

By Great North News Services staff reporter

It is being reported by Associated Press that the U.S.Navy has reversed a previous decision and will now push for the construction of a 3rd stealth destroyer.

Just a month ago the Navy had said it was scrapping the Zumwalt destroyer program once the first two had been completed. At that time it was declared that more of the current-generation DDG-51 (Arleigh Burke) vessels would be built instead.

The Zumwalt class features composite materials, an unconventional wave-piercing hull and carries a smaller crew complement than the DDG-51; it's also 50 per cent larger than its predecessor – and costs twice as much.

Of the first two Zumwalts, one is to be built at Bath Iron Works in Maine; the other will be constructed at the Northrop Grumman Ingalls yard in Mississippi.

It will be interesting to see how this change of direction shakes down. A U.S. Senate appropriations bill originally funded a third Zumwalt at about \$2.6 billion – but the House 'eliminated' the money.

Watch this space.....