

USNS Mercy Team Concludes Pacific Partnership in Solomon Islands



Pacific Partnership 2022 leadership, Solomon Island leaders and members of the international diplomatic corps in the Solomon Islands pose for a photo during the PP22 Solomon Islands closing ceremony aboard Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19). *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jacob Woitzel*

SOLOMON ISLANDS – The Solomon Islands-Pacific Partnership 2022 team wrapped up two weeks of collaboration across several lines of effort during a closing ceremony on board USNS Mercy (T-AH 19), on Sept. 10, Leslie Hull-Ryde of Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific, said in a Sept. 14 release.

Now in its 17th year, Pacific Partnership is the largest annual multinational humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Pacific.

This year, the hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) serves as the PP22 mission platform.

While this year's mission marked Mercy's inaugural visit to Solomon Islands, Pacific Partnership 2022 returned to the Solomon Islands late August, continuing to build on a foundation established during the previous four PP missions here.

"It's great to bring Pacific Partnership back to Solomon Islands and continue to deepen these friendships and partnerships we hold so dear," said Capt. Hank Kim, Pacific Partnership 2022 mission commander.

Pacific Partnership is a unifying mission that fosters enduring friendship and cooperation among many nations. This year's mission in the Solomon Islands includes participants from the host nation, the United States, Japan and Australia.

"This collaborative effort amongst our partners and hosts is what this mission is all about," Kim said. "As we learn from each other and grow as professionals, we enhance our collective ability to respond to any disaster we may face. As the Pacific Partnership motto goes, 'we are preparing in calm to respond in crisis'."

PP22 events are coordinated with the host nation and are planned based on the requirements and requests of the Solomon Islands. Engagements in Honiara and beyond included medical care and exchanges, engineering projects, discussions on humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and community outreach events, including band concerts and sporting events.

During the mission stop, the PP22 team conducted more than 5,800 medical engagements, including more than 4,500 dental procedures, distributing more than 1,000 eyeglasses, and performing more than 50 surgeries; more than 80 consultations

with local pet owners; a humanitarian assistance and disaster relief workshop that included the Solomon Islands National Disaster Management Office and other first responders; 16 band concerts; and four engineering projects. In addition to events in Honiara and Guadalcanal Province, Pacific Partnership activities, to include medical knowledge exchanges, took place in Gizo and Malaita.

In addition to Solomon Islands, this year's Pacific Partnership mission included stops in Vietnam, Palau, the Philippines and engineering engagements in Fiji and Papua New Guinea.

CNO Visits Aviation Commands, Tailhook Convention



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday meets with Sailors during lunch at Naval Air Station Lemoore. Gilday traveled to Nevada and California, Sept. 8-13, to meet and speak with Sailors and Navy leaders. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication 1st Class Michael B. Zingaro*

LAS VEGAS – Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday traveled to Nevada and California, Sept. 8-13, to visit local commands, meet with Sailors and attend conferences, the CNO's public affairs office said in a release.

Gilday visited Naval Air Station Fallon, Naval Air Station Lemoore, and Reno, Nevada.

He first visited Naval Aviation Warfighting Development Center in Fallon, Nevada, for the Aviation and Surface Warfare Commander's Symposium, where he spoke.

"We need to continue to ensure tactical aviation readiness and improved ground forces training can meet the demands of today and the threats of tomorrow," said Gilday. "NAS Fallon and the Fallon Range Training Complex is the nation's premier training

environment comprised of airspace and challenging ranges ... it's a true center of warfighting excellence where our air wings are preparing to win high-end conflict."

He then traveled to Reno, Nevada, for Tailhook Association's Hook '22, a three-day event that featured presentations and panels with leaders from across naval aviation. At the symposium, he met with Sailors, attended a winging ceremony for three new aviators and was the guest of honor at the Tailhook Banquet, where he provided remarks.

"The aircraft carrier and its unmatched weapons system, the embarked air wing, represents what is and what will remain the centerpiece of naval combat power," said Gilday. "The carrier has been a versatile platform for more than a century and will continue to be so because we have adapted the air wing to a changing world and its capabilities to a changing threat spectrum."

"The carrier is the world's most lethal and flexible military machine and the most effective tool for sea control and power projection ever created," he added. "The aircraft carrier, naval aviation and our Navy have a great legacy and an even greater future thanks to our people."

The symposium was a chance for junior officers, senior leaders, aircrew, Navy civilians, retirees and industry partners to gather and talk about items of interest to naval aviation, such as the Air Wing of the Future, unmanned capabilities, readiness, maintenance, training and manning.

Following Hook '22, Gilday travelled to NAS Lemoore, California, for F/A-18 and F-35 program updates and to meet with Sailors.

"The men and women here are shaping the future of our force," said Gilday. "Advanced capabilities help to ensure our Navy will maintain warfighting advantages against increasingly competitive adversaries," said Gilday.

“Going forward, we will continue investing in the next generation air dominance family of systems, manned and unmanned aircraft, netted sensors and weapons, and in our aircraft carriers,” the CNO said. “The last 100 years of carrier aviation has been impressive and we will continue to adapt and carry on that adaptation and warfighting ethos ... the carrier is here to stay.”

The Navy recently deployed its first Navy F-35C and CMV-22B as part of the USS Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group. Additionally, the first Marine Corps F-35Cs deployed with the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group. The USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78) will deploy for the first time later this year.

USS Ronald Reagan Departs Yokosuka to Resume Patrol



Sailors man the rails aboard the U.S. Navy's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier, USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), as the ship departs Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Sept. 12. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Natasha ChevalierLosada*

YOKOSUKA, Japan – The U.S. Navy's only forward-deployed aircraft carrier, USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), and its strike group departed Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka Sept. 12 to continue promoting peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, according to the ship's public affairs.

Ronald Reagan's departure marks the end of a scheduled maintenance availability period.

"We're excited to be back at sea, and are grateful for the excellent support from our maintenance teams ashore," said Capt. Fred Goldhammer, Ronald Reagan's commanding officer. "Not only was our completion of scheduled maintenance and in port training beneficial in ensuring the combat readiness of 'Warship 76,' but this brief period allowed our crew an opportunity to recharge and reconnect with our families and

friends.”

While departing, hundreds of Reagan Sailors manned the rails in service dress white uniforms as the ship made its way to sea for the second time this year.

During this routine deployment, Ronald Reagan, its strike group ships, the embarked Carrier Air Wing 5, Carrier Strike Group 5 and Destroyer Squadron 15 staffs, will continue working with allies and partners, promote adherence to a rules-based international order, as well as maintain presence and flexibility.

Prior to Reagan’s return to Yokosuka, the ship conducted operations in the Philippine Sea.

The Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group includes the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Chancellorsville (CG 62), as well as Arleigh Burke-class destroyers USS Barry (DDG 52) and USS Benfold (DDG 65), assigned to DESRON 15.

The Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group is forward-deployed to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. Under Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, and routinely interacts and operates with 35 maritime nations.

Defense Associations in

Letter to Congress Ask That CR Includes Inflation

Arlington, Va. – The National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA), along with the Aerospace Industries Association (AIA) and the Professional Services Council (PSC) – a group of defense associations known as the “Tri-association” – sent a letter today to Appropriations Committees’ leadership requesting expedited completion of the fiscal 2023 defense appropriations bill.

The bipartisan letter urged Congress to consider the impacts of inflation when setting the topline for a continuing resolution, or CR. NDIA’s president and CEO, David L. Norquist, said, “if left unaddressed, inflation will significantly weaken our national defense. We look forward to working with Congress to take comprehensive and bipartisan steps to address this challenge.”

“Our letter offers concrete ways to mitigate the impacts of cost growth due to inflation and labor market forces through Congress, the executive branch, and industry working together on solutions,” said David Berteau, president and CEO of the Professional Services Council.

“Inflation is everywhere and impacting us all. We cannot allow it to undermine our national security as well. Everyone needs to be concerned, and policymakers must work to address the impacts immediately,” said Eric Fanning, president and CEO of AIA.

As inflation reached a 40-year-high this year, the typical practice of setting CRs at the previous year’s level would leave the service budgets running at a 9% deficit from the funding level required to maintain the buying power Congress intended in its 2022 enacted budget, as cited in the letter.

The Tri-association letter requests Congress allow new starts and quantity increases where bipartisan support exists to allow industry and the Department of Defense to meet requirements and respond to threats.

“Given our nation’s security challenges, Congress should be encouraging the Department and industry to move faster to field new technologies, not directing them to pause,” it said.

It further highlights the harm to businesses, especially smaller businesses, of failing to adjust contracts based on inflationary impacts.

The associations view the call as a necessity step to protect our national security, ensuring that those in our military are provided with the equipment for their mission.

Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk Returns from 92-Day AFRICOM Deployment



Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk returned to its homeport in Key West, Florida, following a 92-day deployment in the U.S. Naval Forces Europe – Africa area of operations. *U.S. COAST GUARD* KEY WEST, Fla. – The crew of the USCGC Mohawk (WMEC 913) returned to their homeport Monday, following a 92-day deployment in the U.S. Naval Forces Europe – Africa area of operations, employed by U.S. 6th Fleet, to defend U.S., allied and partner interests, the Coast Guard Atlantic Area said in a release.

Mohawk began its deployment as surface action group commander, leading the transatlantic escort of two newly commissioned 154-foot, Sentinel-class cutters, USCGC Clarence Sutphin Jr. (WPC 1147) and USCGC John Scheuerman (WPC 1146) from Key West, Florida, to the 6th Fleet area of operations.

While on deployment, Mohawk made significant advances in combating illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing conducting multinational law enforcement operations at sea in the Atlantic basin. Their efforts served to strengthen existing relationships with African nations, and prioritized

opportunities for new partnerships with allies who share common interests in the region.

Mohawk's crew also worked closely with eight partner nation navies, sailing nearly 19,000 nautical miles in support of American interests abroad. Leading training exercises at-sea and in port, Mohawk hosted diplomatic engagements and participated in community relations events during port visits to Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Portugal, Senegal, Sierra Leone and The Gambia. Mohawk was the first United States warship to moor in The Gambia since 1994.

"I am extremely proud of this crew and all they have accomplished over the last three months," said Cmdr. Andrew Pate, commanding officer of Mohawk. "We are operating in a global Coast Guard and Mohawk's ability to deploy across the Atlantic Ocean and work alongside our European and Atlantic African partners to combat piracy and illegal, unregulated, and unreported fishing drives home the United States' commitment to security, stability, and prosperity in the region."

Mohawk's deployment also demonstrated the United States' longstanding commitment of supporting African partners by addressing their security challenges in the maritime domain. The U.S. maritime services routinely work with allied and partner nations to foster a united, global effort to safeguard free and open access to international waterways.

Commissioned in March 1991, Mohawk is the 13th and last of the Famous-class Coast Guard cutters. It is named for the Algonquin tribe of Iroquoian Indians who lived in the Mohawk Valley of New York, and is the third cutter to bear the name.

Boeing Reveals First of New Innovative Defense Factories



Boeing Phantom Works' Advanced Composite Fabrication Center in Mesa, Arizona, leverages the latest in digital engineering and advanced manufacturing to produce components for future advanced combat aircraft. *BOEING*

MESA, Ariz. – Boeing's Defense, Space & Security business unit unveiled on Sept. 12 its new Advanced Composite Fabrication Center, which has been purpose-built to produce advanced composite components for future combat aircraft, the company said in a release.

The new facility in Mesa, Arizona, will be a secure production facility operated by Phantom Works, BDS' proprietary research, development and prototyping division. The construction phase of the 155,000 square-foot facility is now complete, and the center is expected to be fully operational this fall.

"Boeing pioneered a new era of digital aerospace engineering on programs like the T-7, MQ-25 and MQ-28, and now we're leading the way again by digitally transforming our entire

production system to build the next generation of advanced combat aircraft,” said Ted Colbert, Defense, Space & Security president and CEO. “The new Advanced Composite Fabrication Center and the factories that will follow it position Boeing to deliver the most digitally advanced, simply and efficiently produced and intelligently supported aircraft to military customers.”

Leveraging best practices from recent new-start programs like the MQ-28 Ghost Bat, MQ-25 Stingray, T-7A Red Hawk and proprietary efforts, the ACFC will enable Boeing to scale a platform-agnostic, modular and flexible digital production system across future BDS programs, providing unprecedented speed, agility and cost efficiency. Additional new factories supporting subsequent phases of production are under construction in the St. Louis region and slated to come online over the next few years.

“The ACFC capitalizes on the latest in digital engineering – from initial concept and design to the production floor and sustainment – and its capabilities are aligned directly with our customers’ need to design, build and field advanced combat aircraft on dramatically accelerated timelines,” said Steve Nordlund, Boeing Phantom Works vice president and general manager. “We are committed to a future where our platforms are more modular and adaptable, our software is more modifiable and scalable, and where our customers have a common experience across all of our products – providing disruptive advantages from seabed to space.”

James Honea Takes the Helm as the Next MCPON



Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday hands the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy cutlass to MCPON James Honea during the Change of Office ceremony held at Mahan Hall, United States Naval Academy, Sept. 8. *U.S. NAVY / Senior Chief Mass Communication Specialist Anastasia McCarroll*

ANNAPOLIS, Md. – Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Russell Smith passed the ceremonial cutlass, via the Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Michael Gilday, to James Honea during a change of office and retirement ceremony Sept. 8, the Office of the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy said Sept. 10.

The ceremony held at the U.S. Naval Academy's Mahan Hall marked the end of more than three decades of Naval service for MCPON Smith.

Smith has served as the 15th MCPON since Aug. 29, 2018. During

his term, he instituted Laying the Keel, an updated leadership development career path, revised the command master chief instruction, and the Sailor of the Year program. More importantly, he tirelessly advocated policy and program improvements for the Navy's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response program as well as increased Sailor access for mental health care to congressional members during his annual testimonies before the House Armed Services Committee.

Gilday presided over the ceremony and highlighted Smith's accomplishments during his naval career while thanking him for his leadership.

"Your tireless efforts to provide Sailors with mental, morale, and spiritual support has helped make our fleet more resilient and much more effective," said Gilday. "Your leadership ensured that our most important resource, our people, are ready to serve and defend the nation we love. Having conducted more than 200 fleet visits all over the world, your outreach and willingness to be there for Sailors and their families is what truly made your service so remarkable. Thank you for everything you have done over these past four years. Our Navy and our Navy family are much stronger than it was four years ago."

After the ceremonial passing of the MCPON cutlass, Honea took the helm of the enlisted force as the Navy's 16th MCPON. During the ceremony, he spoke about his top priorities: warfighting competency, professional and character development, and quality of life.

"When I was selected for MCPON, I thought heavily on what my tenure means and what I could bring to you all," said Honea. "I'm glad I chose to be challenged by this adventure and I'm proud of what it has brought me. I thank you all for accepting the same challenge and being on this journey with me. I have always been proud to be your Shipmate, and I'm privileged to

be your MCPON.”

The MCPON serves as an adviser to the CNO and to the chief of naval personnel in matters dealing with enlisted personnel and their families. The MCPON is also an adviser to boards dealing with enlisted personnel issues; is the enlisted representative of the Department of the Navy at special events; may be called upon to testify on enlisted personnel issues before Congress; and maintains a liaison with enlisted spouse organizations.

HII Begins Fabrication of Amphibious Transport Dock Ship Pittsburgh



HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division in Pascagoula, Mississippi. *HII*
PASCAGOULA, Miss. – HII's Ingalls Shipbuilding division

started fabrication of the U.S. Navy's newest San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock Pittsburgh (LPD 31) on Sept. 7, the company said in a release. The start of fabrication signifies that the first 100 tons of steel have been cut for the ship.

"The start of fabrication on LPD 31 demonstrates our ability to continue manufacturing quality ships for our Navy and Marine Corps partners," said Mike Pruitt, Ingalls Shipbuilding LPD program manager. "Our shipbuilders are excited to be reaching this milestone in construction and are committed to seeing Pittsburgh serve our nation well into the future."

Ingalls has delivered 12 San Antonio-class ships to the Navy and has three more under construction, including Richard M. McCool (LPD 29), Harrisburg (LPD 30) and Pittsburgh (LPD 31), which will be the second Flight II LPD.

LPD Flight II is the next generation amphibious ship to replace Whidbey Island (LSD 41) and Harpers Ferry (LSD 49) classes of dock landing ships. Amphibious transport docks are a major part of the Navy's 21st century expeditionary force, deployed with a U.S. Marine Corps Air-Ground Task Force for amphibious and expeditionary crisis response operations that range from deterrence and joint-force enablement to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

LPD 31 is the fifth Navy vessel to be named after the historic city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The first ship was an ironclad gunboat and served during the American Civil War. Since then, the name Pittsburgh has been assigned to four vessels that have served the U.S. during conflict.

SECDEF Announces Nominations of Marine Corps General Officers

ARLINGTON, Va. – Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III announced Sept. 9 the president has made the following nominations:

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. James F. Glynn for appointment to the grade of lieutenant general, with assignment as deputy commandant for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Quantico, Virginia. Glynn is currently serving as deputy commanding general, Training and Education Command, Quantico, Virginia.

Marine Corps Maj. Gen. Francis L. Donovan for appointment to the grade of lieutenant general, with assignment as vice commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, Pentagon, Washington, D.C. Donovan is currently serving as director, Office of Marine Corps Communication, Washington, D.C.

Marine Corps Reserve Brig. Gen. Leonard F. Anderson IV for appointment to the grade of major general. Anderson is currently serving as commanding general, 4th Marine Aircraft Wing, U.S. Marine Forces Reserve, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Cutter Tampa Returns Home following Successful 56-Day

Caribbean Sea Patrol



The USCGC Tampa returned to its Portsmouth, Virginia homeport on Aug. 24. *U.S. COAST GUARD*

PORTSMOUTH, Va. – The crew of the USCGC Tampa (WMEC 902) returned to their homeport in Portsmouth, Virginia, on Aug. 24 after a 56-day Caribbean Sea patrol, the Coast Guard Atlantic Area said Sept. 9.

During the patrol, Tampa's crew collaborated with 12 other Coast Guard cutters, numerous Coast Guard aircraft and other Department of Homeland Security boats and aircraft to detect, deter, and intercept unsafe and illegal ventures to the United States.

Tampa's crew primarily patrolled the South Florida Straits, south of the Florida Keys and the Windward Pass, off the northwest coast of Haiti, contributing to the interdiction,

care, and repatriation of 612 migrants from Haiti, Cuba and the Dominican Republic.

“Showcasing professionalism, teamwork, and empathy, our crew once again selflessly performed our assigned missions,” said Cmdr. Sky Holm, Tampa’s commanding officer. “I am continually impressed by their dedication and devotion to duty and I am humbled to be serving alongside them. We acknowledge the tremendous collaboration from team Coast Guard and our international and interagency partners, who seamlessly integrate to meet collective objectives. Of course, our crew sincerely appreciates the extraordinary assistance from our mission support units shore side, who keep our cutter operational, as well as the compassionate support from our loved ones ashore, who provide us strength while we are away.”

Tampa is a 270-foot medium-endurance cutter homeported in Portsmouth with 100 crewmembers. The cutter’s primary missions are counter drug operations, migrant interdiction, enforcing federal fishery laws, as well as search and rescue in support of Coast Guard operations throughout the Western Hemisphere.