyard: " 5 MEN LOST "



ANYONE NEEDING A RIDE TO OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS, PLEASE CONTACT JACK KANE AT 619-602-1801, jkane32@cox.net.

Minutes for Submarine Veterans San Diego 11 February 2014

1903 - Meeting of the Submarine Veterans Inc., San Diego Base was called to order by Base Commander Bob Bissonnette.

Conducted Opening Exercises:

Reading of Our Creed.

Pledge of Allegiance lead by Junior Vice Commander Manny Burciaga.

Chaplain Jack Lester lead us in prayer.

Conducted tolling of the Boats for February.

Observed a moment of Silent Prayer for our lost shipmates.

Base Commander recognized past E-Board members and Officers.

Secretary Ferguson announced 33 members present.

Treasurer Report: Treasurer Ball announced \$2688 in checking, \$293 in the Charlie Marin Memorial Scholarship Fund, and a total of \$17,917.

The minutes of the 14 January meeting were approved.

Call for Committee Reports:

Chaplain Lester announced Storekeeper Phill Richeson, Al Strunk, Frank Walker, Tommy Cox, Benny Williams on the binnacle list.

Jim Eisenhower, Dennis (Shipwreck) Kelly, Gilbert Shaddock and Leonard Lenz were on Eternal Patrol.

Parade Committee : Joel Eikam mentioned repairs to the Parade Float and April parade in Linda Vista.

Membership Committee: Ray Ferbrache announced 284 paid members and he has another 12 or so to submit.

Scholarship Committee: Paul Hitchcock reminded the members of the March 15 deadline and possible changes to the requirements were discussed by all.

Storekeeper Report: Phill Richeson is on the binnacle list so no report but it is known that a few orders have been received and will be distributed next month.

Float Committee: David Kauppinen reiterated Joels statement about repairs to the float that will be completed in next few weeks.

52 Boat Memorial Committee: Warren Branges informed us of the deterioration of the engravings and that Doug Smay is looking into a better engraving process. The damaged marker has been replaced. There was a general discussion of incorporating "line of duty" losses to the Memorial in the future.

1935 Base Commander called a break.

1947 Base Commander called the meeting back to order.

Unfinished Business:

The old float has been scrapped and we received \$135.

Tour of the USS Pasadena last month was enjoyed by 24 persons and \$35 was donated to our annual picnic fund.

The West Region Caucus in Laughlin, NV will be April 27 to May 1 at the Aquarius Resort.

Motion was passed by the members to approve the 2014 budget which basically shows income of approximately \$9100 and expenditures of about \$8200.

New Business:

The Base Commander has duties to perform at the West Coast Sailor of the Year presentation this Friday at the Admiral Kidd Club from 1100-1300. USSVI normally presents gifts but none have been received from National as yet. The members passed a motion to loan \$1500 from the Treasury for gifts to be repaid by National.

Warrior Social will be held this Thursday 1500-1700 at Smugglers Cove, Naval Base Pt. Loma.

Ed Farley has volunteered to head a Committee to log, display, and report to donors, the disposition of submarine memorabilia donated to the Base. Suggestions for display locations include the Veterans Museum in Balboa Park, The Midway Museum, and the Maritime Museum among others. David Kauppinen, Mike Hyman and the Base Commander will also be members of the Committee and all Base Members are urged to assist.

Good of the Order:

The Bonefish Base is sponsoring a boat tour on February 22nd at 1000. After the tour the Base will have their monthly meeting at the Doug Smay Base in Chula Vista.

New member cards are being made by Mike Hyman.

Base Commander Bissonnette adjourned the meeting at 2016.

Jack Ferguson, Secretary

Sailing List for 11 February 2014

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Fred Fomby | Bill Earl | Bob Bissonette |
| Jack Kane | Jack Lester | Joe Peluso |
| Jack Addington | Russ Filbeck | Rocky Rockers |
| Dennis Mortensen | David Kauppinen | Al Poblete |
| Bob Farrell | Joe Acay | David Ball |
| Bob Welch | Jim Harer | Warren Branges |
| Chris Stafford | Joel Eikam | Bud Rollison |
| W. J. (Joe) Sasser | Paul Hitchcock | Ray Ferbrache |
| W. R. Johnston | Manny Burciaga | Deryl Dack |
| Mike Hyman | Alfred Varela | Don Mathiowetz |
| Ed Farley | Jack Ferguson | Larry Dore |

Current News

**“Plataginet, I will; and like thee, Nero,
Play on the lute, beholding the towns burn” (Henry VI, Shakespeare)**

From Front Page

“If we determine a structure is needed to do our missions up there, we will take a look at it, see what it costs and then ask” the president and Congress if funds could be made available for it, White said. “But right now I think it is little premature to start looking at specific infrastructure.”

The Navy will also work closely with the Coast Guard in the Arctic. The Coast Guard, which operates the nation’s fleet of icebreakers, conducts various missions in the region, ranging from patrolling the seas to search and rescue.

The Coast Guard is currently grappling with procuring a new heavy-duty icebreaker. The service only has two operational icebreakers, the Healy – a medium icebreaker commissioned primarily for scientific research – and the Polar Star, a heavy-duty icebreaker that recently emerged from a multi-million dollar refurbishment. The Star’s sister vessel, the Polar Sea, was mothballed after breaking down.

Coast Guard officials have said that the service cannot afford to bear the full cost of a new heavy-duty icebreaker, which could total \$1 billion.

While icebreaking capabilities may be hard to come by in the future, there is a long history of partnerships among nations in the Arctic, which include Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Russia and the United States.

“There are a lot of icebreaking capabilities with our partner nations around the Arctic,” White said. “As icebreaking capabilities are needed ... we look to partnerships as a way to answer some of those requirements, especially in the near- and mid-term.”

The United States already leases the services of Russian icebreakers to gain access to McMurdo Station, a research facility in Antarctica.

Building partnerships with other Arctic nations was emphasized in the roadmap.

“To build the ties of trust and confidence that underpin strong alliances and partnerships, it is essential to operate and train together,” the roadmap said.

Multinational operations in the Arctic Ocean such as Canada’s search-and-rescue exercise known as Nanook, and Northern Eagle – a biennial joint naval drill, which includes the United States, Russia and Norway – will improve knowledge of the region and provide a positive foundation for future missions, the roadmap said.

**Are India’s Russian Origin Submarines Unsafe?
*DefenseWorld.net, Feb 26***

Questions are being raised over the safety of India’s submarine fleet following yet another incident involving a Russian-origin Kilo Class submarine INS Sindhuratna.

India currently operates 10 kilo-class submarines, of which eight including, the INS Sindhuratna, were built by Sevmash and upgraded at the Zvezdochka shipyard in Russia.

The latest incident comes as a blow to the Indian Navy whose submarine fleet has experienced three mishaps in the last year. Earlier in 2013, India’s newly upgraded kilo-class submarine, the INS Sindhurakshak, reportedly fully-armed at the time, was destroyed by a fire. In January, the INS Sindhughosh nearly ran aground while entering the Mumbai harbour during a low-tide phase.

The overhauled Indian submarines are equipped with 3M-54 Club-S (SS-N-27) anti-ship cruise missiles, the Indian-developed USHUS sonar, CCS-MK radio communications system and Porpoise radar.

The spate of accidents involving India’s Russian-origin submarines has left many wondering about the state of the navy’s submarine fleet and the quality of work carried out in the overhaul.

**Algeria Ordering Two Kilo Class Submarines
*Guy Martin, DefenceWeb.co.za, Feb 26***

Algeria will soon order two Kilo class diesel electric submarines from Russia, which will join the four already in its fleet.

A Russian defence industry source told ITAR-TASS that Algeria plans to order the two Project 636 Varshavyanka (Kilo class) submarines in the first half of this year, for delivery by 2018. The submarines will be constructed at the Admiralty Shipyard in St Petersburg.

The value of the contract may be more than \$1.2 billion, according to Interfax.

Algeria already operates four Kilo class submarines. In June 2006 Rosoboronexport signed a contract with the Algerian Navy for the construction of two Project 636 Improved Kilo class submarines under a roughly US\$400-600 million contract. Construction of the first submarine started in 2006 and the second began in 2007. They were handed over to the Algerian Navy in March and September 2010 where they joined two Project 877EKM Kilo diesel electric submarines, which Algeria received in 1987-1988. The latter two were upgraded by Russian shipyards.

The Project 636 Varshavyanka class is mainly intended for anti-shipping and anti-submarine operations in relatively shallow waters. The tear-drop hulled submarine is 72.6m long, 9.9m wide and can dive to 300 meters. The design has a displacement of 3076 tons. Underwater, it reportedly has a speed

of up to 25 knots. The complement is 52 and the submarine has an endurance of 45 days. The boat is fitted with six 533mm torpedo tubes and carries up to 18 homing or wire-guided torpedoes, or 24 AM-1 mines.

The outer hull is covered with sound damping tiles and its machinery as well as design is regarded as very quiet. Designed by the Rubin Central Maritime Design Bureau of St Petersburg, the submarine entered service in 1982. The type was originally built at the Komsomolsk shipyard and lately by the Admiralty Shipyard in St Petersburg. It is in service with the navies of Russia, China, Vietnam, Iran, India and Poland, among others. Some 50 have been built.

The Algerian Navy has been undergoing expansion in recent years as it faces problems such as smuggling, illegal migration and indigenous terrorism. These threats mainly affect Algeria's harbours and maritime communication routes and ships passing through the Straits of Gibraltar. Consequently, the Algerian Navy maintains a well-trained and well-equipped fleet to provide security to more than 1000 km of coastline. The country is also maintaining a strong navy to deter its neighbours, notably Morocco.

In April 2012 it emerged that Algeria had signed a contract with the China Shipbuilding Trading Company for three light frigates, after ordering two Meko A-200N frigates from Germany's ThyssenKrupp Marine Systems in March 2012. The three light frigates will displace around 2 800 tons fully loaded, and will be powered by MTU diesel engines. Algeria has also ordered two new Tiger class corvettes from Russia. The Tiger corvette (Project 20382) is an export model of the Project 20380 Steregushchy class, which is the Russian Navy's newest corvette class.

In January Italian shipyard Fincantieri launched the Algerian Navy's Kalaat Beni-Abbes landing helicopter dock ship, which will be delivered to Algeria later this year. Algeria may order a second of the type in the coming months.

Record Figure Of IDF's Submarine Activity *israeldefense.com, Feb 26*

A leap in the scale of military submarine operations, even in the northern theater: "The best Russian and Iranian products are between Syria and Lebanon. We are prepared for transfer of 'Yakhont' missiles"

On the day in which reports of an Israeli attack are published in Lebanon, the Israeli Navy reveals that most of the submarine's time at sea is operational, for the first time in years.

Against the background of these foreign reports according to which the IAF attacked convoys of advanced weapons moving from Syria to Lebanon, a significant expression of IDF's special operations in the era of warfare between campaigns was revealed. According to data presented by a senior officer in the Navy, 58% of the time submarines spent at sea last year was within operational deployments, and the rest was for training purposes.

For comparison, in 2012 the figure was 36%. A similar number also concluded the years 2011 and 2010. "We have made last year thousands of hours of submarine operational activity," said Commander of the Submarine Flotilla, Col. G., who updated that "two new Dolphin submarines, INS Tanin and INS Rahav, will arrive to Israel from Germany in the second half of the year (after a delay of several months due to the complexity of the submarine).

These are very technologically sophisticated vessels that require highly trained and professional crews to operate them. We operate in different theaters, including the northern theater, to ensure the security of the State of Israel".

The new submarines will allow remaining undercover for a longer period of time, since it will not require rising to the waterline to charge air to produce energy for the engines, as opposed to the existing ones. A special system will generate its own electricity for generators which will charge the engines time and again. This will allow a longer stay at sea, at long ranges, in addition to a greater capacity of carrying weapons.

The sixth submarine is expected to arrive in 2019. The new submarines, arriving from Kiel port in Germany, will dock along with its "sisters" at the new submarine port, the Polynom, formed at the Navy base in Haifa. One of the innovations the port offers is the protection: for the first time, a submarine during the hold period will be under armed protection layer, which will protect from missiles and rockets.

Another innovation of the new submarines: protection system similar to the "Trophy" which operates on tanks, detects approaching missiles and diverts them before contact. As a result of the overload of submarines activity, considered to be the most expensive vessel of the IDF Navy, the amount of cadets enrolled in the Frogman Course has been doubled.

A senior military official who is involved in the project said that the new submarines were built by the German manufacturer uniquely to the Navy's demands, unlike other submarines which were established at the same shipyard for other armies.

"The best Iranian and Russian products are within the region between Syria and Lebanon and the efforts of Hezbollah and the Syrian army to intensify do not cease. We are constantly ready to protect our assets. We assume that the advanced Yakhont missiles are also in the hands of the Syrian army and we are preparing for it", said commander of the Haifa Navy Base, Brig. Gen. Eli Sharvit.

Navy to Gauge Interest Among Female Sailors in Serving on Subs *Jennifer McDermott, The Day, Feb 25*

Enlisted women may join crews starting in 2016 The Navy will soon ask every female sailor whether she is interested in joining the submarine force, and the answers will help shape the strategy for bringing enlisted women aboard subs.

The task force that is figuring out the best way to integrate enlisted women into the submarine force expects to receive the results of the anonymous survey this summer.

"The ability to attract, recruit and retain quality female sailors is essential to the success of integration. It will also be a big challenge," Lt. Timothy Hawkins, spokesman for the task force, said in a statement.

Enlisted women could begin serving aboard submarines in 2016.

About two-thirds of Navy ships have mixed-gender crews. The task force is consulting with senior leaders in the Navy communities where women have served on ships and at aircraft squadrons, to understand their experiences and incorporate their lessons into the planning, Hawkins said.

Vice Adm. Michael J. Connor, the commander of the submarine force, approved the task force's timeline for completing a series of studies and the areas of study for nine working groups on Feb. 10, Hawkins said in the statement. Hawkins described the group's "Plan of Actions and Milestones" as "the plan to build the plan."

One group is responsible for gauging how many enlisted women will want to serve aboard submarines.

Other working groups are looking at ship configuration, what submarines to integrate, or what modifications will be required and when; sailor rate conversion, or what specific rates, or jobs, the submarine force will use to bring current female sailors into the submarine force; and recruiting development and accession planning, or whether any changes are needed in the recruiting practices and policies or in how the training a sailor completes before reporting to a submarine is structured, Hawkins said. Another group will use the findings to craft the initial plan.

Soon, the remaining groups will look to validate that there is a viable career path for all rates and pay grades, study retention issues, and write the final plan with input from across the fleet, Hawkins said.

Each group is led by a subject matter expert and includes 10 to 20 participants from commands across the Navy.

The Navy lifted its ban on women serving aboard submarines in 2010 and started assigning female officers first to the larger, ballistic-missile and guided-missile submarines. Female officers will begin reporting to attack submarines by January 2015, and, as the next step, the Navy is considering enlisted women for sub duty.

Rear Adm. Kenneth M. Perry, the commander of Submarine Group Two in Groton, leads the 60-person task force. He was not available to comment.

Perry has said that the biggest challenge the task force faces is figuring out how women can have a successful career in the submarine force - which often entails going to sea for long periods of time - and a family as well, and that while the standards people must meet to be a submariner will continue to be gender-neutral, it may not be wise not to acknowledge that the life/work balance is fundamentally different for a woman than it is for a man.

A detailed implementation plan is due to the Chief of Naval Operations by March 2015. Hawkins said the task force's work is on track, and there will be briefings for top Navy leaders so they can decide what action to take by early 2015.

DoD Budget Seeks Cuts in BAH, Commissary, Tricare benefits

Andrew Tilghman, Navy Times, Feb 24

The Pentagon on Monday proposed the deepest and most far-reaching cuts to military compensation in the 40-year history of the all-volunteer force, explaining that such cuts are necessary in order to pay for more modern gear and high-tech weaponry.

Some highlights of the Defense Department's budget proposal for fiscal 2015 include the first-ever rollback in Basic Allowance for Housing; a military pay raise that would match last year's 1 percent hike, the lowest in the volunteer era; massive cuts to commissary subsidies; and potentially increased health care fees for both active-duty families and retirees.

Together, the proposals signal an end to a decade-plus wartime era of rising pay and benefits for troops. Even after the proposed cuts, military compensation would remain comparatively more generous than it was in the 1980s and '90s. But the Pentagon has never before sought to pare back existing benefits in the all-volunteer era.

Moreover, personnel costs would be slashed further by significant reductions to the size of the force, including the smallest Army since the before the Second World War.

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said the changes are part of an overarching decision to protect big-ticket programs and research projects by saving money on people.

"We chose to slow the growth of military compensation costs in ways that will preserve the quality of the all-volunteer force, but also free up critical funds needed for sustaining training, readiness, and modernization," Hagel said Monday at a briefing with reporters.

"We chose further reductions in troop strength and force structure in every military service — active and reserve — in order to sustain our readiness and technological superiority, and to protect critical capabilities like special operations forces and cyber resources," Hagel said.

Hagel also said this is "the first budget to fully reflect the transition DoD is making after 13 years of war."

On housing allowances, Hagel said the Pentagon will "slow the growth" until BAH covers only about 95 percent of estimated rental costs, with troops paying the other 5 percent out of pocket. In addition, the monthly BAH check provided to about 1 million service members will be cut further by eliminating the stipend for renters insurance that for years has been a key component in calculating BAH.

Next year's pay raise for troops would be 1 percent, the same as this year. Those are the lowest pay raises since the end of the draft in 1973 and fall below estimated growth in average private-sector wages in recent years.

The Defense Department aims to slash \$1 billion from the \$1.4 billion commissary subsidy. Pentagon officials insist that no commissaries will be closed but acknowledge that prices will likely rise on many items as local facilities absorb the reduced subsidies.

Changes are also coming to Tricare. "We will ask retirees and some active-duty family members to pay a little more in their deductibles and co-pays," Hagel said. Officials have not provided specific details.

Many of the proposed changes to compensation will require approval from Congress. In the past lawmakers, have been reluctant to reduce troops' pay and benefits. But Pentagon officials believe that may change as combat tours end and reducing compensation is presented as the only viable alternative to vastly diminished readiness.

"I think there is a growing recognition that there is a direct tradeoff," said one senior defense official.

Hagel said the Pentagon is seeking a base budget of about \$496 billion, roughly the same amount the military is allowed to spend this year.

Hagel reiterated the Pentagon's call for Congress to set up a new Base Realignment and Closure Commission to help make politically difficult decisions about shuttering domestic installations and eliminating jobs.

He also raised the specter of big reductions to the military footprint in Europe by noting that "BRAC authority is not needed" to close facilities there, which means DoD could make those closure decisions unilaterally.

Underpinning many of the budget decisions is the firm belief that "after Iraq and Afghanistan, we are no longer sizing the military to conduct long and large stability operations," Hagel said.

The size of the special operations force would grow slightly to 69,700, up from today's 66,000, Hagel said. Yet the rest of the force would shrink.

The Army would take the biggest hit. Today's Army of about 530,000 soldiers was already slated to drop down to 490,000 during the next several years. But Hagel announced that the new target level will be an active-duty end strength of 440,000 to 450,000 soldiers. Also, the Army will terminate its Ground Combat Vehicle program to save money.

The Air Force will eliminate its entire fleet of A-10 Warthogs, a aircraft popular with ground troops because it flew thousands of close-air-support missions over Iraq and Afghanistan during the past 13 years. The savings would help pay for dozens of new F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighters.

The Air Force would also retire its entire fleet of U-2 spy planes. The Pentagon plans to fulfill that mission in the future with unmanned Global Hawks. The Air Force will press ahead with plans to build and buy a new tanker and a new bomber, Hagel said.

For now, the Navy can keep its fleet of 11 aircraft carriers. But Hagel threatened to cut that to 10 if Congress does not raise current budget caps in 2016. Specifically, he said the carrier George Washington would have to be retired before its currently scheduled nuclear refueling.

The big impact on the Navy's surface fleet will be on cruisers. Half of the Navy's cruiser fleet — 11 ships — will be "laid up," meaning they will be taken out of normal deployment rotations and essentially left unmanned.

Among the most controversial provisions of the Navy budget is the decision to scale back the long-term Littoral Combat Ship program from 52 vessels to 32. Amid concerns that the LCS is too vulnerable to attack, Hagel directed the Navy to consider building a new ship "consistent with the capabilities of a frigate."

The Marine Corps was spared any troop reductions for now and will retain its end strength of 182,000 Marines. However, Hagel said that if Congress does not lift sequestration spending caps on the defense budget before next year, the Corps' end strength likely would have to be cut to 175,000.

The budget proposal is unlikely to end the internal battle simmering between the Army's active and reserve components. The bad news for the Army National Guard is Hagel's order to turn over its Apache helicopters to the active force.

The good news is that the Army reserve components will get to keep more soldiers. The force reductions for the reserve components amount to a 5 percent cut, compared to the 13 percent drop for the Army's active force.

Hagel's preview of the 2015 budget comes one week before the full details of the plan are sent to Congress, where the proposal's many controversial decisions are likely to hit resistance.

But as one senior military official said Monday: "It's hard to cut this much money out of anything and expect people to cheer about it."

Navy To Build Its 'Information Dominance' Forces Through New Command

Jared Serbu, WFED AM Radio Washington DC, Feb 24

The Navy says it's about to create a new home for its growing cadre of what it calls "information dominance" forces.

A new organization will begin to take shape this fall, taking on the responsibility for manning, training and equipping the entire service for information warfare.

The move is a significant follow-up to the Navy's 2009 decision to merge several disciplines, including cyber, intelligence, meteorology, oceanography and electronic warfare into a single large workforce cadre called "information dominance forces."

Within the next few weeks, officials expect Chief of Naval Operations Jonathan Greenert to sign off on an implementation plan to stand up a new command to continue to build and organize that force.

Vice Adm. Ted Branch, a deputy chief of naval operations and the Navy's chief of information dominance, said the service expects the new organization to reach its initial operating capability by October. It will fall within the auspices of the existing Navy Cyber Forces, headquartered at Joint Base Little Creek-Fort Story in southeastern Virginia.

"That means that resources will move from my staff at the Pentagon, from the Office of Naval Intelligence, from the commander of naval oceanography and from Fleet Cyber Command into that new type command," Branch said Friday during an AFCEA gathering in Tyson's Corner, Va. "That type commander will be responsible for the manning, training and equipping of the entire information dominance corps and for moving forward information dominance in the Navy."

The Ninth Command

The Information Dominance Forces Command would be the ninth type command (TYCOM) in the Navy, and would have similar responsibilities to the others, but a broader reach. The others are all responsible for holding administrative control over specific categories of platforms, like naval aircraft, submarines or surface ships.

"For the platform TYCOMs, it's pretty easy to figure out what they're dealing with if it looks like a ship or a submarine or an airplane. This one will have the information dominance corps and the cyber activities, all that kind of man train and equip, but it will also have responsibility for the rest of the Navy," Branch said. "The systems commands, naval reactors, medical, anybody that has a network will have a line to the information dominance TYCOM. So it's a big job, but it's the right thing to do as we move information dominance down the path and make it a warfighting pillar."

Navy officials say the standup of the command will mean some other changes to the way the service organizes its current cyber workforce.

Some of Navy Cyber Forces' existing responsibilities for operating and defending Navy networks will transition to the service's 10th Fleet/Fleet Cyber Command, the Navy component of U.S. Cyber Command. Navy Cyber Forces, meanwhile, will focus more exclusively on training and equipping the workforce.

Branch said the new organization's relatively difficult task will be to integrate the skills and expertise of what used to be five distinct career fields in the Navy: Intelligence specialists, information warfare officers, information professionals, oceanographers and the space cadre.

"We brought that all together and said, 'OK, we used to be five different tribes, now we're going to be one corps and be able to practice information dominance warfare,'" Branch said. "That's moving along, but it's not cooked yet, because people who grew up in those different specialties are pretty zealous about what those specialties bring to the game, and they don't want to lose their identities. I tell people all the time, though, that we're not trying to homogenize the community or diminish the depth of expertise. What we're doing is providing a broader experience. We're doing cross-detailing so we can move from a multidisciplinary group of folks to an interdisciplinary corps, so we can innovate and find answers to some of the far-reaching decisions we're going to make as we apply these new systems and techniques for information warfare in the future."

Information Dominance As Warfighters

The Navy says its information dominance strategy, initiated when it first combined its top officer billets for intelligence and for communications into the job Branch currently holds, is based on the idea that it ought to be able to synthesize skill sets its sailors already hold in various communities across the service into a single warfighting capability.

The eventual goal, Branch said, is to have information dominance leaders sitting at the same table, at the same level as other decision makers in, for example, a carrier strike group.

"We will have arrived when we have our internal audience, the information dominance corps, thinking of themselves as warfighters," he said. "And probably more importantly, when the rest of the guys, the kinetic guys, the trigger-pullers start thinking of the information dominance corps as warfighters, we'll get there."

Vietnam Joins Submarine Arms Race Amid South China Sea Tensions

Want China Times, Staff Reporter, Feb 23

Vietnam finally has a new weapon against China's aggressive maritime claims after receiving its first Kilo-class submarine from Russia on the last day of 2013, according to the Washington-based Strategy Page on Feb. 20.

The submarine is the first of six 2,300-tonne Kilo-class submarines to arrive in Vietnam after the country signed a US\$2.1 billion deal with Russia in 2009. The submarines are likely to be based at Cam Ranh Bay, a deep water port located in southern Vietnam, Strategy Page said. The port was formerly used by the United States Navy during the Vietnam War and later became a naval facility for the Soviet Union.

A Kilo-class submarine is capable of carrying 18 torpedoes or SS-N-27 anti-ship missiles. The SS-N-27 can be launched underwater from the torpedo tubes and its range is estimated to be 300 kilometers. Combined with its quietness and Russian cruise missiles, the Kilo-class submarine is a very dangerous weapon against the surface combat vessels of the People's Liberation Army Navy operating in the disputed South China Sea, the report said.

Other nations such as North Korea, Iran and China have also imported Kilo-class submarines from Russia. China is said to have gone one step further, designing its own unlicensed version of the Kilo-class, known as the Type 41 Song-class submarine.

Vietnam was able to purchase the Russian-built submarines at a relatively low price, and they may not be equipped with air independent propulsion which would allow non-nuclear boats to stay underwater for weeks at a time, according to Strategy Page.

Tensions between Hanoi and Beijing center around the disputed Paracel and Spratly islands in the South China Sea, while Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei also lay claim to the area.

Catching Z's at Sea is Getting Easier for Sailors

Corinne Reilly, PilotOnline.com, Feb 21

For sailors aboard deployed Navy ships, little sleep has long come with the territory.

It's partly a function of the job: A ship at sea is an around-the-clock operation. On top of drills, meetings and daily work, most sailors must also stand watch - on the bridge, in engine rooms, in front of screens in darkened operations centers - on schedules that give little regard to the body's circadian rhythm. One day a sailor might be on watch all morning, and the next all night.

It's partly culture, too: Among sailors, the ability to push on for months at a time with little sleep and no days off is seen as a badge of honor.

Aboard more and more ships, though, that is changing. Rather than seeing it as a point of pride, Navy officials are working to recast fatigue as an unnecessary risk that causes costly mistakes, and some commanding officers are taking significant steps to help their sailors get more and better sleep.

Most notably, an increasing number are scheduling watch shifts that align with the body's 24-hour clock and allow sailors to sleep at the same time each day - a big change from the way the service has long operated.

"It's a paradigm shift," said John Cordle, a recently retired Navy captain who has been championing better sleep for sailors for years. "And it's catching on."

The destroyer Truxtun, which left Norfolk on Saturday with the aircraft carrier George H.W. Bush, tried a circadian-based schedule while training this summer and decided to keep it for the deployment.

Said the ship's senior watch officer, Lt. Kori Levy-Minzie, "It's noticeable that people are more alert and less tired."

The key difference is that traditional watch schedules ignore the body's circadian rhythm. Among the most common rotations, for example, is what the Navy calls the "five and dime." Watch standers are on duty for five hours, then have 10 hours to sleep, exercise and take care of other work. Their watch shifts always begin at different times. One day, their chance to sleep might start at 5 a.m., and the next at 8 p.m.

That keeps the body constantly confused, which makes it harder to fall asleep, said Nita Shattuck, a professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif., who has studied crew rest aboard numerous ships.

“Even though they can be very fatigued, their bodies just aren’t ready to sleep,” Shattuck said.

With circadian-based schedules, she said, “the quality of the sleep is superior. They’re getting more benefits from it.”

Shattuck spent a month aboard the Norfolk-based destroyer Jason Dunham while it was deployed in 2012. A portion of the crew used a traditional schedule while others used an alternative - three-hour watches before nine hours off - that gave them a long block for rest at the same time each day. Sailors used wrist monitors and smart phones to track their sleep and reaction times.

An analysis showed that those on the alternative rotation were more alert. Shattuck considers the three-on, nine-off schedule to be the best for crew rest.

It’s the same one the Truxtun is using. Petty Officer 1st Class Sandra Flowers said she likes it. As a sonar technician, she spends her watch shifts tracking nearby vessels, whales and dolphins. “Staring at a display for hours - you have to stay attentive,” she said. “This makes it easier.”

Said Petty Officer 3rd Class Eric Lettow, a boatswain’s mate: “Now I have time to get things done other than try to sleep.”

Critics of the change have knocked it as another example of the military going soft. But proponents disagree. “This is just the opposite,” Shattuck said. “It’s about performance. It’s about building crew endurance and making them stronger.”

Research has shown long-lasting consequences among civilian workers with inconsistent and overnight shifts, she said, and many private employers have come to understand the value of a well-rested workforce.

So has the Coast Guard, and even Navy aviators are required to sleep a minimum number of hours before flying. Among sailors who man and oversee ships, rest has been a low priority.

In May, though, two top admirals in charge of the Navy’s surface ships issued a message to the fleet endorsing watch schedules designed to give sailors more sleep. “The aviation community has long embraced the concept of crew rest as a foundation for safe operations,” said Vice Adm. Tom Copeman and Rear Adm. David Thomas. “It has a place in the surface force as well.”

Safety and effectiveness are the biggest reasons sailors need better sleep, they said, noting that fatigue has played a role in ship groundings and collisions. In a January 2013 article in the U.S. Naval Institute magazine Proceedings, Cordle wrote that too little rest was cited as a factor in nearly 80 percent of Navy mishaps.

Cordle saw other benefits, too - namely improved morale - when he tried the three-on, nine-off schedule as commanding officer of the Norfolk-based destroyer San Jacinto in 2010. Sailors were less stressed, and they found more time to exercise, he said.

He has trumpeted circadian schedules since. “Working and sleeping the same hours each day paid huge dividends,” he wrote in Proceedings. As for sleeplessness as a badge of honor, he wrote, “it does not have to be that way.”

Cmdr. Seth Burton, skipper of the Norfolk-based submarine Scranton, said he’s become a believer, too.

On a seven-month deployment that ended last month, Scranton watch standers were on for eight hours and then off for eight - a big shift from the six-hour rotations that submariners are used to. “It was the best-rested crew I’ve ever seen,” Burton said.

He had to get special permission to use the schedule because submariners were limited by policy to six-hour watches. That recently changed, and Burton said other subs have made the transition.

But he and others warn that starting such schedules isn’t like flipping a switch, and it doesn’t work for every vessel.

On the San Jacinto and the Truxtun, meal times had to be extended, and meetings and announcements were restricted to day hours. The ships even did away with the long-standing tradition of morning reveille and evening taps.

“It’s a whole program,” Cordle said. “You have to tweak the entire ship’s routine.”

Kinks must be ironed out, and extra watch standers must be trained to cover additional shifts that turn over more often.

And some vessels simply don’t have enough qualified personnel to allow all watch standers a circadian routine with long blocks of time for rest.

The Navy is working to boost staffing on ships after years of downsizing, which officials acknowledge added to sailors’ fatigue.

As much as supporters want to see circadian schedules spread, few think the practice should be mandated from the top; rather, most say it should stay a choice made ship by ship.

“It’s working well for us,” said the Truxtun’s commanding officer, Cmdr. Andrew Biehn. “But it’s not one-size-fits-all.”

Russia to Strengthen Mediterranean Force with ‘Stealth’ Subs

RIA Novosti. Feb 20

MOSCOW – The combat capability of Russia’s naval task force in the Mediterranean will increase significantly following the first deliveries of Varshavyanka-class submarines to the Black Sea Fleet in 2015, Navy Commander Adm. Viktor Chirkov said Thursday.

Russia formed a permanent naval task force in the Mediterranean last year to defend its interests in the region. The move was widely seen, however, as a response to calls for international intervention in the worsening civil war in Syria, Russia’s longtime ally.

The task force currently consists of 12 warships and auxiliary vessels, including the nuclear-powered missile cruiser Pyotr Veliky and aircraft carrier Admiral Kuznetsov.

According to Chirkov, the Russian warships are taking part in an international operation to remove chemical weapons stockpiles from Syria.

“In general, the tasks assigned to the Mediterranean group are absolutely clear: to thwart any threat to Russia’s borders and security,” the admiral said, adding that it is normal practice for any country to keep naval assets in vital regions around the globe.

Chirkov said that the first Varshavyanka-class diesel-electric submarine, the Novorossiisk, will join the Black Sea Fleet in 2015.

The Defense Ministry has ordered a total of six Varshavyanka-class subs, dubbed “black holes in the ocean” by the US Navy because they are nearly undetectable when submerged.

According to the Admiralty shipyard in St. Petersburg, the second and third subs in the series will be floated out in May and June, respectively, “to be delivered to the customer by yearend.”

Construction of the fourth submarine – the Krasnodar – began at the shipyard Thursday.

The Varshavyanka-class (Project 636) is an improved version of the Kilo-class submarines and features advanced stealth technology, extended combat range and the ability to strike land, surface and underwater targets.

The submarines are mainly intended for anti-shiping and anti-submarine missions in relatively shallow waters.

The vessels, crewed by 52 submariners, have an underwater speed of 20 knots and a cruising range of 400 miles (650 kilometers) with the ability to patrol for 45 days. They are armed with 18 torpedoes and eight surface-to-air missiles.

The Black Sea Fleet has not received new submarines for decades and currently operates only one boat: the Kilo-class Alrosa, which joined the navy in 1990.

India’s Ballistic Missiles Capable of Destroying China’s Cities

WantChinaTimes.com, Feb 21

India’s new Agni-V intercontinental ballistic missile and the INS Arihant nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine are capable of destroying major Chinese cities if war should break out between the two nations, reports the Moscow-based Voice of Russia on Feb. 18.

The state-run Defence Research and Development Organisation of India announced on early February that the Agni-V and the Arihant are expected to be commissioned in 2015.

In terms of China’s capability, the PLA’s DF-15 short-range ballistic missile deployed to the Tibetan border can reach most parts of India, and the entire nation is within the range of the DF-21 medium-range missile and H-6K strategic bomber.

The Agni-V and Arihant are designed to give India first-strike capability against China. With a range of 5,000 kilometers, the Agni-V is designed to be able to strike Beijing and other major cities in northeastern China. To reach major coastal cities in eastern and southern China such as Shanghai and Guangzhou, the shorter-range K-15 Sagarika submarine-launched ballistic missile with a range of 700-750 kilometers and capable of carrying a 1-tonne warhead, can be launched from the Arihant.

In the event of open hostilities, the PLA could deploy its submarines near the Indian naval bases which are potential home ports for the Arihant or its sister ships according to the website of People's Daily.

People's Daily suggested that if necessary the PLA Navy could openly patrol the Indian Ocean with its Type 052 destroyers equipped with cruise missiles. If China is ultimately able to send a carrier battle group to the region, carrier-based fighters can also launch air strikes with precision-guided munitions against strategic targets in southern India along with cruise missiles.

Obama Administration Is Botching Iran Nuke Talks

Zachary Keck, The Diplomat, Feb 20

[Before anyone says even one word about including this particular piece in *The Silent Sentinel*, please note that the article first appeared in the official US Navy Publication, *Undersea Warfare News*, on February 20, 2014—consequently, it is includable in our newsletter.]

By Raising The Issue of Ballistic Missiles, The U.S. Threatens to Undermine The P5+1-Iran Negotiations.

When Iran and the P5+1 concluded an interim agreement on Tehran's nuclear program back in November, Ankit and I warned that the fact that the deal heavily favored the Western parties could impede progress on reaching a comprehensive solution. Specifically, we wrote:

"The harder part of the P5+1-Iran talks was always going to be reaching a lasting comprehensive solution. The lopsided nature of the interim agreement may have further complicated this process.

"Specifically, since Iran has made the bulk of its necessary concessions during the interim agreement, it will have few additional concessions to offer to reach a comprehensive solution. The only obvious concessions it could offer, besides extending all the concessions from the interim deal, would be to dismantle some of its existing centrifuges, close down one of its enrichment facilities, and reduce its stockpile of 5 percent enriched uranium. By contrast, by offering so few concessions in this round of talks, the P5+1 will have to make the bulk of its concessions on sanctions and Iran's right to enrich uranium during the final deal. Opponents of diplomacy in the U.S. and allied capitals will seize upon the ostensibly lopsidedness of the comprehensive deal to try and derail its implementation."

Many of these concerns are being borne out this week as the P5+1 and Iran convene for talks in Vienna aimed at reaching the coveted comprehensive nuclear deal. By all accounts, the negotiations have not gotten off to a good start. This shouldn't come as a surprise as the weeks leading up to the talks saw Iran and the U.S. stake out increasingly opposed (and specific) positions on what a final agreement would have to include (or omit). More troubling, they have increasingly outlined their positions publicly, which cannot help but constrain negotiators' freedom to maneuver later on.

Most reports this week cite disagreements over Iran's ballistic missile program as a large sticking point. U.S. officials – allegedly with some other P5+1 members in agreement – are now insisting that any final nuclear deal must include Iran agreeing to limit its ballistic missile development because of concerns that these would be used to deliver nuclear weapons. As White House spokesman Jay Carney explained: "They have to deal with matters related to their ballistic missile program."

Iranian officials have categorically rejected this demand. Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who has been intimately involved in the negotiations, summed up Iran's position for reporters this week by stating: "We will not allow any other issue aside from the nuclear matter to be introduced in these talks."

It's not clear when the U.S. decided that a nuclear agreement must include limitations on Iran's ballistic missile program. According to Bloomberg Businessweek, Washington is citing UN resolutions which prohibit Iran from developing technology to deliver nuclear weapons. This indeed is the most sensible use of ballistic missiles, given that they tend to be widely inaccurate. However, this is hardly the only way to use ballistic missiles.

In fact, according to a January 2012 Arms Control Association analysis, 31 states are known to have ballistic missiles, while only nine of these have nuclear weapons. Some of these countries – such as Afghanistan and Yemen – could not develop nuclear weapons in any conceivable scenario. Obviously, then, they acquired ballistic missiles for different reasons. Moreover, a myriad number of Iran's neighbors in the Middle East are cited by Arms Control Association as having ballistic missiles. Besides Yemen, this includes Egypt, Israel, Syria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates.

It's also only partially sensible to demand that Iran not have ballistic missiles as part of Western efforts to ensure it doesn't become a nuclear-armed country. Although the ability to place a nuclear warhead on a ballistic missile is an essential part of becoming a nuclear weapon state (assuming a country doesn't have nuclear-capable bombers or submarines), the U.S. and its allies have never acted this way before. In fact, most observers – particularly Iran hawks – have insisted that Iran will, for all intent and purposes, become a nuclear weapon state once it produces weapons grade uranium or plutonium. Most in the West therefore insist that the U.S. must prevent Iran from developing this HEU and weapons grade plutonium. In terms of when the U.S. must decide whether to attack or live with a nuclear-armed Iran, Tehran's ballistic missile capabilities are seemingly a non-factor.

Thus, the fact that the Obama administration is now putting the whole Iranian negotiations at risk over Tehran's ballistic missiles suggests that it has seemingly realized it's going to need significant additional Iranian concessions in order to sell a comprehensive agreement at home. Since Iran made most of the possible nuclear concessions it can make during the interim agreement, Washington needs to find new issues outside of (but preferably related to) Iran's nuclear program from which to gather Iranian concessions. Ballistic missiles are one such issue.

There are significant dangers to this approach however. To begin with, reaching a comprehensive nuclear accord was always going to be challenging enough. Adding new issues to the agenda only makes this task more challenging, which is why third parties who oppose a nuclear agreement with Iran have started demanding that the Obama administration shouldn't agree to a deal until Iran has improved on human rights, ended its support for Western designated terrorist groups, stopped supporting Bashar al-Assad, and accepted the U.S.-led regional order.

The real danger in all this is that many in Iran, including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, genuinely believe that the U.S. in reality opposes the Islamic Republic's very existence. To these Iranian leaders, the U.S. has just used the nuclear issue as a useful mechanism for undermining the Islamic Republic, which is their ultimate goal. They have long warned Iranians that if the nuclear issue is resolved the U.S. will just turn to other issues to isolate Iran.

As Khamenei once again explained in an hour long speech broadcast on national Iranian television on Monday:

"The nuclear issue is an excuse.... Even if one day, against all the odds it is solved based on the Americans' expectations, then Americans will seek another issue to follow it. Just pay attention to the spokespersons of the U.S. government, who have also raised the issue of human rights, missiles and arms."

Navy Leadership Continues to Rally Congress to Fund Sub Programs

Lee Hudson, Inside the Navy, Feb 14

Senior Navy leaders continue to rally Congress on funding the Ohio-class replacement ballistic missile submarine during the same time the service plans to build Virginia-class attack submarines, and the Navy's top officer will drive home this theme when he testifies before Congress on the fiscal year 2015 budget.

Not only will this be a common theme when Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert testifies before Congress, it will also be reflected in the Navy's newest 30-year shipbuilding plan, Rear Adm. David Johnson, program executive officer for submarines, told Inside the Navy Feb. 12 after his presentation at a conference in Arlington, VA.

Johnson said the 30-year shipbuilding plan is now being reviewed within the Navy before its release this spring. The service will build Ohio-class replacement subs and Virginia-class subs at the same time beginning in fiscal year 2021. "It is as simple as augmenting the SCN [shipbuilding and conversion, Navy] budget to pay for the cost of it," Johnson said. "It won't cover the total cost but a significant part of the cost of the Ohio replacement within the years that the ship is being authorized, FY-21 to FY-35."

The Navy must have a multiyear contracting arrangement involving both the Virginia-class submarine and Ohio-class replacement submarine programs in order to achieve cost savings across both ship classes, particularly if the service expects to hit a \$4.9-billion per boat target for the Ohio replacement effort. The programs expect to leverage cost savings by buying common components. Examples include common hydraulic valves, air valves and pumps, Johnson said in a May 2013 interview.

In order for the Navy to achieve its \$4.9-billion cost target (calculated in FY-10 dollars) for the Ohio-class replacement submarine program, the joint multiyear deal for both ship classes must take place, Johnson stated. "That will take some work with Congress," Johnson said during the 2013 interview. "We have briefed this concept before [congressional] staffers for about three years now."

Buying subs smartly in a multiyear contract is the same approach the Navy took for the Virginia-class sub program with its "two for four in '12" slogan, which was an effort the service sought to shave \$400 million off the price tag in order to buy two subs for \$4 billion in FY-05 dollars by 2012. The service will not have the procurement volume nor gain the benefit of economic order quantity material if both submarine classes do not have multiyear contracts, Johnson stated.

"It seems good value for the government to come into a multiyear to go forward and reduce the costs not just for Ohio replacements but for Virginias at the same time," he said. A multiyear contract can save the Navy anywhere from about 8 to 15 percent collectively across the two ship classes, Johnson said. "Sometime in 2018, we need to have thought through this and add to the Virginia-class contract that will allow you to gain some of the economic benefits from the Ohio that will happen in FY-21," he stated. "Those details still need to be worked out."

Both the Ohio-class replacement and Virginia-class programs are working to lower program costs. The next-generation ballistic missile submarine program is incorporating guidelines from Pentagon acquisition chief Frank Kendall's Better Buying Power approach to defense acquisition. These guidelines cover affordability targets and implementing contract incentives, Naval Sea Systems Command spokeswoman Brie Lang wrote in a Jan. 16 email.

For example, a research and development (R&D) contract signed in December 2012 contains incentives for reaching specific engineering, construction and operation and support costs. This is the first time a shipbuilding R&D contract has tied incentive fees to cost reduction across a submarine's lifecycle, Lang noted. Navy leadership meets frequently to discuss how to drive down the cost of the Ohio-class replacement sub program, Vice Adm. Terry Benedict, strategic systems program director, said Feb. 12 during the conference in Arlington, VA.

This is an issue that consumes much of the leadership's "bandwidth," he said. In the past, Navy officials proposed to the Office of the Secretary of Defense that the Ohio-class replacement program have supplemental funding outside the shipbuilding budget because the program is part of the nuclear triad. However, Navy acquisition chief Sean Stackley told the Senate Armed Services Committee last May that talks about using supplemental funding for the program "have not progressed."

Tensions Set To Rise In The South China Sea *Carl Thayer, The Diplomat, Feb 19*

A Series Of Recent Events Points To A Declining State Of Stability And Security In The South China Sea.

Over the last month and a half, seven significant developments indicate that tensions in the South China Sea are set to rise in both the short and long term. The five short-term trends include: Philippine defiance of China's fishing ban; continued inaction by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); the Chinese navy's repeated assertions of sovereignty over James Shoal; the possibility of an Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) over the South China Sea; and stronger United States opposition to China's ADIZ and maritime territorial claims.

First, in January, the Philippines stepped up its public defiance of China and its territorial claims in the South China Sea. On January 15, Emmanuel Bautista, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, stated in a television interview with respect to new fishing regulations issued by Hainan province that Filipino fishermen should not give in to threats or intimidation. A day later, Secretary of Defense Voltaire Gazmin stated that the Philippines would disregard Hainan province's new fishing regulations and would provide escorts to Filipino fishermen in the West Philippines Sea "if necessary."

On January 17, the local media published aerial reconnaissance photographs taken at Ayungin Shoal (Second Thomas Reef) on August 28, 2013. The photographs showed the presence of two People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) warships, including a frigate, and a Coast Guard vessel. The press quoted from a confidential government report that stated the Chinese naval presence "could be part [of] a renewed and possibly more determined effort to remove Philippine military presence on Ayungin Shoal and from the whole Spratly island group."

On February 4, President Benigno Aquino in an interview with The New York Times called on the international community to lend its support to resist China's claims in the South China Sea.

Second, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers held a Retreat in Bagan, Myanmar from January 16-17. Philippines Secretary of Foreign Affairs Albert del Rosario called on ASEAN to "maintain regional solidarity" in response to China's imposition of an ADIZ and new fishing regulations in the South China Sea.

"Clearly, in addition to unilateral measures to change the status quo and threats to the stability of the region," del Rosario stated, "these latest developments violate the legitimate rights of coastal and other states under international law, including UNCLOS, and more specifically the principles of freedom of navigation and overflight, and is contrary to the ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea."

The ASEAN Ministers "expressed their concerns on the recent developments in the South China Sea. They further reaffirmed ASEAN's Six-Point Principles on the South China Sea and the importance of maintaining peace and stability, maritime security, freedom of navigation in and overflight above the South China Sea."

The ministers repeated ASEAN's standard line that all disputes should be resolved by peaceful means in accordance with international law and that all parties should show "self-restraint in the conduct of activities." The ministers declined to be specific and took no further action.

Third, on January 20 a PLAN flotilla comprising three ships, the Amphibious Landing Craft Changbaishan, and two destroyers, Wuhan and Haikou, left the naval base on Hainan to commence annual naval exercises in the South China Sea. The flotilla first conducted drills off the Parcel islands including amphibious landings "on every reef guarded by China's navy," according to the commander of the flotilla.

The flotilla then sailed south to the Spratly islands. On January 26 the Chinese media reported that when the ships reached James Shoal eighty kilometers off Sarawak, PLAN sailors conducted an oath taking ceremony vowing to safeguard China's sovereignty and maritime interests.

The following day Qin Gang, a spokesperson for China's Foreign Ministry, reiterated China's "indisputable sovereignty" over James Shoal.

However, when Admiral Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Jaafar, the Chief of the Malaysian Navy, was interviewed by the New Straits Times on January 29 about the PLAN activities at James Shoal, he denied they took place.

According to Admiral Aziz, "There has been no act of provocation on the part of the Chinese or threat to our sovereignty as they are conducting their exercises in international waters" one-thousand kilometers away. Admiral Aziz was apparently referring to naval exercises conducted previously by the aircraft carrier Liaoning and its escorts.

This is the second time in two years that PLAN warships have visited James Shoal to assert Chinese sovereignty claims. On both occasions Malaysian authorities have denied any knowledge of Chinese activities. This raises questions about the veracity of Malaysian accounts, deficiencies in Malaysia's maritime domain awareness capacity, or whether Malaysia ordered its navy out of the area to avoid any incident.

Fourth, the Asahi Shimbun reported on January 31 that a draft ADIZ for the South China Sea had been drawn up by air force officers at the working level at the Air Force Command College and submitted to the government in May 2013. The draft ADIZ reportedly covers the Parcel islands and some of

the South China Sea. The Japanese report stated that Chinese officials were still deliberating on the extent of the ADIZ and the timing of the announcement.

Immediately after the Asahi Shimbun report was published it was dismissed by China's Foreign Ministry. A spokesperson declared "generally speaking, China does not feel there is an air security threat from ASEAN countries" and therefore does not feel a need for an ADIZ.

It should be recalled, however, that in November last year when China announced its ADIZ in the East China Sea, a Ministry of National Defense spokesperson affirmed that "China will establish other Air Defense Identification Zones at the right moment after necessary preparations are completed."

Fifth, in February, high-level United States officials became more assertive in opposing China's ADIZ and territorial claims in the South China Sea. For example, on February 1, Evan Medeiros, Director for Asia at the National Security Council, stated in an interview, "We oppose China's establishment of an ADIZ in other areas, including the South China Sea. We have been very clear with the Chinese that we would see that as a provocative and destabilizing development that would result in changes in our presence and military posture in the region."

On February 5, Daniel Russel, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, stated in testimony to the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific that China should refrain from establishing other ADIZs in the region.

Russel also said, "any use of the 'nine-dash line' by China to claim maritime rights not based on claimed land features would be inconsistent with international law" and that China's "pattern of behavior in the South China Sea reflects an incremental effort by China to assert control over the area contained in the so-called 'nine-dash line'."

Finally, Russel provided the strongest U.S. endorsement of the Philippines' action in taking its territorial dispute with China to arbitration. Assistant Secretary Russel, "We fully support the right of claimants to exercise rights they may have to avail themselves of peaceful dispute settlement mechanisms. The Philippines chose to exercise such a right last year with the filing of an arbitration case under the Law of the Sea Convention."

The two long-term trends include new U.S. assessments of the future balance of power in the Asia-Pacific and continued Chinese maritime modernization.

During January and February, three high-level U.S. officials proffered sober assessments of the changing balance of power in the Western Pacific.

On January 15, Admiral Samuel Locklear, Commander U.S. Pacific Command, was quoted by Defense News as stating, "our historic dominance that most of us have enjoyed is diminishing, no question." Admiral Locklear was referring to the rise of China's naval power that would take time to eventuate. He concluded, "That's not something to be afraid of, it's just to be pragmatic about."

In late January, Frank Kendall, Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, stated that U.S. military technological superiority is being "challenged in ways that I have not seen for decades, particularly in the Asia-Pacific Region." He cited China's military modernization and shrinking U.S. defense budgets as the main causes.

On February 4, James Clapper, Director of National Intelligence told a hearing of the House Intelligence Committee with respect to China, "They've been quite aggressive about asserting what they believe is their manifest destiny, if you will, in that part of the world." Clapper noted that China's "very impressive military modernization" was designed to address what China views as U.S. military strengths.

According to testimony by the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) to the U.S. China Economic and Security Review on January 30, "The Chinese navy has ambitious plans over the next 15 years to rapidly advance its fleet of surface ships and submarines as well as maritime weapons and sensors." The ONI reported that China laid down, launched or commissioned more than 50 naval ships in 2013 with a similar number planned for this year.

At the same time, it was reported that China has begun construction a second aircraft carrier which it hopes to launch in 2018. Security analysts believe that China plans to operate a carrier battle group in the "far seas" by 2020. There were also reports that China was building a hypersonic missile capable of penetrating the U.S. missile defense system.

In an analysis released in early February, IHS Jane's estimated that China's defense spending would reach nearly \$160 billion in 2015, up from \$139 billion spent in 2013. According to Deputy Undersecretary Kendall, "Overall, China's military investments are increasing in double-digit numbers each year, about 10 percent."

China continued to make similar advances on the paramilitary front. On January 10, a new 5,000 tonne ship was commissioned into China Coast Guard South Sea Fleet and stationed at Sansha City on Woody island in the Paracels. The China Ocean News reported on January 21 that the new vessel would commence regular patrols in the South China Sea to protect China's maritime interests and provide a "speedy, orderly and effective emergency response to sudden incidents at sea." Also on the same day, the Global Times and Beijing Times reported that China was building a 10,000-ton marine surveillance ship, the largest of its kind in the world.

Current short-term and long-term security trends appear likely to exacerbate tensions over territorial disputes in the South China Sea. The Philippines continues to engage in a war of words with China, while China continues to invest in Second Thomas Reef by stationing warships in the area. Differences in approach between the Philippines and Malaysia make it unlikely the four claimant states can reach a common position for ASEAN to endorse. ASEAN itself appears unable to reach a consensus that Chinese fishing bans in the South China Sea, coupled with the possible imposition of a Chinese ADIZ, are security issues affecting the whole of Southeast Asia.

China is continuing its build-up and modernization of both PLAN warships and paramilitary Coast Guard vessels. The former continue to conduct military exercises in areas where China's nine-dash line overlaps with the Exclusive Economic Zones of claimant states. The latter are increasing in size thus enabling them to patrol and remain on station in the South China Sea for longer periods.

The current proactive U.S. challenge to China's nine-dash line claim and opposition to any ADIZ in the South China Sea is likely to meet Chinese political, diplomatic and possibly military resistance in the form of challenges in contested waters. In the long-term, China's naval modernization and expansion will result in the relative decline of U.S. naval primacy in the Western Pacific.

