

CNO PODCAST TRANSCRIPT
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Welcome to the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Gary Roughead's podcast. I'm Petty Officer Rebekah Blowers. We sat down with Admiral Roughead to talk about his three priorities of building a future force, maintaining current readiness and developing and supporting Sailors, Navy civilians and their families. Thank you sir for joining us today. You've spent a lot of time visiting shipyards throughout the country. Have you accomplished what you intended when you began those visits?

My shipyard tours have been really helpful to me and they fully accomplished what I intended. I wanted to get out, visit the shipyards where our ships are being built. Everything from aircraft carriers to submarines, amphibious ships - and to really meet the people that are building our ships. The craftsmen that are putting a tremendous amount of effort into our ships and the future Navy are doing a great job. And it was important for me to be able to see what they were doing, see what kind of innovation is being put into the production of our ships, look at the quality of the ships that are being built. So it really has been a worthwhile and very valuable experience for me.

You say that "313 is the floor" when you talk about how many ships the Navy will need in the future. What does this mean for the future fleet?

Well 313 ships in my opinion is the minimal number that we should have as we go into the future. We are a global navy. We have been and we will continue to be a global navy. And in order to cover the vast oceans of the world numbers matter. And I believe 313 is the minimum that we can afford to have. But it is also important that we look at the balance of that fleet. It's great to say that this particular ship is very capable and does great things and that's true but what really is important is how does our Navy balance capability from the very high end of warfare, whether its an aircraft carrier or submarine to some of the smaller ships that we're now building the littoral combat ship for example, or the joint high speed vessel. And it's the balance that gives us the global reach that's important to our Navy and to our country. So that we have options, so that we can involve ourselves in areas of the world that are important to the safety and the security and the prosperity of our country.

How does today's Maritime Strategy influence the decisions you're making about the Navy we'll have in the future?

Our maritime strategy defines our Navy of the future. In our maritime strategy we call for six capabilities. Four of those capabilities have been part of our Navy since we began. The first is to be a global navy. The second is to be a navy that is able to deter others. The third capability is to be able to project power. Project power ashore from our aircraft carriers, missiles from ships and submarines, and also to be able to project power from our amphibious ships with our partners the Marine

Corps. And also to be able to control the seas. Larger areas of the ocean, small areas of the sea but being able at our time and our choosing to be able to control the seas. Those are the four enduring capabilities that our navy must support.

But in our maritime strategy we added two other capabilities. One is maritime security. So much of what moves on the world today in trade and commerce and the resources that flow moves on the oceans. About 90 percent of everything that moves, moves on the oceans. So how we protect the sea lanes, how confident we are that goods can move from one point to the other and not be interfered with is extremely important. The other capability that we have called for is humanitarian assistance and disaster response. We have been responding to natural disasters as a navy since we began. But in our strategy we call out to be more proactive. And that was recently demonstrated with the deployments of the hospital ships mercy and comfort, PELELIU. We have Africa Partnership Stations that's doing great work in West Africa as we speak today. So those are the capabilities and that is what defines the fleet. And when I work with the Navy and when we look to the future and what we're going to buy we must be able to tie what we are buying to those capabilities. If one ship or airplane can cover more than one, that's terrific. But everything we buy must tie into that maritime strategy. The other aspect of the strategy that's important is that we acknowledge that entering into cooperative arrangements with other agencies within our government, with other services as we have joined with the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard, that that cooperative effort is important. But equally important is our ability to cooperate with other navies and other maritime forces around the world. And all that ties together. And that too influences the Navy that we're going to be in the future. So the key to where we're going is our maritime strategy. And as I've said on several occasions we are what we buy and the ships and the airplanes and the equipment that we buy must support that maritime strategy.

With all the technology you mentioned, how do people fit in?

Well the Navy is nothing without Sailors. That is our Navy. And the programs that we put in place to attract and recruit and retain and fulfill personally and professionally the young men and women that come to our Navy is so very important. We can buy very expensive ships and very expensive airplanes, but they have no value until our sailors get in them and make them do things. And quite frankly, I don't even think the engineers had on their plate when we started. So people are key and no one must ever forget that.

Thank you for listening. For more news from the chief of naval operations, visit Navy.mil.