

## **Report to Congress on Navy LPD-17 Flight II (LX(R)) Amphibious Ship Program**

The LPD-17 Flight II program, previously known as the LX(R) program, is a program to build 13 new amphibious ships for the Navy. The Navy had planned to procure the first LPD-17 Flight II ship in FY2020. Congress, as part of its action on the Navy's proposed FY2018 budget, accelerated the procurement of the first LPD-17 Flight II ship to FY2018.

Within a Navy shipbuilding program, the term flight refers to a group of ships built to a particular design version. The LPD-17 Flight II ships are to constitute the second version of the Navy's San Antonio (LPD-17) class amphibious ship design. Compared to the original (i.e., Flight I) LPD-17 design, the Flight II design is somewhat less expensive and, in some ways, less capable. In many other respects, the LPD-17 Flight II design is similar in appearance and capabilities to the LPD-17 Flight I design. The Flight II design was developed to meet Navy and Marine Corps operational requirements while staying within a unit procurement cost target established by the Navy.

A total of 13 LPD-17 Flight I ships (LPDs 17 through 29) were procured between FY1996 and FY2017. The final two Flight I ships (LPDs 28 and 29) incorporate some design changes that make them transitional ships between the Flight I design and the Flight II design.

The LPD-17 Flight II ship procured in FY2018 will be designated LPD-30, and subsequent ships will be designated LPD-31, LPD-32, and so on. Whether the LPD-17 Flight II ships constitute their own shipbuilding program or an extension of the original LPD-17 shipbuilding program might be a matter of perspective. As a matter of convenience, this CRS report refers to the Flight II shipbuilding effort as a program. Years from now, LPD-17 Flight I and Flight II ships might be referred to collectively as either the LPD-17 class, the LPD-17/30 class, or the LPD-17 and LPD-30 classes.

Huntington Ingalls Industries' Ingalls Shipbuilding (HII/Ingalls) of Pascagoula, MS, is the builder of LPD-17 Flight I ships. On April 6, 2018, the Navy announced that it intends to issue a solicitation on a sole-source basis to HII/Ingalls for the detail design and construction (DD&C) of LPD-30.

The Navy's FY2019 budget submission, which was submitted before Congress finalized its action on the Navy's FY2018 budget, does not request procurement of an LPD-17 Flight II ship in FY2019, and does not request any procurement or advance procurement (AP) funding for the LPD-17 Flight II program in FY2019. It programs the procurement of an LPD-17 Flight II ship in FY2020. Under the Navy's original plan, the ship programmed for procurement in FY2020 was to be the first Flight II ship. With the first Flight II ship having been procured in FY2018, the Flight II ship scheduled for procurement in FY2020 would be the second Flight II ship.

Issues for Congress for FY2019 for the LPD-17 Flight II program include the following:

- whether to accelerate the procurement of the second LPD-17 Flight II ship (i.e., LPD-31) from FY2020 to FY2019; and
- the Navy's intent to issue a solicitation for LPD-30 on a sole-source basis, and the Navy's plans for controlling costs and achieving good production quality and schedule adherence in the LPD-17 Flight II program in a sole-source contracting environment.