

## Future USS Minnesota successfully completes sea trials

Written by Lt. Cmdr. Jennifer Cragg, Commander, Submarine Group 2 Public Affairs  
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NEWPORT NEWS, Va (NNS) -- Pre-Commissioning Unit (PCU) Minnesota (SSN 783), the nation's newest and most advanced nuclear-powered attack submarine, moored May 16 at Huntington Ingalls Industry's Newport News Shipbuilding following its successful completion of Alpha and Bravo sea trials.

Testing evolutions completed during Alpha sea trials included diving to test depth, conducting an emergency surfacing, and testing the submarine's propulsion plant to evaluate the ship's seaworthiness and operational performance. Bravo trials consisted of testing Minnesota's acoustic performance and combat systems.

The tenth ship of the Virginia-class, Minnesota is scheduled to be delivered approximately one year earlier than its contract delivery date. Starting in August of 2008 with USS New Hampshire (SSN 778), the last five boats have been delivered early, and all Virginia-class submarines currently under construction are scheduled to be delivered prior to their contract delivery dates.

Minnesota is commanded by Cmdr. John Fancher, a native of Hammond, Ind., who reflected on the transformation he has seen with his crew from initial construction of the attack submarine to the recent completion of sea trials.

"I could not be more proud of the crew. The events required during sea trials are some of the most demanding tasks a submarine can be asked to do," said Fancher. "All our preparation and training really paid off. I also cannot say enough about the support from the entire Sea Trials Team. Their insight and experience was vital to Minnesota's success."

Capt. David Goggins, Virginia Class Program Manager reflected on the completion of the Alpha and Bravo Sea Trials.

"PCU Minnesota's successful run through Alpha and Bravo Trials is indicative of the quality and dedication of the crew and our Navy/shipbuilding team," said Goggins. "Minnesota continues the Virginia Class' trend of delivering these outstanding assets to the fleet early to contract, within budget, and ready for operational tasking."

Rear Adm. Ken Perry, Commander, Submarine Group Two participated in Minnesota's Alpha

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trials as Officer in Tactical Command and praised Fancher and his crew for their performance.

"I want to commend Cmdr. John Fancher and his officers and crew for completing this major milestone very successfully," said Perry, who also recognized the integral partnership between the shipbuilders Newport News and General Dynamic Electric Boat and support from Naval Sea Systems Command, Naval Reactors, PEO Submarines and stakeholders throughout the Navy and industry who have designed, built and delivered this most modern attack submarine for the nation.

Virginia-class submarines are built under a unique teaming arrangement between General Dynamics Electric Boat and Newport News Shipbuilding. Perry further reflected on the success of the Virginia-class program and its ability to deliver these state-of-the-art warships ahead of schedule and under budget.

"Minnesota's sea trials are a testament to the success of the Virginia-class program's ability to deliver high-quality and extremely capable boats early and on cost," said Perry.

Minnesota is the third ship to be named after the state, with the last one being more than a century ago. The attack submarine is the last of the block II Virginia-class submarines and is in the final stages of construction and testing at Newport News Shipbuilding.

Construction began in February 2008, and the keel was authenticated in May 2011. The boat was christened Oct. 27, 2012.

Virginia-class submarines are built to dominate the world's littoral and deep waters while conducting Anti-submarine; anti-surface ship; strike; special operation forces; intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance; irregular warfare; and mine warfare missions. Their inherent stealth, endurance, firepower, and sensor suite directly enable them to support five of the six Maritime Strategy Core Capabilities - sea control, power projection, forward presence, maritime security, and deterrence.

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