From: Secretary of the Navy

Subj: CLASSIFICATION OF NAVAL SHIPS AND CRAFT

Ref: (a) Defense Intelligence Agency DST-1200Z-545-90, Subj: Glossary of Naval Ships Types (GNST) (NOTAL)

Encl: (1) Combatant Ship Category
(2) Auxiliary Ship Category
(3) Combatant Craft Category
(4) Support Craft Category
(5) Official Battle Force Ship Count Method

1. Purpose. To issue a listing of ship categories and classifications of naval ships and craft, contained in enclosures (1) through (4). To issue guidance for determining fleet size as contained in enclosure (5).

2. Special Instructions

a. The objectives of the grouping of categories and subcategories are to provide a means for valid comparisons and accounting of naval forces.

b. Letter prefixes shall be used in conjunction with classification symbols, as follows:

(1) T - to indicate that a government-owned or bareboat-chartered ship is assigned to Commander, Military Sealift Command (MSC) as a type commander.

(2) F - to indicate that a ship is being constructed for a foreign government.

(3) W - to indicate a Coast Guard Ship.

c. The letter “N”, when used as the last letter of a ship classification symbol, denotes nuclear propulsion. When used as the last letter of a service craft classification, it indicates a non self-propelled version of a similar self-propelled service craft.
d. Parentheses shall not be used to separate any letters in classification symbols.

e. Reference (a) will be used for additional standardized ship classifications.

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Secretary of the Navy

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1. **Warship Classification**

   a. **Aircraft Carrier Type.** All ships designed primarily for the purpose of conducting combat operations by aircraft which engage in attacks against airborne, surface, sub-surface and shore targets.

      (1) Conventional Take Off and Landing Aircraft Carriers (CTOL)

         Multi-purpose Aircraft Carrier CV
         Multi-purpose Aircraft Carrier (Nuclear-Powered) CVN

   b. **Surface Combatant Type.** Surface ships that are designed primarily to engage in attacks against airborne, surface, sub-surface and shore targets.

      (1) **Cruisers**

         Guided Missile Cruiser CG

      (2) **Destroyers**

         Destroyer DD
         Guided Missile Destroyer DDG

      (3) **Frigates**

         Guided Missile Frigate FFG

      (4) **Littoral Combat Ship**

         Littoral Combat Ship LCS

   c. **Submarine Type.** All self-propelled submersible types regardless of whether employed as combatant, auxiliary, or research and development vehicles, which have at least a residual combat capability.

      (1) **Attack Submarines**

         Submarine (Nuclear-Powered) SSN

Enclosure (1)
(2) **Ballistic Missile Submarines**

Ballistic Missile Submarine  
(Nuclear-Powered)  SSBN

(3) **Guided Missile Submarines**

Guided Missile Submarine  
(Nuclear-Powered)  SSGN

d. **Amphibious Warfare Type Ships.** All ships having organic capability for amphibious assault and which have characteristics enabling long duration operations on the high seas.

(1) **Amphibious Helicopter/Landing Craft Carriers**

Amphibious Assault Ship  
(General Purpose)  LHA  
Amphibious Assault Ship  
(Multi-Purpose)  LHD  
Amphibious Transport Dock  
Dock Landing Ship  LPD  LSD

(2) **Miscellaneous**

Amphibious Command Ship  LCC  
Joint Command and Control Ship  JCC

2. **Other Combatant Classifications.** Ships, which have the capability to provide support to fleet units.

   a. **Combat Logistics Type Ships**

   (1) **Underway Replenishment**

   Ammunition Ship  AE  
   Combat Store Ship  AFS  
   Oiler  AO  
   Fast Combat Support Ship  AOE  
   Ammunition Cargo Ship  AKE

   (2) **Material Support**

   Submarine Tender  AS  
   Destroyer Tender  AD

Enclosure (1)
b. **Mine Warfare Type Ships.** All ships whose primary function is mine warfare on the high seas.

(1) **Mine Sweeper Ships**

Mine Countermeasures Ship  MCM

(2) **Mine Hunter Ships**

Mine Hunter, Coastal  MHC

c. **Sea Basing**

(1) **Sea Base Connector**

High Speed Vessel  HSV

(2) **Maritime Prepositioning Force**

Maritime Prepositioning Ship, Aviation  MPFA
Maritime Prepositioning Ship, Cargo (LMSR)  MPFC
Maritime Prepositioning Ship, Dock (MLP)  MPFD

(3) **High Speed Sealift**

High Speed Sealift  HSS

d. **Fleet Support Ships.** A group of ships designed to operate in the open ocean to provide general support to Combatant Forces.

(1) **Surveillance**

Surveillance  AGOS

(2) **Salvage Ships**

Salvage Ships  ARS

(3) **Fleet Ocean Tugs**

Fleet Ocean Tugs  ATF
AUXILIARY SHIP CATEGORY

1. Auxiliary Classification - Support Type Ships. A grouping of ships designed to operate in the open ocean in a variety of sea states to provide general support to either combatant forces or shore based establishments. (Includes smaller auxiliaries which by the nature of their duties leave inshore waters).

   a. Other Auxiliaries

   Auxiliary Crane Ship
   Missile Range Instrumentation Ship
   Oceanographic Research Ship
   Surveying Ship
   Auxiliary Research Submarine
   Hospital Ship
   Cargo Ship
   Vehicle Cargo Ship
   Gasoline Tanker
   Transport Oiler
   Cable Repairing Ship
   Aviation Logistic Support Ship

   ACS
   AGM
   AGOR
   AGS
   AGSS
   AH
   AK
   AKR
   AOG
   AOT
   ARC
   AVB
1. Combatant Craft Classification

a. Patrol-Type Craft. Surface patrol craft intended for use relatively near the coast or in sheltered waters or rivers.

   (1) **Coastal Patrol Combatants**
   
   Coastal Patrol Craft PC

   (2) **River/Roadstead Craft**

   River Patrol Craft PBR

b. Amphibious Warfare Type Craft. All amphibious craft that have the organic capacity for amphibious assault and are intended to operate principally in coastal waters or may be carried aboard larger units.

   (1) **Landing Craft**

   Landing Craft, Air Cushion LCAC
   Landing Craft, Mechanized LCM
   Landing Craft, Personnel, Light LCPL
   Landing Craft, Utility LCU
   Amphibious Warping Tug LWT
   Side Loadable Warping Tug SLWT

   (2) **Special Warfare Craft**

   Advanced SEAL Delivery System ASDS
   MK V Special Operations Craft MK V SOC
   NSW Rigid-Hull Inflatable Boat NSW RHIB
   SEAL Delivery Vehicle SDV
   Special Operations Craft - Riverine SOC-R
SUPPORT CRAFT CATEGORY

1. Support Craft Classification

   a. Service Type Craft. A grouping of Navy-subordinated craft (including non-self-propelled) designed to provide general support to either combatant forces or shore-based establishments.

     (1) Dry Docks (Non-self-propelled)

     Small Auxiliary Floating Dry Dock AFDL
     Medium Auxiliary Floating Dry Dock AFDM
     Medium Auxiliary Repair Dry Dock ARDM
     Yard Floating Dry Dock YFD

     (2) Tugs (Self-propelled)

     Large Harbor Tug YTB
     Small Harbor Tug YTL

     (3) Lighters and Barges

     Open Lighter YC
     Car Float YCF
     Aircraft Transportation Lighter YCV
     Covered Lighter YFN
     Lighter (Special purpose) YFNX
     Large Covered Lighter YFNB
     Gasoline Barge YOGN
     Fuel Oil Barge YON
     Oil Storage Barge YOS
     Water Barge YWN

     (4) Other Craft

     (a) Self-propelled

     Deep Submergence Rescue Vehicle DSRV
     Deep Submergence Vehicle DSV
     Submersible Research Vehicle NR
     Ferry Boat or Launch YFB
     Patrol Craft, Training YP
     Seaplane Wrecking Derrick YSD
     Torpedo Trials Craft YTT

Enclosure (4)
(b) Non-self-propelled

Barracks Craft
Floating Crane
Diving Tender
Dry Dock Companion Craft
Floating Power Barge
Salvage Lift Craft, Light
Gate Craft
Floating Workshop
Repair and Berthing Barge
Repair, Berthing and Messing Barge
Floating Dry Dock Workshop (Hull)
Floating Dry Dock Workshop Machine
Radiological Repair Barge

(c) Unclassified Miscellaneous

Unclassified Miscellaneous Unit
1. **Purpose.** To establish the official battle force ship counting methodology.

2. **Special Instructions.** The battle force ship count will only include combat capable ships that contribute to warfighting missions, specified combat support missions, or service support missions. Specifically, the battle force ship count will include:

   a. Those ship types listed in enclosure (1) that are classified in the Naval Vessel Register (NVR) as Active, MSC Naval Fleet Auxiliary Force (NFAF), Naval Reserve Force (NRF) Active, or MSC Special Mission Support. The following exceptions apply:

      (1) For mine hunter ships, only forward deployed and mobilization category “A” ships will be included.

      (2) MSC ships assigned Reduced Operating Status (ROS) of 45 days or less may be counted on a case-by-case basis as recommended by the Chief of Naval Operations with the Secretary of the Navy approval.

   b. All other craft and auxiliaries listed in this instruction are not included in the battle force ship count.