

# Joint Strike Fighter Lot 15 Ceiling Allows 28 F-35s for Navy, Marine Corps



An F-35C Lightning II, assigned to the “Black Knights” of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314, prepares to launch from the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) while the ship is underway in the Philippine Sea. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Javier Reyes*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Defense Department has increased the ceiling for its contract for Lot 15 Joint Strike Fighters to 129, the department said in an Aug. 12 release.

The Naval Air Systems Command awarded Lockheed Martin a not-to-exceed \$7.63 billion firm-fixed-price, fixed-price incentive (firm target), un-definitized modification to a previously awarded advanced acquisition contract, the Defense Department said in the release. The modification increases the

contract ceiling to procure 129 F-35s.

Of the 129 F-35s, the total includes three F-35Bs and 10 F-35Cs for the U.S. Marine Corps and 10 F-35Cs for the U.S. Navy. The numbers notionally will enable the Navy and Marine Corps each to add one F-35C squadron to its force structure.

The total also includes 49 F-35As for the U.S. Air Force; 32 F-35As and four F-35Bs for non-U.S. program partners; and 16 F-35As for Foreign Military Sales customers. The contract also includes 69 shipsets of hardware.

The Navy currently has two F-35C fleet squadrons on strength, while the Marine Corps has one. The Corps also fields five fleet F-35B squadrons.

Work on the contract is expected to be completed in October 2024.

---

# **U.S. Coast Guard Participating in Operations Island Chief, Blue Pacific 2022**



The USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140) crew arrives in Manus, Papua New Guinea, on Aug. 14, 2022, from Guam as part of a patrol headed south to assist partner nations in upholding and asserting their sovereignty while protecting U.S. national interests. *U.S. Coast Guard / SW3 Victor Villanueva, NMCB-FOUR MANUS, Papua New Guinea* – The U.S. Coast Guard is participating with partners to support the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency-led Operation Island Chief and the larger Operation Blue Pacific through patrols in the Western Pacific in August and September 2022, the Coast Guard’s Micronesia Sector said in an Aug. 14 release.

“Employing our unique authorities, capabilities, and access within Oceania is a privilege. We are eager to further integrate with our Allies and regional partners to protect national interests and combat illicit maritime activity such as illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing,” said Capt. Nick Simmons, U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam commander. “Strengthening governance and modeling professional maritime behavior on the high seas and the surrounding waters is one way to counter predatory activity and reinforce the Pacific as a positive center of gravity and sustainable economy.”

The operation covers a substantial area of the Pacific on the high seas and the exclusive economic zones of the Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Australia, and the Solomon Islands, while renewing relationships bolstered by local knowledge and expertise.

The USCGC Oliver Henry (WPC 1140), a 154-foot Sentinel-class fast response cutter, and crew deployed from Guam are making their first port call of the patrol in Manus, Papua New Guinea. During the patrol, the cutter will also have aerial support from a forward deployed HC-130 Hercules airplane crew from U.S. Coast Guard Air Station Barbers Point and New Zealand Defence Force P-3 Orion airplane crew. Where possible, the crew will also conduct subject matter expert exchanges and engagements.

Operation Island Chief is one of four operations conducted annually under FFA. It includes the Pacific waters of 11 participating FFA member nations – Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, the Marshall Islands, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.

“The Oliver Henry crew are committed to regional collaboration and sharing best practices to strengthen our relationships and information sharing,” said Lt. Freddy Hofschneider, commanding officer of Oliver Henry. “The U.S. Coast Guard has been a dedicated partner in the region for decades. We appreciate the support of our colleagues as we take this ship across vast distances in this region, making some transits and port calls for the first time.”

A significant emphasis of the operation for the U.S. Coast Guard is the ongoing emphasis on fisheries and resource protection.

“The Pacific Ocean is home to some of the world’s most abundant fisheries,” said Simmons. “These fisheries are living

marine resources, part of the global food chain, representing food security and an economic engine for many of the Pacific Island Nations. By leveraging our cutters, aircraft, and intelligence professionals, the U.S. Coast Guard continues our strong partnership with the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency and its members to protect this vital marine ecosystem and ensure continued economic prosperity and a thriving ocean for future generations.”

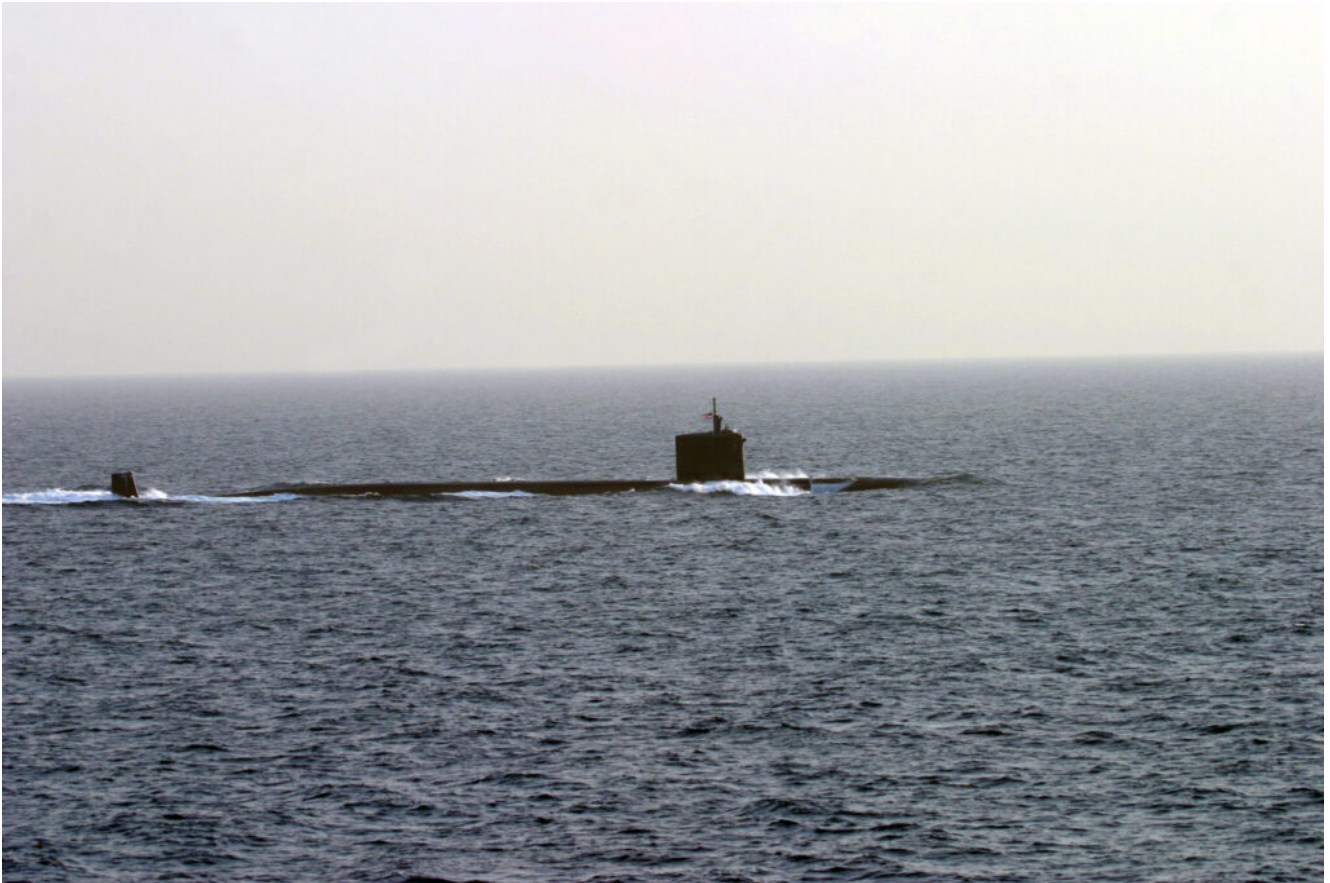
According to FFA, partners are seeing increasing success through multilateral operations in the Pacific to tackle IUUF. These operations evolved from a focus on protecting against illegal boats entering the fisheries to policing the operations of licensed vessels that haven’t followed the rules and regulations governing their activities. The Pacific region is a vast expanse, and collaboration across the many partners, providing personnel and assets, is crucial to ongoing success.

The Oliver Henry is the 40th Sentinel-class fast response cutter. The ship arrived in Guam and was commissioned along with its sister ships, Myrtle Hazard and Frederick Hatch, in July 2021. In the time since, the crew has participated in several search and rescues cases, completed a counternarcotics patrol off Guam with the Japan Coast Guard patrol vessel Mizuho, and conducted sovereignty and fisheries patrols in the Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam area of responsibility.

---

**General Dynamics Electric  
Boat Awarded \$236.2 Million**

# Contract Modification for Support of Operational Submarines



The Los Angeles-class attack submarine USS Hartford, shown underway in the Persian Gulf in 2009. *U.S. NAVY*

GROTON, Conn. – General Dynamics Electric Boat, a business unit of General Dynamics, was awarded a modification of the previously awarded U.S. Navy contract for engineering, technical, design and planning yard support for operational strategic and attack submarines, the company announced in an Aug. 12 release.

The contract modification has a value of \$236,182,606 million. Work will be performed in Groton, Connecticut; Kings Bay, Georgia; Bangor, Washington; Pearl Harbor, Hawaii; North Kingston, Rhode Island; and Newport, Rhode Island, and is expected to be completed by September 2023.

“The shipbuilders of Electric Boat are proud to continue our role providing lifecycle maintenance and modernization support to the U.S. Navy’s operational submarine fleet in keeping with our mission to provide sailors with the advantage that helps protect our nation,” said Kevin Graney, president of General Dynamics Electric Boat.

General Dynamics Electric Boat designs, builds, repairs and modernizes nuclear submarines for the U.S. Navy. Headquartered in Groton, Connecticut, the company employs approximately 18,000 people.

---

## **ONR ‘SCOUTs’ for Creative Warfighting Solutions at Naval Academy Event**

ARLINGTON, Va. – A web of connecting sensors and buoys for conducting ISR (intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance) in the maritime environment. Specialized GPS that can monitor fishing routes and pinpoint suspicious activity that might reveal the presence of drug smugglers.

These were just two of the ideas presented by recent U.S. Naval Academy graduates during a “design thinking” event aimed at addressing a major challenge facing the Joint Interagency Task Force-South (JIATF-S) – limited resources to cover a huge area of operations to counter narcotics smuggling into the U.S.,” said Warren Duffie Jr., Office of Naval Research, in a release.

The Academy event – which lasted from Aug. 2-5 and culminated in presentations to Chief of Naval Research Rear Adm. Lorin

Selby and other stakeholders – was a partnership between the Office of Naval Research (ONR)-sponsored SCOUT initiative, JIATF-S and multiple warfare centers.

“My job is to train people to think differently and challenge the current system,” said Selby, “and this generation is the one that will change things. We’re trying to change the conversation and talk openly about challenges, obstacles and opportunities to learn and improve.”

The event was spearheaded by SCOUT, an ongoing, multiagency experimentation campaign that rapidly brings solutions to warfighter challenges. SCOUT is committed to getting nontraditional, commercial-off-the-shelf, government-developed and/or government-sponsored technologies to the fleet rapidly.

Currently, SCOUT is helping JIATF-S, which works with U.S. Southern Command and partner naval forces to leverage all-domain technologies and unmanned capabilities to target, detect and monitor illicit drug trafficking in the air and maritime domains. This facilitates interdiction and apprehension to reduce the flow of drugs, as well as degrade and dismantle transnational criminal organizations.

“We wanted to get fresh minds and perspectives to study the warfighting problems faced by JIATF-S,” said Dan Cabel, who heads up SCOUT. “What better minds than those at the Naval Academy, who will surely bring creative thinking and viewpoints to real-world challenges?”

During the Academy event, the graduates divided into two teams and listened to JIATF-S operators and subject matter experts describe challenges and needs unique to their mission. From there, they grouped these issues into themes that would serve as the basis for generating ideas. Afterward, they held a Shark Tank-style round robin to pitch ideas and select the best four for final presentation.

In addition to the ideas about connecting sensors and buoys and specialized GPS, other concepts included using artificial intelligence and machine learning to predict where drug runners might operate – as well as improve data gathering for asset allocation and case management.

“An event like this is fantastic for exposing these Academy graduates, who are now newly minted Navy and Marine Corps officers, to operational issues and challenges they will face when leading our warfighters,” said Lt. Cmdr. Allison Mabrey, lead facilitator of the event. “We can’t wait to see them bring their innovative ideas and skills to use in the fleet.”

Next steps involve SCOUT and JIATF-S reviewing the four presentations and determining which aspects could be incorporated into experimentation exercises. The Academy graduates will be part of this implementation process.

“This has been a fantastic experience,” said Ens. Skyler Schork, one of the presenters. “It’s not often that someone fresh out of the Academy gets to brief a two-star admiral. It’s inspiring to know that naval leadership is interested in the ideas and viewpoints of an ensign.”

The Academy event was part of the larger SCOUT Experimentation Campaign, which will leverage the Naval Research and Development Establishment communities, capabilities and enterprise tools to solve warfighter-driven problems. The goal of SCOUT is a series of innovation sprint events, exercises and experimentations to encourage learning and innovation, in order to rapidly develop technologies and techniques to improve warfighting capability—and assist in quicker leadership decision-making. These events will ultimately culminate in a large-scale demonstration early next year.

---

# Marines Commemorate 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Guadalcanal



U.S. Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Steven R. Rudder, commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific, makes remarks during the anniversary of the Battle of Guadalcanal at the Guadalcanal American Memorial in the Solomon Islands, Aug. 7, 2022. The ceremony commemorated the 80th anniversary of the battle, and served to honor the fallen and strengthen the U.S. relationship with the Solomon Islands and other Pacific allies and partners. The historic battle was codenamed Operation Watchtower and was the first major offensive and decisive victory for the allied forces in the Pacific theater. *U.S. Marine Corps / Cpl. Dillon L. Buck*

CAMP H. M. SMITH, Hawaii – Gen. Steven Rudder, commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific (MARFORPAC), traveled to Honiara, Solomon Islands, as part of a U.S. interagency delegation led by Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman from Aug. 7-9, said

Chuck Little, of [U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific](#), in a release. The delegation, which also included U.S. Ambassador to Australia Caroline Kennedy and other senior U.S. military officers, participated in several events commemorating the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Guadalcanal, and further strengthened long-standing partnerships between the United States and the nations in attendance: Solomon Islands, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.

Rudder was joined on the trip by other senior U.S. military officers, including fellow Marines Lt. Gen. Stephen Sklenka, deputy commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command; Lt. Gen. George Smith, commanding general, I Marine Expeditionary Force; and Maj. Gen. Benjamin Watson, commanding general, 1st Marine Division. The delegation included U.S. military officers from units that also heroically fought during the battle: Vice Admiral Andrew Tiongson, commander, U.S. Coast Guard Pacific Area; Rear Adm. Jeffrey J. Kilian, commander, Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command Pacific/director, Fleet Civil Engineer, U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. Navy; and Maj. Gen. Joseph Ryan, commanding general, 25th Infantry Division, U.S. Army.

On Sunday, Aug. 7, the United States hosted a memorial ceremony on Skyline Ridge, the site of the World War II Guadalcanal American Memorial. The hour-long ceremony, which started at 7 a.m., was largely planned and executed by MARFORPAC Marines. The ceremony was the first time a joint service color guard marched on Guadalcanal, carrying the national ensign and flags from each of the military services that fought in the battle: the U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Coast Guard. A quintet from the 1st Marine Division provided music for the event.

In his remarks, Rudder highlighted the important impact of the battle.

“So we’re here to remember those sacrifices that were made; it

changed the history of the Solomon Islands, and it changed the history of our nation," Rudder said. "I do not want to pass up the opportunity to show my dear appreciation for the Solomon Islanders. They were instrumental in everything we did and they endured hardships that we can't imagine."

"But it makes no sense to remember those sacrifices without looking to the future; and we pledge from Indo-PACOM and the United States Marine Corps, that we will look forward."

Other speakers at the ceremony included American Battle Monuments Commissioner Mr. Bud Pettigrew and Deputy Secretary of State Mrs. Wendy Sherman.

Sherman, whose Marine father fought and was wounded on Guadalcanal, spoke of the impact of the battle on both the military and Solomon Islanders. "With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy for us gathered here today to recognize the Battle of Guadalcanal as a turning point in the Pacific theater, and indeed in the Second World War. But for the Marines patrolling the dense and humid jungle, who had to be wary of both enemy snipers and crippling disease; for the sailors who fought terrifying night battles in the seas around these islands; for the airmen who engaged in countless dogfights in the skies above, the future was unknown and unknowable. And in many of those places – like here in Solomon Islands – civilians saw their world upended as well, as bombs and mortars fell on their towns and villages, destroying the lives of innocents."

During the ceremony, Sklenka and Rudder placed a wreath at the base of the monument on behalf of all U.S. service members.

Immediately following the U.S. ceremony, the Solomon Scouts and Coast Watchers (SSCW) Trust hosted a memorial event at the SSCW monument. At this ceremony, during which Ambassador Kennedy spoke, MARFORPAC provided a color guard at the request

of the event organizers. Sklenka and Rudder laid a wreath at this ceremony on behalf of all U.S. service members.

Following the SSCW ceremony, the U.S. delegation traveled to the Point Cruz Yacht Club to attend a ceremony hosted by the U.S. Coast Guard, honoring Medal of Honor recipient Douglas Albert Munro. Afterward, the U.S. delegation traveled to the Japanese War Memorial Peace Park for a ceremony hosted by the Government of Japan. At both ceremonies, Sklenka and Rudder laid a wreath on behalf of all U.S. service members.

On Monday, Aug. 8, the U.S. delegation attended the fifth and final ceremony, which was hosted by the government of Solomon Islands. The event took place at the Bloody Ridge National Peace Park, which was named after an important battle fought by U.S. Marines in September 1942.

Throughout the seven-month battle for the island, American forces fought side-by-side with Allies from the Solomon Islands, Australia, Britain, New Zealand, the Kingdom of Tonga, and Fiji. The bravery, determination, and commitment of the Allied forces was critical to ensuring the strategic victory that marked a turning point of the war in the Pacific.

In her remarks at the Skyline Ridge ceremony, Deputy Secretary of State Sherman reflected on what came out of the battle for Guadalcanal 80 year ago. "Today – as we have been every day since the war ended – former combatants are united here as partners in peace. We have built schools and clinics together, conducted scientific research together, shared vaccines to combat the pandemic together. We have helped each other recover from natural disasters, protected each other from the impacts of climate change. We have celebrated and mourned and grown together. And above all – forged in the experience of the Second World War and made deeper with each passing year – we have built profound and enduring ties with each other, as

one Pacific family.”

---

# Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group Returns from Indo-Pacific Deployment



USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) returns to Naval Station North Island Aug. 11 following a seven-month deployment. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Maria Llanos*

SAN DIEGO – The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group returned home Aug. 11, marking the end of a seven-month deployment to U.S. 3rd and 7th Fleet area of operations, the USS Abraham Lincoln’s public affairs office said in a release.

The strike group’s flagship, Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), arrived at Naval Air Station North Island, while Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser USS Mobile Bay (CG 53) and Arleigh Burke-class guided missile

destroyer USS Spruance (DDG 111) also arrived at Naval Base San Diego. USS Gridley (DDG 101) and USS Momsen (DDG 102) returned to Naval Station Everett, Washington.

After departing their homeport in San Diego, the strike group conducted dual carrier operations in the South China Sea with the Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group to demonstrate the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command's ability to deliver a powerful maritime force with a combined 14,000 Sailors and Marines.

While underway for 220 days, the strike group sailed over 65,000 nautical miles conducting deterrence and presence operations and multinational exercises, including maritime security operations, integrated training between surface and air units, long-range maritime strike, anti-submarine warfare, information warfare operations, maritime interdiction operations, personnel recovery, air defense operations, multiple ship navigation, formation maneuvering and refueling-at-sea operations.

"Abraham Lincoln Sailors have worked exceptionally hard during this dynamic deployment and should be proud of their accomplishments," said Capt. Amy Bauernschmidt, Abraham Lincoln commanding officer. "It is incredibly humbling to serve alongside these professionals and observe their dedication to the mission. Every day of our seven month deployment, this talented crew displayed grit, resilience and professionalism in the execution of their jobs. Their hard work made the difference as we operated alongside joint and combined forces to ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific."

The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group is the first carrier strike group to deploy with a U.S. Marine Corps F-35C Lightning II squadron, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314, and the second to deploy with a Navy CMV-22 Osprey squadron, Fleet Logistics Multi-Mission Squadron (VRM) 30. During the deployment, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9, embarked aboard Lincoln, executed more than 21,307 fixed-wing and

helicopter flight hours comprising of 10,250 sorties, 8,437 launches and 8,487 aircraft arrestments.

The strike group operated alongside other strike groups including the Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group, led by Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), and the Essex Amphibious Ready Group, led by Wasp-class amphibious assault ship USS Essex (LHD 2).

The strike group consists of Abraham Lincoln, embarked staffs of CSG-3, CVW-9 and Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 21, Mobile Bay, and destroyers USS Fitzgerald (DDG 62), Gridley, Sampson and Spruance. Fitzgerald will return to San Diego at a later date.

The squadrons that make up Carrier Air Wing Nine 9 are fighter attack squadron (VFA) 41, VFA 151 and VFA 14; VMFA 314; VRM 30; electronic attack squadron (VAQ) 133; airborne early warning squadron (VAW) 117; helicopter sea combat squadron (HSC) 14; and helicopter maritime strike squadron (HSM) 71.

---

## **Newport News Shipbuilding to Host Ceremonial Keel-Laying of Enterprise (CVN 80)**

# ENTERPRISE CVN 80

CEREMONIAL KEEL LAYING



NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – HII’s Newport News Shipbuilding division will host a ceremonial keel-laying for Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carrier Enterprise (CVN 80) on Saturday, Aug. 27, the company said in a release.

CVN 80 is the third Gerald R. Ford-class aircraft carrier. Designed to replace Nimitz-class carriers, the Ford class features a new nuclear power plant, a redesigned island, electromagnetic catapults, improved weapons movement, an enhanced flight deck capable of increased aircraft sortie rates, and growth margin for future technologies. Enterprise will be the first aircraft carrier not only designed digitally but also built digitally.

Olympic gold medalists Simone Biles and Katie Ledecky are the ship’s sponsors. Ledecky will participate in the keel-laying ceremony in person, while Biles will participate via video.

CVN 80 will be the ninth Navy vessel to bear the name Enterprise. It carries on the name of the first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier in history, CVN 65, which was also built at Newport News Shipbuilding. As America recognizes the 100-year legacy of aircraft carriers this year, all nuclear-powered aircraft carriers operating in the U.S. Navy fleet today were built at Newport News Shipbuilding.

This event is not open to public but will be livestreamed:  
<https://HII.com/cvn80>

---

# George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group Deploys



The aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) transits the Atlantic Ocean, June 13. The George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group deployed on Aug. 10. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Samuel Wagner*  
NORFOLK, Va. – Commander, Carrier Strike Group 10, George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group (GHWBCSG) deployed aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) from Naval Station Norfolk, Aug. 10, the carrier strike group

said in a release.

The aircraft carrier joins guided-missile cruiser USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55) and guided-missile destroyers USS Delbert D. Black (DDG 119), USS Farragut (DDG 99) and USS Truxtun (DDG 103) which recently departed from their homeports. Delbert D. Black is underway on its first deployment.

“We bring the full-range of U.S. and allied maritime power in support of national security and defense objectives wherever we sail,” said Rear Adm. Dennis Velez, commander, CSG-10, GHWBCSG. “Throughout our deployment we will continue to operate with and reassure our allies, maintain open sea lanes for trade and increased prosperity, and deter – or if necessary – destroy our adversaries.”

This marks the first deployment for George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) since 2017. The carrier completed an intensive maintenance availability after the 2017 deployment before returning to the operational fleet to begin a robust deployment readiness cycle in late 2021.

“George H.W. Bush Sailors are warriors, leaders, teachers, and ambassadors operating forward, representing their families, hometowns, and the American people wherever we operate,” said Capt. David-Tavis Pollard, commanding officer of George H.W. Bush. “President Bush said, ‘Let future generations understand the burdens and blessings of freedom. Let them say we stood where duty required us to stand.’ We know what an awesome responsibility we have to preserve liberty, justice, and freedom while embodying the principles of service, grit, humility, and resilience our namesake showed throughout his lifetime.”

The GHWBCSG is comprised of the Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10 staff, George H.W. Bush, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 7, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 26 staff and units, the Information Warfare Commander, and the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser

USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55). In total, the strike group is a force of more than 6,000 Sailors, capable of carrying out a wide variety of missions around the globe.

The squadrons of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 7 embarked aboard George H.W. Bush are the “Jolly Rogers” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 103, the “Pukin’ Dogs” of VFA-143, the “Bluetails” of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 121, the “Nightdippers” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 5 located in Norfolk, Virginia; the “Sidewinders” of VFA-86 and the “Nighthawks” of VFA-136 located in Lemoore, California; the “Patriots” of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 140 based in Whidbey Island, Washington; and the “Grandmasters” of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 46 located in Mayport, Florida.

---

## **HII Marks Construction Milestone in Virginia-Class Submarine Massachusetts**



The USS Massachusetts, nearing completion. *HII*  
NEWPORT NEWS, Va. – HII’s Newport News Shipbuilding division has achieved a significant milestone in construction of Virginia-class submarine Massachusetts (SSN 798), the company said Aug. 10.

Shipbuilders working on Massachusetts recently reached pressure hull complete, meaning that all of the hull sections were joined to form a single, watertight unit. This is the last major construction milestone before the submarine is launched.

“Our highly skilled shipbuilders are driven to serve the nation by delivering great submarines that help ensure America’s undersea superiority,” said Jason Ward, Newport News Shipbuilding vice president of Virginia-class submarine construction. “Reaching this point in construction demonstrates our commitment to getting Massachusetts ready as soon as possible to become part of the U.S. Navy fleet.”

Newport News Shipbuilding is one of only two shipyards capable

of designing and building nuclear-powered submarines. The advanced capabilities of Virginia-class submarines increase firepower, maneuverability and stealth.

This milestone on Massachusetts comes following the delivery of USS Montana (SSN 794) and launch of USS New Jersey (SSN 796) at Newport News Shipbuilding earlier in 2022, as the shipyard continues to invest in its workforce and facilities to make steady progress on delivering these important assets to the Navy.

Massachusetts is the 25th Virginia-class fast attack submarine.

---

## **Carrier Air Wing 9 Returns from Indo-Pacific Deployment**



An E-2D Advanced Hawkeye assigned to the “Wallbangers” Airborne Command and Control Squadron (VAW) 117 arrives at Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC) following a seven-month deployment to U.S. 3rd Fleet and 7th Fleet areas of operations with Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9, embarked aboard USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72). *U.S. NAVY*

SAN DIEGO – Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9, embarked aboard Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), returned from a seven-month deployment to the U.S. 3rd and 7th Fleet areas of operations on Aug. 9, USS Abraham Lincoln public affairs said in a release.

CVW-9 is the first carrier strike group to deploy with a U.S. Marine Corps F-35C Lightning II squadron, Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314, and the second to deploy with a Navy CMV-22 Osprey squadron, Fleet Logistics Multi-Mission Squadron (VRM) 30.

During the deployment, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9 executed more than 21,307 fixed-wing and helicopter flight hours comprising of 10,250 sorties, 8,437 launches and 8,487 aircraft

arrestments.

“Carrier Air Wing 9 Sailors and Marines worked together over the last seven months, providing a credible deterrent to any potential adversary in the Pacific,” said Capt. Lew Callaway, commander, CVW-9. “Naval aviators culminated 100 years of aircraft carrier aviation history operating fourth- and fifth-generation aircraft from a Nimitz-class aircraft carrier at sea. We are grateful for the chance to serve, and celebrate our return to home port, family, and friends.”

CVW-9 participated in dual carrier operations in the South China Sea with the Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group, as well as joint exercise Valiant Shield in June 2022, and bilateral exercises Noble Fusion in February and Jungle Warfare in March, both with the Japanese Self-Defense Force. Most recently, CVW-9 trained alongside 26 participating nations during Exercise Rim of the Pacific 2022 in July.

“Words cannot express just how proud I am of the Sailors and Marines attached to CVW-9,” said Master Chief Petty Officer Craig Vavruska, command master chief, CVW-9. “They expertly applied their training and faced each mission with strength and resilience. Their families have a lot to be proud of.”

CVW-9 and Lincoln deployed Jan. 3 as part of the Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group. Along with CVW-9 and Lincoln, the ABECSG also consists of the embarked staffs of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 3, and Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 21; the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Mobile Bay (CG 53), and the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Fitzgerald (DDG 62), USS Gridley (DDG 101), USS Sampson (DDG 102) and USS Spruance (DDG 111).