



Chief of Naval Operations' Monthly Update

"The right technologies must be harnessed to give us the mix of capabilities our warfighters need. Investments that further ballistic missile defense, integrated air defense, area anti-submarine warfare, mine warfare, irregular warfare, and cyber operations are what we should be focused on. Likewise, technologies that reduce overall expenses are worth the up-front investment – things like open architecture, modularity, and minimal manning technologies. Total ownership costs and life cycle costs must figure into our decisions because we cannot afford excess at any stage."

– Adm. Gary Roughead, Chief of Naval Operations

In January CNO travelled to Norfolk, Va., for the commissioning ceremony of USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77). He also spoke at the 21st Annual Surface Navy Association Symposium about the status of today's Navy and what we are doing to build the Navy of tomorrow. President Barack Obama took office on January 20th and CNO attended several events in support of our new Commander in Chief.

Current Readiness – Fleet Response Plan

The Fleet Response Plan has provided unprecedented readiness value to our nation. Aircraft carriers and carrier air wings allow for flexible, mission-tailored forces while ensuring the nation is prepared for the inevitable crises that require the supremacy of an aircraft carrier. But individual ships in the Fleet have the flexibility to deploy and carry out missions across the spectrum of capabilities as well. Our surface combatants are general purpose - they can go from delivering Tomahawks to delivering humanitarian aid in the midst of conflict and disaster, and their flexibility and utility stretch out over decades. We must retain that flexibility and responsiveness by adequately resourcing readiness and adequately developing the skills and the competence of our Sailors. The commissioning of CVN 77 is an example of the flexibility that our Navy will offer not just today's commander in chief, but for the presidents of the future.

"Under the Fleet Response Plan, Sailors have taken our Navy from a force that on September 10th, 2001, could only deliver two carrier strike groups, to the force that today can deploy three carrier strike groups, surge three in 30 days, and have one more CSG on its way in 90 days. The incredible flexibility this gives to the combatant commanders and the agility it gives to the commander in chief are national assets that must be resourced as such."

Future Readiness – 313 is the Navy's Shipbuilding Floor

At the Surface Navy Association Symposium, CNO stressed that the minimum number of ships the Navy needs to continue to be a strong maritime force today and in the future is 313. The scope and magnitude of the nation's interests and the dispersion of threats across the globe make it imperative for the Navy to look at its force structure - the number and mix of ships needed to protect and advance American interests and security.

"313 is still the floor when it comes to the size of the fleet we need to carry out our maritime strategy. The capacity of our Fleet – the number of ships we have - matters greatly today and I believe will matter even more in the future."

People – Sailors are the Foundation of our Fleet

Nothing is more important to today's Fleet or the Fleet of the future than the Sailors and Navy civilians whose hard work and determination make it come to life. Everyone should be working to set the standards of excellence every day, whether they are supporting the Navy ashore, at sea or boots on the ground.

"To see these young men and women move so competently and confidently between the many missions that they must perform is to really understand the power and flexibility of our Navy. This year [2008] those Sailors shot down an errant satellite, they provided air cover to their shipmates, Soldiers, Airmen and Marines on the ground, they delivered aid in the midst of conflict in Georgia, they fought on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan, and they sailed the world in defense of freedom and prosperity. They are unrivalled in their abilities and it is because of them that we are all here today, planning to build the fleet they will use to keep our nation safe for years to come."