

ON THE WAYS

ACB awarded \$38 million Coast Guard contract



The Transportable Port Security Boat will be deployed worldwide.

Aluminum Chambered Boats

COMPILED AND
EDITED BY
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TECHNICAL EDITOR

Aluminum Chambered Boats (ACB), Bellingham, Wash., was recently awarded a \$37.7 million, five-year contract to provide up to 80 Transportable Port Security Boats to the U.S. Coast Guard.

The soft-sided patrol boats measure 32'9" x 8'4" and weigh about 9,300 lbs. Each boat will be powered by a pair of 315-hp Yanmar 6LPA-STZP diesel engines turning Mercury Marine Bravo X-1 outdrives. Top speed is 40-plus knots. The draft is only 19" with the outdrives trimmed up.

The boat was designed in-house at ACB with some help from Howard Apollonio, a naval architect in Bellingham.

The 32-footers establish a new class of vessels for the TPSB units. The most recent TPSBs have been outboard-powered, 25' Guardians from Brunswick Commercial and Government Products. The ACB boats will provide more crew comfort and better range.

"In this case, it was fairly easy to tell that they were looking for crew comfort and some legs — more distance, more time on station. It's also

a global requirement, so these boats will experience everything from cold weather ops to warm weather ops," said Kelly Webb, ACB's executive vice president of government sales.

To reduce weight, ACB did not include an air conditioner. "We offered fans and vents, primarily because of the weight and power requirements," said Webb. "Anytime you call something transportable, it's a weight-sensitive application. Basically we gave them good shade. And we get good cross ventilation with the fans. But we did put a heater in it. There's an engine-block-fed heater in the boat. I've always found that it's easier to cool off than it is to warm up."

The top and sides are mostly fabric, which can be removed or lowered out of the way. "When the guys are doing patrols, they like to be open to the environment, so the requirement stated that all of the structure — and even the armor — had to be removable," said Webb.

For the TPSB, ACB's signature aluminum chambers, which are airtight compartments that wrap around the outside of the gunwale, have been

replaced with **Wing** hybrid foam-and-air sponsons.

"It's similar to our Cutter Boat-Large, which we've been supplying to the Coast Guard for the last three years. We've morphed into a soft-sided patrol-law enforcement vessel," said Webb.

The mission of the new boat is patrol and protection at military bases and other locations in the U.S. and around the world. The operators are generally Coast Guard reservists, which have been constantly deployed for the past several years. "They'll do everything from escort ships through the Suez Canal or Panama Canal or do harbor security ops in places like Basra [Iraq], Bahrain, Okinawa, Korea, all over the place," said Webb.

The new TPSBs will be transported on **Boatmaster** trailers. "The trailer was definitely part of the package," said Webb. "Boatmaster has been responsive to government needs, and they build a very robust trailer that the Coast

Guard is very comfortable with."

Production of the new boats is expected to begin in mid-July. The first boat in the new series will take 150 days to produce, then one will be delivered every 18 days after that.

— Bruce Bult

Conrad nears completion of double-ended ferry for Texas

Conrad Industries, Morgan City, La., is putting the finishing touches on a new 263'3"x62'11"x15'6", 500-passenger, 70-vehicle ferry for the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT).

The *John W. Johnson* will be the sixth vessel in the fleet of ferries that operates on Galveston Bay between Galveston Island and Port Bolivar. The free ferry service is the only way motorists can cross the waterway between the Bolivar Peninsula and Galveston

Island, a 2.7-mile trip.

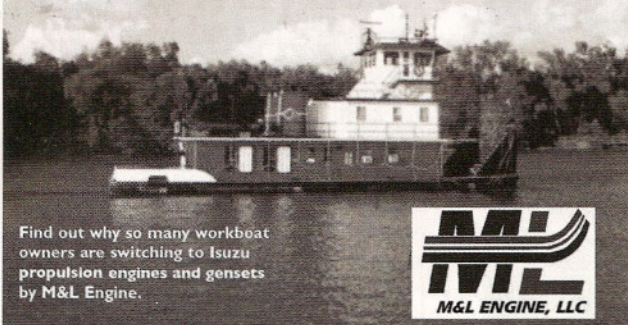
The new ferry will be capable of carrying eight 18-wheel trucks weighing 80,000 lbs. each. Like the other five ferries in the fleet, the *John W. Johnson* is double-ended with a pilothouse on each end.

Four of the five ferries in the fleet feature **Voith Schneider** cycloidal propulsion systems. Vertical cycloidal propulsors at both ends of the boats provide excellent maneuverability.

The *John W. Johnson*, however, has conventional, ducted propellers powered by a diesel-electric system that features a **RACCI**-designed variable frequency drive with **Siemens** equipment. Primary power consists of two **GE V228** Tier 2 diesel engines. The engines each produce 1,728 hp at 900 rpm and drive the **AVK** alternators that supply juice to electric propulsion motors — two on each end. **Lufkin** gearboxes turn shafts with 5-bladed, Kaplan-style **Rice** wheels in nozzles.

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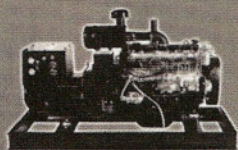


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