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CDR [REDACTED] USCG
OP-642C5, X70364
23 June 1980

SUBJECT

Coast Guard 270 Medium Endurance Cutter (WMEC)

HIGHLIGHTS

The shortages and technological obsolescence in the WMEC/WHEC cutter fleet were first identified in the 1974 Cutter Plan. The 1979 Cutter Plan lists WMEC/WHEC cutter shortages of 15 in FY 81, 28 in FY 85 and 26 in FY 90. In January 1975 the Commandant authorized the design of a new cutter class. This effort was completed in March 1977. The Deputy Secretary approved procurement of the first four cutters of this class on 19 April 1977.

A fixed price contract with an escalation clause was awarded to Tacoma Boatbuilding Company on 30 December 1977 for the first four cutters funded in FY's 77 and 78. Delivery of the first cutter is scheduled for August 1981 with the remaining three cutters to be delivered in 4 month intervals. Two cutters are authorized in the FY 79 budget, two in the FY 80 budget and funds for one have been deferred to FY 81. Funding for one cutter in FY 81 and three in FY 82 is planned. An Invitation for Bid was issued on 14 January 1980 for a multi-year 9 ship procurement. Expected contract award date is 28 August 1980. This will complete the replacement of 13 technologically obsolete, overaged cutters.

DISCUSSION

The 270' WMEC class will provide the Coast Guard with the seagoing capabilities necessary for employment in Coast Guard peacetime missions of Enforcement of Laws and Treaties, Marine Environmental Protection, Marine Science Activities and Search and Rescue. In addition, it will contribute significantly to the Coast Guard's Military Preparedness by accommodating state-of-the-art capabilities in such defense activities as anti-submarine warfare, coastal surveillance, search and interdiction, and defensive anti-surface and anti-air warfare.

The vessels feature a modern computer based Command Display and Control System (COMDAC); sensors to detect, track and identify targets such as fishing vessels at long range, and a flight deck to handle all Coast Guard helicopters. Modern habitability standards, arrangements to accommodate a mix of men and women and improved pollution control are included in the design.

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The major characteristics of this cutter are:

Length overall	270 feet	Speed	19.5 knots
Beam, extreme	38.0 feet	Endurance	21 days
Draft, full load	13.5 feet	Displacement	1730 tons
Machinery, Diesel	7000 horsepower: twin screw		

FY's 77 and 78 AC&I funds in the amount of \$104.8M were provided to meet the estimated obligations through FY 78 for the first four cutters and equipment for a facility for COMDAC operational and maintenance training. FY's 79 and 80 funds in the amount of \$173.3M are available to procure five cutters (vessels E5-9) and to fund shore spares and contract-related and escalation the costs for the first nine cutters. FY 81 through FY 86 costs for the 13 cutter replacement program, including shore based COMDAC training and maintenance facilities, are \$640.3M. This funding does not include USN funding for Navy provided electronics and weapons suites.

Total program costs are:

Ships No. 1 - 4	\$268.7M	(\$67.2M each)
Ships No. 5 - 13	\$649.7M	(\$62.2M each)
Navy furnished		
Equipment No. 1 - 13	<u>\$325.8M</u>	
Total	\$1254.2M	(\$96.5M each)

RECOMMENDATION

Provided for information.

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