



Acquisition Directorate

POLAR ICE BREAKER

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Coast Guard's polar fleet, which includes one 399-foot heavy icebreaker (Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star) and one 420-foot polar icebreaker (Coast Guard Cutter Healy), as well as some ice-capable tugs and tenders, represents a national capability. With commerce and traffic on the Arctic Ocean increasing, including petrochemical exploration and fisheries, the United States has vital national interest in maintaining robust polar icebreaking capability to ensure year-round Coast Guard presence in these important waters.

When refurbished by 2014, the Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star will be the service's only operational heavy icebreaker. This important, but venerable platform will serve until 2020 but that is only the beginning of the story. The Coast Guard's mission requirements, including marine environmental protection, dictate that the service maintain heavy icebreaking capability for the foreseeable future.

The Coast Guard now is in the preliminary phase of a new, heavy polar icebreaker acquisition project. This stage in the process includes developing a formal mission need statement, a concept of operations, and an operational requirements document – all necessary before developing and implementing a detailed acquisition project plan.

In order to fully fund subsequent phases of this project, the Coast Guard believes that a “whole-of-government” approach will be necessary. Obtaining a new, heavy polar icebreaker that meets Coast Guard requirements will depend upon supplementary financing from other agencies whose activities also rely upon the nation possessing a robust, Arctic-capable surface fleet.



Coast Guard Cutter Polar Star



Coast Guard Cutter Healy

Mission execution begins **here.**