



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Eastern Shipbuilding Group Announces Keel Laid for USCGC ARGUS (WMSM-915)

Panama City, FL, Eastern Shipbuilding Group reports that the keel laying ceremony for the US Coast Guard's, first of class, Offshore Patrol Cutter (OPC) ARGUS (WMSM-915), was held on April 28, 2020 at Eastern's Nelson Street facility. The ceremony was performed and recorded without audience to comply with CDC guidelines to combat the spread of COVID-19.

A video of the keel authentication and remarks from Joey D'Isernia is available [here](#). The USCG video of the keel authentication with recorded remarks from Schultz, Kelley and D'Isernia is available [here](#).

The keel laying represents the ceremonial start of a ship's life by commemorating the assembly of the initial modular construction units. Historically, to attest that the keel was properly laid and of excellent quality, the shipbuilder would carve their initials into the keel. This practice is commemorated by welding the ship's sponsor's initials into the keel authentication plate.

The ship's sponsor is CAPT Beverly Kelley, USCG (Ret.). CAPT Kelley was the first woman to command a U.S. military vessel as the Commanding Officer of the 95-foot patrol boat, USCGC CAPE NEWAGEN in 1979. Throughout her distinguished career, she became the first woman to command both a medium endurance cutter and a high endurance cutter in USCGC NORTHLAND and USCGC BOUTWELL respectively.

Eastern's President Mr. Joey D'Isernia noted the following: "*Eastern Shipbuilding Group is humbled and proud to have been chosen to build this next generation ship for the world's best Coast Guard, and we think today represents a milestone that all those involved in the program can be proud of.*"

*The steel joined here today is unlike any you or I have seen before. This steel has been ravaged by 162 mph winds, generated by the 3rd most powerful hurricane to make landfall in this country's history. This steel has borne witness to a Pandemic that has caused fear and shaken our core.*

*But through all this, it remains sturdy, it remains resilient, and today it will join with other steel to become stronger, more defined, and more resolute. Today is representative of how we build, and of unwavering resolve in the face of adversity for a Coast Guard and a nation that deserves nothing less."*

Joey D'Isernia was accompanied on the podium by CAPT Andrew Meverden, representing the USCG, and Mr. Bradley Remick, the expert welder charged with welding the sponsor's initials onto the ceremonial keel authentication plate.

The OPC is designed to conduct multiple missions in support of the nation's maritime security and border protection. The OPC will provide a capability bridge between the national security cutter, which patrols the open ocean in the most demanding maritime environments, and the fast response cutter, which serves closer to shore. The OPC design includes the capability of carrying an MH-60R or MH-65 helicopter and three operational Over The-Horizon small boats. The vessel is also equipped with a highly sophisticated combat system and C4ISR suite that will enhance capabilities to execute the service's missions.

On September 15, 2016, the U.S. Coast Guard exercised the option for Detail Design on Eastern Shipbuilding Group's OPC contract. Eastern Shipbuilding Group will construct the Offshore Patrol Cutters to replace the Medium Endurance Cutters currently in service. The contract includes the production of up to four vessels.

## About Eastern Shipbuilding Group:

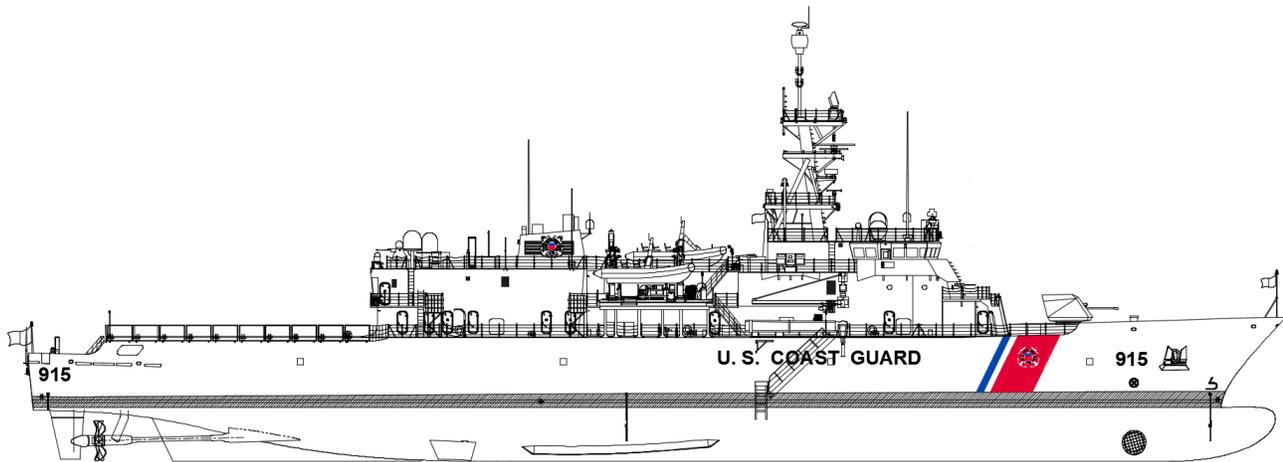
Eastern's original shipyard was established in 1976 for the purpose of constructing commercial fishing vessels for the company's founder and CEO, Brian R. D'Isernia. As the owner of a fleet of commercial fishing vessels, Mr. D'Isernia ventured into the world of shipbuilding after learning first hand that the only way to get the type of vessels he wanted was to design the vessels, write the specifications, and build them himself. As he built and developed his own fleet of vessels, other professionals in the industry took notice and also began requesting their own custom-built vessels. Soon customers in areas including New England, the Pacific Northwest and Alaska were contacting Eastern with requests for customized fishing vessels. By 1980, 26 commercial fishing vessels had been constructed and delivered.

Building on his passion for boats and the sea, Mr. D'Isernia decided to diversify Eastern's reputation from a 'Fishing Vessel' shipyard into a shipyard that could fulfill any type of custom vessel request, large or small. In 1981, Eastern's diversification began with the delivery of its first Offshore Supply Vessel. Today, Eastern's portfolio includes over 350 vessels and has become one of the most diversified vessel construction companies as a result of its state-of-the-art production line and fabrication process. Eastern has built everything from Offshore Supply Vessels to Tugs, Articulated Tugs/Barges, Inland Towboats, a SWATH Vessel, Passenger Vessels, Ro-Ro/Passenger Ferries, Inland Transport Vessels, Barges, Fireboats, Research Vessels, SUBSEA Construction Vessels, Dredges, High Speed Passenger Vessels, Fishing Vessels, and more. Eastern currently operates two shipyards in Bay County and one shipyard in Gulf County, FL.

In support of OPC construction, ESG has made improvements to the Nelson Street facility. In conjunction with the state of Florida and Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc., ESG has commenced construction on additional warehousing, a state-of-the-art C4ISR Production Facility, improved building and launch ways, among numerous other improvements. This wave of facility improvements positions ESG to continue OPC production as efficiently as possible. ESG's investments have grown Panama City's public shipbuilding infrastructure for the purpose of helping establish within the City, a shipyard that helps meet the nation's needs for ships that support national defense, border security and other public purposes, today and into the future.

For more information please visit:

[www.easternshipbuilding.com](http://www.easternshipbuilding.com)



OPC Characteristics:

- Length: 360 feet
- Beam: 54 feet
- Draft: 17 feet
- Sustained Speed: 22 Plus knots
- Range: 8500 Plus nautical miles
- Endurance: 60 Days