



SEATTLE—Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star (WAGB 10), a 399-foot heavy-duty polar icebreaker, returns to its homeport at Base Seattle after successful sea trials in mid-January, 2013. With industrial work for reactivation now complete, the Coast Guard plans to deploy the Polar Star on Operation Deep Freeze this November. U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Jordan Akiyama.

Heavy Polar Icebreaker Project Makes Progress

April 25, 2013

As part of the fiscal year 2013 appropriations act signed into law last month, Congress provided approximately \$7.6 million to the Coast Guard's Heavy Polar Icebreaker project, which the service intends to use for further research and development, finalizing requirements and acquisition planning.

Meanwhile, the Coast Guard's Research and Development Center (RDC) at New London, Conn., recently issued a service-wide solicitation for ideas on where the RDC should direct resources. Of the 160 submissions received, all five of the icebreaker project's recommendations were chosen for further action. Those submissions included fuel economy versus icebreaking capability, affordability in construction, and technology to address environmental regulations. The icebreaker project team is working closely with the RDC, as well as with the U.S. Navy's Naval Sea Systems Command and the Finnish Naval Research Institute through existing cooperative research agreements.

Additionally, the United States has been closely following the Canadian Coast Guard's Polar Icebreaker project, which began in 2008. The Canadians saw positive results in recent ice tank tests on a redesigned stern and centerline pod arrangement, and plan to continue ice tank and open water testing at a Canadian National Research Council facility in St. John's, Newfoundland, in the next few months. This effort will culminate in a final design review.

On Feb. 7, members of both the U.S. and Canadian Coast Guards' polar icebreaking programs signed an annex to a 2009 U.S.–Canadian shipbuilding memorandum of understanding, codifying ongoing cooperation between the two nations' efforts to obtain a polar icebreaker.

Accessibility and Leadership Boost Small Business Contracting Program

The Coast Guard's small business program has been successful because it has 16 dedicated small business contracting professionals and strong support from senior leadership.

“The responsiveness, flexibility, ingenuity, and the quality products and services that the small businesses provide are essential for the Coast Guard in meeting its mission needs,” said Small Business Contracting Program Manager Nauman Ansari in his speech at the Navy League Sea Air Space Exposition outside Washington, D.C., April 10, 2013.

In all but one year since fiscal year (FY) 2008, the Coast Guard has obligated more than 40 percent of its annual prime contract dollars to small businesses. In FY 2011, the service obligated approximately 31 percent of prime contract dollars to small businesses, which was still above the congressionally mandated goal of 23 percent. Since FY 2010, the Coast Guard also has exceeded its goal of obligating three percent of contract dollars to service disabled veteran-owned small businesses. So far in FY 2013, the service has obligated nearly seven percent of its prime contracting dollars to service disabled veteran-owned small businesses.