



# National Defense Reserve Fleet

## Maritime Administration FACT SHEET

The Maritime Administration's National Defense Reserve Fleet (NDRF) was established under Section 11 of the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 to serve as a reserve of ships for national defense and national emergency purposes. At its height in 1950, the NDRF consisted of 2,277 ships at eight anchorages. Today's fleet is much smaller, with vessels at three of the original anchorages and additional designated port facilities. The program consists primarily of dry cargo ships with some tankers and military auxiliaries.

### The Fleet

The largest and most active component of the NDRF is the Ready Reserve Force (RRF). Established in 1976 to provide rapid deployment of military equipment, the RRF consists of 46 vessels that are maintained at readiness in reduced operating status for United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM), ready to receive and transport cargo within five or ten days of activation. These ships are situated near strategic loading ports around the country at commercial berths, government facilities, and the NDRF anchorages. MARAD also maintains two active NDRF vessels for the Missile Defense Agency, which are used for missile tracking.

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Vessels in retention status berthed at Suisun Bay Reserve Fleet

Many vessels laid up in the reserve fleet anchorages are in retention status, preserved for future and contemporary use by USTRANSCOM or federal agency programs. The vessels are preserved in a way that keeps them in the same condition as when they entered the fleet. Dehumidification of air-tight internal spaces is an effective means of controlling the corrosion of metal and growth of mold and mildew. A cathodic protection system uses an impressed current of DC power that is distributed through anodes to the exterior underwater portions of the hull, resulting in an electric field that suppresses corrosion and preserves exposed hull surfaces.

Vessels that no longer have a useful application are in non-retention status, pending disposition; these ships are stripped of useful material and eventually sold or transferred

by MARAD's Office of Ship Disposal. MARAD is the Federal Government's disposal agent for Federally-owned obsolete, merchant-type vessels, and naval auxiliaries that are equal to or greater than 1,500 gross tons. MARAD disposes of vessels through a variety of methods that include the following: domestic recycling; sinking for use as artificial reefs; and deep-water sinking in conjunction with the U.S. Navy's SINKEX Program.

Finally, MARAD maintains vessels that are owned by other government agencies but maintained by MARAD on a cost-reimbursable basis.

### **National Defense Reserve Fleet Anchorages**

The three fleet anchorages are:

- Beaumont Reserve Fleet (BRF), in the Neches River near Beaumont, Texas;
- James River Reserve Fleet (JRRF), in the James River at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia; and
- Suisun Bay Reserve Fleet (SBRF), in Suisun Bay near Benicia, California.

Beaumont Reserve Fleet is adjacent to, and supports, the MARAD Layberth Facility, an Orange, Texas, facility owned by MARAD, that can support up to eight surge sealift vessels in reduced operating status.

### **Training Ships**

Twelve NDRF vessels are used for training purposes. Eight are assigned to maritime schools or United States Merchant Marine Academy, and are used for cadet training cruises and practical training throughout the year:

- TS *Empire State*, operated by the State University of New York Maritime College in the Bronx, New York;
- TV *Freedom Star*, operated by the Seafarer's Harry Lundberg School in Piney Point, Maryland;
- TV *General Rudder*, operated by the Texas Maritime Academy in Galveston, Texas;
- TS *Golden Bear*, operated by the California Maritime Academy in Vallejo, California;
- TS *Kennedy*, operated by Massachusetts Maritime Academy in Buzzard's Bay, Massachusetts;
- TV *Kings Pointer*, operated by the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York;
- TS *State of Maine*, operated by the Maine Maritime Academy in Castine, Maine; and
- TS *State of Michigan*, operated by the Great Lakes Maritime Academy in Traverse City, Michigan.

An additional four retention status vessels are designated for military and homeland security training, often at the NDRF fleet sites themselves.

### **or More Information**

For more information and to view the NDRF inventory, visit the program's website at:

<https://www.marad.dot.gov/ships-and-shipping/strategic-sealift/office-of-ship-operations/national-defense-reserve-fleet-ndrf/>