

# Patrulleros de Zona Marítima (OPV)

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The Patrulleros de Zona Marítima (PZM) are a series of offshore patrol vessels being built for the Navies of Chile, Argentina and Colombia.

The 1,723 tonne ARC 7 de Agosto (PZE 47) began sea trials in December and offers a broad enhancement to the Navy's offshore security capabilities as it prepares for deployment to the San Andres archipelago, patrolling the nation's boundaries with Nicaragua.

The vessel is armed with two 40 mm guns, a 20 mm gun, and two .50 calibre remote weapon stations (RWS).

The T-12 RWS was developed by THOR Defense Systems in conjunction with the Colombian Navy's Weapons and Electronics Department (Dirección de Armas y Electrónica - DARET), which also developed the Barracuda fire control system to control all weapons aboard.

Special modifications had also been ordered by the Navy. These include the installation of a ramp on the stern for the deployment of interceptor boats in addition to the two RHIB boats that can be stationed on both port and starboard sides. The ship also has a flight deck that is able to receive medium-sized helicopters.

The Colombian Navy is set to procure six OPV 80s by 2019. Some reports have suggested that the Navy may be undertaking research and analysis to fit its future OPVs with surface-to-air and surface-to-surface missile systems.

Those that have been operated by the Chilean Navy's Coast Guard Service since 2008 are each equipped with two 12-cylinder Wärtsilä 26 main engines, providing a sustained economic speed of 12 knots and a maximum of up to 20 knots. Each engine drives a controllable-pitch propeller through a single-input Wärtsilä reduction gearbox. Wärtsilä also supplies the sterntube seals and the control systems for the engines and propellers.

These ships will conduct defence missions in Chile's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), including the control and protection of maritime traffic, and logistical support for isolated locations.

The Colombian Navy also commissioned its second 20-de-Julio-class ocean patrol vessel in March, a design based on the OPV 80 and built at COTECMAR, with DCNS and Thales responsible for the integration of combat and communications systems.

The OPV will be available to tour at the [OPV Latin America 2014](#) conference in Cartagena, Colombia (June 30 – July 02).

