



The Spanish Ministry of Defence and Navantia sign the Order of Execution for two coastal hydrographic vessels for the Spanish Navy

- The ships, which will have a high degree of automation, reduced crews and autonomous means, will be built at San Fernando's shipyard (Cádiz, Spain), where they will support up to 700 jobs

Madrid, 20th December 2023.- The Spanish Ministry of Defence and Navantia have signed the Execution Order for the construction of two coastal hydrographic vessels (BHC) for the Spanish Navy.

Following authorisation by the Council of Ministers last August, the signing took place this Wednesday at the Ministry of Defence, by the Secretary of State for Defence, María Amparo Valcarce, and the president of Navantia, Ricardo Domínguez.

The vessels will replace the hydrographic vessel *Antares*, built in the 1970s and the only one still in service out of the four of the *Castor* class. With the new BHCs, an important step will be taken not only in the renewal of the Hydrographic Fleet, but also in the advance to the green transition, since the new vessels will be able to operate with biofuels and will comply with the latest emissions regulations.

The main mission of the BHCs is the production and maintenance of the official nautical cartography of the Spanish State, in the waters and coasts of Spain, as part of the Marine Hydrographic Institute (*Instituto Hidrográfico de la Marina (IHM)*), which is responsible for operating these vessels and for the publication and dissemination of the nautical charts in the area of national responsibility, constituting a State mission.

Thus, Navantia has submitted a conceptual design to the Spanish Ministry of Defence, in accordance with the requirements necessary to fulfil the vessel's missions.

These ships will be 47 metres long and have a displacement of around 900 tonnes. With a reduced crew up to 30 people, due to their high degree of automation, they will have a range of 3,000 miles and will be able to operate in waters up to 200 metres deep for 15 days.

These ships will be built at Navantia's shipyard in San Fernando (Cádiz, Spain). Over the next four years, the work will support 700 jobs, including direct, indirect and jobs induced by the economic activity.

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The BHCs will be capable of carrying out hydrographic surveys to enable cartography, support the Fleet with geographic, environmental and meteorological information, and protect underwater archaeological heritage. To this end, they will be equipped with hydrographic equipment such as echo sounders, side scan sonar or positioning systems that will contribute to the study of the water column and the seabed.

Moreover, they will have autonomous means such as an ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle), an USV (Unmanned Surface Vehicle) and a hydrographic boat, which will work autonomously to compile and record data and have the capacity to carry out hydrographic and oceanic work.

About Navantia:

With a history of more than 300 years linked to the construction of ships for the Navy, Navantia is a state-owned and strategic technology company for the defense of Spain. Its areas of specialization range from shipbuilding (surface and submarine), to the design and integration of systems with a high technological content and life cycle support and high value-added services. Additionally, with its brand Navantia Seaneergies, it is a global supplier for the development of offshore wind energy and other green energies such as hydrogen. Navantia employs nearly 4,000 people directly in Spain, mainly at its offices in Ferrol and Fene (A Coruña), Puerto Real, San Fernando, Cádiz and Rota (Cádiz), Cartagena (Murcia Region) and Madrid.

Committed to building a safe and sustainable future through technological excellence and industrial collaboration, Navantia has contracts with Governments and companies around the world and ties with universities and technological and academic centers. It contributes to sustainability and innovation through its daily commitment to people and the planet, with responsible practices from the point of view of labour, the environment and economic and technological development that are viable regionally, nationally and internationally. It is owned 100% by the Sociedad Española de Participaciones Industriales (SEPI), attached to the Ministry of Finance and Public Function of Spain).

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