

Powerful patents: Navy outranks all government agencies in yearly report

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A visit, board, search and seizure team from the guided-missile destroyer USS Pinckney (DDG 91) approaches a suspected pirate vessel. Predicting the risk of pirate attacks on shipping lanes could soon be easier, thanks to a data system that's just one of 364 technologies patented by the US Navy in 2014. Credit: US Navy photo/Released

Predicting the risk of pirate attacks on vital shipping lanes could soon be easier, thanks to a data system that's just one of 364 technologies patented by the U.S. Navy (DoN) in 2014.

DoN leads the government category in an annual ranking of patent portfolios recently published by the Intellectual Property Owners Association. Titled the IP Record's "Top 300 Organizations Granted U.S. Patents in 2014," the report compiles rankings based on patent data from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

For the fifth consecutive year, DoN earned the top spot among U.S. government agencies, including the U.S. Army, Department of Health and Human Services and National Aeronautics and Space Administration. DoN also out-patented the likes of Nissan Motor Co. and Rolls-Royce PLC, pharmaceutical purveyors Novartis AG and Sanofi and academic institutions such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"The science and technology component of the Office of Naval Research's [ONR] mission is primarily focused on technology maturation," said Chief of Naval Research Rear Adm. Mat Winter. "Helping the Navy to patent such a large number of game-changing technologies, year after year, ensures our warfighters retain the technological advantage on the battlefield today, and well into the future, while highlighting the deep scientific intellectual capital across the entire Naval Research Enterprise."

ONR manages DoN's intellectual property investments, setting policy and conducting oversight of patents as well as trademarks, copyrights, inventions and royalty payments.

Patents are designed to protect an inventor's interests, excluding others from "making, using, offering for sale, or selling the invention through

the United States or importing the invention" for a specified time.

A few examples of the patents issued to DoN in 2014 include:

- **Method for Predicting Pirate Attack Risk:** This data system can predict the likelihood of a pirate attack in a geographic area by using a combination of intelligence and meteorological information about pirate behavior and shipping activity and vulnerabilities.
- **Rapid Identification of Identifying Campylobacter Jejuni:** Using DNA molecules, this system rapidly and accurately identifies the main types of Campylobacter Jejuni, a bacteria that causes diarrheal disease globally and could impact U.S. warfighters deployed overseas.
- **Using Satellite Imaging to Detect Disaster Relief Assets:** This system features an algorithm that uses satellite imaging to quickly and automatically identify assets for disaster relief, including water sources for firefighting efforts.

Earlier this year, DoN also dominated the government category in IEEE (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers) Spectrum magazine's 2014 Patent Power Scorecard. IEEE evaluated 5,000 organizations' portfolios across 17 industries for the number of patents issued, as well as the growth, impact, originality and general applicability of each patent.

Provided by Office of Naval Research

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