

# POLAR SECURITY CUTTER



Acquisition  
Directorate

*“The mission has evolved so that you need to break ice to get to the mission, and just being there and accessing the Arctic is a projection of national sovereignty. It’s a national security mission.”*

– Adm. Karl Schultz,  
commandant of the Coast Guard



Artistic rendering  
courtesy of VT Halter  
Marine

## Polar Security Cutter

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION



The Coast Guard requires six new polar icebreakers, at least three of which will be polar security cutters (PSCs), to support the country’s economic, commercial, maritime and national security needs. The new PSCs will be national assets that will ensure access to both polar regions and be capable of executing key Coast Guard missions, including defense readiness; marine environmental protection; ports, waterways and coastal security; and search and rescue. The ships will operate worldwide and face the range of extreme environmental conditions found in the polar, tropical and temperate regions.

In March 2018, the integrated program office comprised of Coast Guard and Navy personnel released a request for proposal for the detail design of the PSC class and construction of up to three ships.

On April 23, 2019, the integrated program office awarded a fixed price incentive (firm) contract to VT Halter Marine Inc., of Pascagoula, Mississippi, for the detail design and construction of the lead PSC.

Construction on the first ship is planned to begin in 2021 with delivery planned for 2024; however, the contract includes financial incentives for earlier delivery.

The Coast Guard established the project resident office (PRO) for PSC acquisition at its headquarters in Washington, D.C., in April 2019 to lay the groundwork for the new unit and ensure efficient transition of acquisition personnel to the shipyard facilities. The PRO is staffed with Coast Guard personnel who oversee work and provide management of contract execution for the PSC acquisition.

The operational polar fleet currently includes one 399-foot heavy icebreaker (Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star, commissioned in 1976) and one 420-foot medium icebreaker (Coast Guard Cutter Healy, commissioned in 2000). Polar Star underwent a three-year reactivation and returned to operations in late 2013. Since then, the ship has completed six Operation Deep Freeze deployments to resupply McMurdo Station in Antarctica.

For updates on the polar security cutters, visit the program’s website at <http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Acquisitions-CG-9/Programs/Surface-Programs/Polar-Icebreaker/>

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[www.dcms.uscg.mil/acquisition](http://www.dcms.uscg.mil/acquisition)

Mission execution begins *here*.