

DHS Science and Technology Directorate

Fast Response Cutter Test and Evaluation Oversight

Background

The Sentinel-class Fast Response Cutter is a new U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) patrol boat that is capable of deploying independently to conduct missions that include port, waterways and coastal security; fishery patrols; search and rescue; and national defense. Named after USCG enlisted heroes, the Fast Response Cutters are replacing the aging Island-class 110-foot patrol boats.

Test and Evaluation Results

In 2013, the Fast Response Cutter successfully completed Test and Evaluation, under the oversight of Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology (S&T), Office of Operational Test and Evaluation (OTE) and was granted full rate production authority by the Under Secretary for Management. This was the culmination of a four- year Test and Evaluation effort that revealed major structural problems and main engine reliability issues early in the program development. Working in concert with the USCG and the U.S. Navy Test and Evaluation Command, DHS S&T OTE developed an innovative test strategy that used robust modeling and simulation and at sea testing to facilitate corrections to the ship design that enhanced the service life of the vessel and reduced long term life cycle costs. The Fast Response Cutter acquisition was a model Test & Evaluation effort for the department. The information gained from Test and Evaluation aids DHS Acquisition Authorities in making informed acquisition decisions.

Features

- Enhanced response time with a minimum top speed of 28 knots
- Ability to conduct missions on moderate seas up to transit speed for eight hours in all directions

- Ability to survive on very rough seas up to loiter
- Speed for eight hours in all directions
- Armed with a stabilized 25 mm machine gun mount and four crew-served .50-caliber machine guns
- Fully interoperable command and control systems with Coast Guard existing and future assets and with DHS and the Department of Defense

Recent Events

The eighth Fast Response Cutter, Charles Sexton, was commissioned on March 8, 2014. On March 28, 2014, the USCG accepted delivery of the ninth Fast Response Cutter, Kathleen Moor. Kathleen Moore is the third of six Fast Response Cutters to be homeported in Key West, FL, and was commissioned into service May 10, 2014.

