

USS Missouri Completes PSA and Extended Modernization Ahead of Schedule

GROTON, Conn. (NNS) -- The crew of USS Missouri (SSN 780) and General Dynamics Electric Boat accomplished two major milestones, a first for the Virginia-class submarine program, by completing the submarine's post-shakedown availability (PSA) sea trials and extended modernization Jan. 6, a month ahead of schedule.

"I'm proud of the crew for their hard work to accomplish these milestones," said Cmdr. Tim Rexrode, Missouri's commanding officer. "Because of this teamwork and camaraderie, USS Missouri will be delivered from post-shakedown availability and extended modernization about a one month ahead of schedule."

Capt. Michael Bernacchi, commodore, Commander, Submarine Squadron 4 said that the boat and her crew's completion ahead of schedule is in direct line with the Design for Undersea Warfare, which was published in 2011.

"This is a notable example of how the design is being implemented on the waterfront," said Bernacchi, who added that the entire Missouri, Electric Boat, and Squadron 4 teams worked together to apply the design to complete the modernization ahead of schedule.

He said the design was the catalyst which drove him and the commanding officer to challenge all aspects of the modernization and warfighting readiness to see how they could think outside the box.

"Missouri is not just coming out; she is coming out ready to fight. We have already scheduled her for operations when she would have previously still been in the PSA. Because of this effort she is taking over operations for a sister ship, which will allow the Submarine Force to give almost 10 additional months of Surge ready and Ready for Tasking time back to the fleet. This is a huge achievement for everyone," said Bernacchi.

Bernacchi's scheduled change of command is Jan. 13; his next assignment will be chief of staff, Commander, Submarine Group 2.

In addition to the completion of the PSA and modernization ahead of schedule, Dec. 19, USS Missouri and her crew returned to General Dynamics Electric Boat after successfully completing their sea trials also a month ahead of schedule.

Rexrode reflected on the significance of USS Missouri being the first Virginia-class submarine commissioned to complete their sea trails, PSA and modernization this far ahead of schedule.

"We worked hard to challenge previous assumptions and deliver effective first time results that should carry forward to future projects. As a result of these efforts the fleet has one more submarine for tasking earlier than planned," said Rexrode.

Missouri is the seventh submarine of the Virginia class. General Dynamics Electric Boat delivered the submarine to the U.S. Navy in July 2010. The submarine's crew consists of about 134 officers and enlisted personnel. Missouri is the fifth Navy ship to be named in honor of the people of the "Show Me State."

- By Lt. Cmdr. Jennifer Cragg, Submarine Group 2 Public Affairs (1/6/2012)