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IN THE NEWS

LCS Frigate: Delay A Year to Study Bigger Missiles?

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Related Expert: Bryan Clark

Is Austal's proposal realistic? We need to know the trade-offs, said Bryan Clark, a former top aide to the Chief of Naval Operations, who'd prefer a new, heavier frigate designed from the start to handle VLS. If you have to fit everything in the small hull of an LCS, Clark told me, adding VLS could require taking out too many other systems. Particularly at risk is kit for anti-submarine warfare, an increasingly important mission as the Chinese and Russian sub fleets grow in size and sophistication. Austal says their VLS-equipped frigate can still hunt subs just fine, but they do acknowledge it can carry fewer helicopters and drones than the original LCS, which could impact ASW and many other missions.