CNA: A Trusted Partner in Maritime and Defense Revitalization

The National Imperative for Maritime Revitalization

After decades of declining US shipbuilding and US-flagged maritime trade, leaders in Washington are prioritizing a renaissance of American seapower. The goal: restore American maritime dominance and ensure our Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and merchant marine have the industrial support and human capital needed to meet global challenges. Achieving these ambitious goals will require not only funding and policy support, but also world-class data analytics, labor analysis, and strategic planning. CNA offers critical resources in these areas.

CNA's Expertise: Analytics, Wargaming, and Strategic Insights

CNA is an independent, not-for-profit organization with more than 80 years of experience supporting US national security decision-makers. As the Department of the Navy's federally funded research and development center (FFRDC), CNA has a long track record of providing actionable, data-driven insights to the US Navy and Marine Corps. CNA analysts are often embedded with commands, giving them a real-world perspective on operational challenges. This unique approach has made CNA a trusted advisor not only to the Navy, but also to the US Coast Guard and Department of Homeland Security, among other agencies. CNA's multi-disciplinary team of nearly 500 analysts—90 percent with advanced degrees—brings deep expertise in data analytics, labor and workforce analyses, wargaming, and operational strategy.

We specialize in:

- **Data-Driven Analytics:** CNA harnesses big data and advanced modeling to help agencies make informed decisions. From assessing labor dynamics and sealift capacity to optimizing procurement, our analysts sift evidence and curate valuable data to determine system drivers. For example, the Navy relied on CNA analysis to help them optimize fleet sea manning levels through agent-based simulation models to match skills to billets and address recruiting shortfalls.

- **Wargaming and Scenario Planning:** CNA is an internationally recognized center of excellence in wargame design and analysis. We develop immersive simulations and tabletop exercises to test strategies against complex scenarios—whether that's a contested sea lane or a port security crisis. Our wargames, backed by decades of naval operational insights, help leaders visualize outcomes and refine plans in a risk-free environment. CNA's gaming experts have crafted wargames for the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and civilian agencies like the Maritime Administration, yielding insights that drive better real-world decisions.

- **Acquisition Strategy and Alternatives Analysis:** With limited budgets and urgent needs, smart acquisition is essential. CNA brings successful experience with some of the nation's most complex acquisition programs, from Coast Guard vessels to Navy shipbuilding. As an objective evaluator, we offer conflict-free guidance on procurement strategies. Our analysts conduct rigorous Analyses of

Alternatives (AoAs)—evaluating materiel or non-materiel solutions based on cost, benefits, and risk—to ensure agencies choose the best path forward. We help streamline the acquisition lifecycle by embedding with program offices, identifying inefficiencies, and providing key analysis related to schedule and budget impacts.

Together, these core competencies in labor and system analytics, wargaming, and acquisition strategy position CNA to tackle the toughest maritime revitalization challenges.

Expanding the US-Flag Fleet and Shipbuilding Base

Rebuilding America's commercial fleet and shipyard industrial base is a top priority for strengthening national security. The ability to build and operate more US-flagged ships for trade and military sealift will reduce reliance on foreign shipping and ensure sufficient logistics support to our armed forces when crises arise. Recent bipartisan initiatives have set bold goals: expanding the US-flag fleet by hundreds of vessels within a decade and revitalizing shipyards across the country.

Achieving these objectives will require strategic analysis to identify effective incentives, policies, and investments. CNA is already at the forefront of this effort: the US Maritime Administration (MARAD) selected CNA to lead an analysis informing the new National Maritime Strategy, aimed at revitalizing the US merchant marine and maritime industrial base. In this role, CNA has been engaging public and private stakeholders to pinpoint the elements of a successful long-term strategy.

Our analysts bring expertise in sealift and fleet composition modeling, helping determine the optimal mix of vessels and support programs to meet defense and commercial needs. We also apply wargaming to stress-test how a larger US fleet would perform in various conflict or crisis scenarios, ensuring that expansion plans translate to real capability. CNA has analyzed regulatory reforms and cost drivers to make US-built vessels more cost effective. By providing evidence-based recommendations—such as how to structure vessel financing or cargo preference rules—CNA gives lawmakers and officials a roadmap to grow the fleet sustainably. Our support to Navy and Coast Guard leadership over the years, including work on fleet architecture and cutter mix, means CNA is uniquely qualified to advise on a future force structure that integrates Navy warships, Coast Guard cutters, and merchant shipping into one, coherent maritime force. In short, CNA delivers the analytics and strategic vision to expand the US-flag fleet and rekindle America's shipbuilding might.

Partnering with CNA for a Strong Maritime Future

America's renewed focus on maritime and defense revitalization is an ambitious, multi-faceted endeavor. CNA offers the proven expertise and innovative thinking to translate these national priorities into concrete results. Our long-standing support to the Navy, Coast Guard, Department of Homeland Security, and other federal partners attests to our commitment and capability. We understand the stakes, and we stand ready to help turn vision into reality.

About CNA

CNA is a not-for-profit analytical organization dedicated to the safety and security of the nation. With nearly 700 scientists, analysts, and professional staff across the world, CNA's mission is to provide data-driven, innovative solutions to our nation's toughest problems. It operates the Center for Naval Analyses—the Department of the Navy's federally funded research and development center (FFRDC)—as well as the Institute for Public Research. The Center for Naval Analyses provides objective analytics to inform the decisions of military leaders and ultimately improve the lethality and effectiveness of the joint force. The Institute for Public Research leverages data analytics and innovative methods to support federal, state, and local government officials as they work to advance national and homeland security.

To learn more about CNA's capabilities in maritime and defense revitalization, contact Randall Gentry at gentryr@cna.org.

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