

GERALD R. FORD CARRIER STRIKE GROUP DEPLOYS



230502-N-QI061-0364 NORFOLK, Va. – Line handlers stand by as the capital ship of the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group (GRFCSG), the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), departs Naval Station Norfolk for a routine deployment, May 2. GRFCSG consists of Gerald R. Ford, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 12, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 2, Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Normandy (CG 60), and Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyers USS Ramage (DDG 61), USS McFaul (DDG 74), and USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116). (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Nathan T. Beard)

[Release from Carrier Strike Group \(CSG\) 12 Public Affairs](#)

02 May 2023

NORFOLK, Va. – The capital ship of the Gerald R. Ford Carrier

Strike Group (GRFCSG), the first-in-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), departed Naval Station Norfolk for a routine deployment, May 2.

“This strike group is the cornerstone of our Navy’s forward operations, capable of meeting any tasking provided by regional combatant commanders to ensure peace and stability at sea,” said Rear Adm. Greg Huffman, Commander, Carrier Strike Group 12. “Our presence at sea throughout the deployment will provide reassurance to our partners and Allies that sea lanes will remain open and our joint operations will demonstrate our commitment to interoperability and maritime stability.”

Ford’s second deployment marks the flagship’s first combat deployment, following its two-month deployment to the U.S. 2nd and 6th Fleet areas of operation in autumn 2022.

“The Sailors of Gerald R. Ford are ready and able to perform because of the strenuous training they have put in to get this ship ready to deploy, and also in large part to the support of their families and friends,” said Capt. Rick Burgess, Ford’s commanding officer. “This ship and crew are actively reshaping the face of our Navy’s capabilities and strengthening the future of naval aviation.”

The GRFCSG provides an inherently flexible naval force capable of deploying across combatant commands to meet emerging missions, deter potential adversaries, reassure allies and partners, enhance security and guarantee the free flow of global commerce.

The GRFCSG consists of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 12 staff, Gerald R. Ford, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 2 staff and units, Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Normandy (CG 60) and the Information Warfare Commander. In total, the GRFCSG deploys with more than 6,000 Sailors across all platforms ready to respond globally to combatant commander’s tasking.

The ships of DESRON 2 are the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Ramage (DDG 61), USS McFaul (DDG 74) and USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116).

The squadrons of CVW-8 embarked aboard Gerald R. Ford are the "Tridents" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 9, the "Bear Aces" of Airborne Command and Control Squadron (VAW) 124, the "Rawhides" of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 40 located in Norfolk, Va., the "Ragin' Bulls" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 37, the "Blacklions" a of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 213, the "Golden Warriors" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 87, the "Tomcatters" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 31 located in Virginia Beach, Va., the "Gray Wolves" of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 142 located in Whidbey Island, Wa., and the "Spartans" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 70 located in Mayport, Fla.

Ford is the U.S. Navy's newest and most advanced aircraft carrier. As the first-in-class ship of Ford-class aircraft carriers, CVN 78 represents a generational leap in the U.S. Navy's capacity to project power on a global scale. Ford-class aircraft carriers introduce 23 new technologies, including Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System, Advanced Arresting Gear and Advanced Weapons Elevators. The new systems incorporated onto Ford-class ships are designed to generate a higher sortie rate with a 20% smaller crew than a Nimitz-class carrier, paving the way forward for naval aviation.

For more information about the USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), visit <https://www.airlant.usff.navy.mil/cvn78/> and follow along on Facebook: @USSGeraldRFord, Instagram: @cvn78_grford, Twitter: @Warship_78, DVIDS www.dvids.net/CVN78 and LinkedIn at USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78).

Navy Declares Initial Operational Capability of Mine Countermeasures Mission Package



[Release from Naval Sea Systems Command](#)

By Program Executive Office for Unmanned and Small Combatants
Public Affairs

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Navy's Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) mine countermeasures mission package (MCM MP) and AN/AQS-20 Sonar Mine Detection Sets achieved initial operational capability (IOC), officials announced on May 1.

IOC was declared by Vice Adm. Scott Conn, deputy chief of naval operations for warfighting requirements and capabilities (OPNAV N9).

An integrated suite of unmanned maritime systems and sensors, the MCM MP counteracts mines in the littorals while increasing the host vessel's standoff distance from the threat area. Embarked with the MCM MP, an LCS or a vessel of opportunity can conduct the full spectrum of detect-to-engage operations (hunt, neutralize, and sweep) against mine threats using sensors and weapons deployed from the MCM Unmanned Surface Vehicle (USV), an MH-60S multi-mission helicopter, and associated support equipment.

"The declaration of the MCM MP and AQS-20 IOC is a significant accomplishment for the LCS Mission Modules program and the future of mine countermeasures," said Capt. Godfrey Weekes, program manager of the LCS mission modules program office (PMS 420). "This milestone enables the Navy to field modern MCM systems to the fleet, replacing aging platforms and sensors. The new equipment utilizes cutting-edge unmanned and autonomous technologies and keeps our Sailors out of harm's way."

The AN/AQS-20 is a mine hunting and identification system with sensors housed in an underwater towed body that integrates the Wideband Forward-Looking Sonar (WBFLS), two multi-function Side Look Synthetic Aperture Sonars (MFSLS), and Digital Gap Fill Sonar (DGFS) for the detection, classification, and localization of targets. The integration of the Electro-Optic Identification (EOID) sensor allows additional capability. Like the Unmanned Influence Sweep System (UISS), which achieved IOC in July of 2022, the AN/AQS-20 is towed from the MCM USV.

"Achieving IOC of the entire mine countermeasures mission package is the result of rigorous testing and evaluation of each component of the package and then integrating the systems

and the mission to ensure the fleet is receiving the best MCM capabilities possible,” said Rear Adm. Casey Moton, program executive officer, unmanned and small combatants (PEO USC), which oversees the LCS mission modules program. “This is also a critical step in the Navy’s progress towards the hybrid fleet described in Force Design 2045 by providing a modular MCM capability that leverages unmanned technologies to prosecute mines.”

The MCM MP IOC declaration follows rigorous initial operational testing and evaluation (IOT&E) of the full mission package, including the AN/AQS-20 system, during the fall of 2022 aboard USS Cincinnati (LCS 20).

Brig. Gen. Marcus Annibale, director of Expeditionary Warfare (OPNAV N95) and resource sponsor for mine warfare, noted the importance of the IOC declaration.

“Fielding the MCM MP on Independence-Class LCS is one of the top priorities for OPNAV N95 in order to deliver the capability to the warfighters forward in the fleet. Mine countermeasures are a critical enabler for the joint force and in safeguarding sea-lanes for the global commons.” He also added, “This new capability includes advanced technologies in unmanned systems, allowing greater standoff from the LCS platform as the ‘mothership,’ as well as providing greater precision and capacity while keeping our personnel out of the minefield.”

PEO Unmanned and Small Combatants designs, develops, builds, maintains and modernizes the Navy’s expanding family of unmanned maritime systems, mine warfare systems and small surface combatants.

USNS Bruce C. Heezen (T-AGS 64) arrives in Monaco for IHO Assembly 2023



[Release from Naval Oceanography Public Affairs Office](#)

By Naval Oceanography Public Affairs Office

MONACO CITY, Monaco – The Pathfinder-class oceanographic survey ship USNS Bruce C. Heezen (T-AGS 64) arrived in Monaco City, Monaco, May 1, 2023, for a scheduled port visit to participate in the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) Assembly 2023.

The Assembly is formed by the representatives of 98 Member States. It meets every three years to provide general guidance on the functioning and work of the Organization, as well as taking decisions of technical and administrative nature.

The ship's presence in Monaco is a demonstration of the U.S. Navy's continued commitment and support to the European region and reinforces the strong bond between the United States and Europe.

Naval Oceanography operates the T-AGS class of ships, owned and operated by Military Sealift Command, to conduct scientific work such as oceanography, hydrography, and many other scientific fields from the ocean floor to the stars.

The U.S. and Monaco, along with the IHO, are committed to working together and improving collaboration on the collection of scientific data to help create a safer ocean for all.

Bruce C. Heezen will host a reception later this week to support the US delegation in hosting representatives from many of the countries participating.

The International Hydrographic Organization works to ensure that all the world's seas, oceans, and navigable waters are surveyed and charted, thereby supporting the safety of navigation and the protection of the marine environment. It coordinates the activities of national hydrographic offices and sets standards in order to promote uniformity in nautical charts and documents. It issues survey best practices and provides guidelines to maximize the use of hydrographic information.

Naval Oceanography has approximately 2,500 globally distributed military and civilian personnel, who collect, process, and exploit environmental information to assist Fleet and Joint Commanders in all warfare areas to guarantee the U.S. Navy's freedom of action in the physical battlespace from the depths of the ocean to the stars.

Bollinger Shipyards to Refit NOAA Ship Ronald H. Brown



Side view of NOAA Ship Ronald H. Brown underway. Image courtesy of Wade Blake/NOAA.

[Release from Bollinger Shipyards](#)

At 274 feet, the Ronald H. Brown is the largest ship in the NOAA fleet

Refit will create 100 jobs at Bollinger Mississippi Repair

Work is scheduled to be completed by summer 2024

PASCAGOULA, Ms., – (May 2, 2023) – Bollinger Shipyards has begun fabrication at its newly acquired Mississippi repair facility, Bollinger Mississippi Repair, in preparation to

refit the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (“NOAA”) Ship [Ronald H. Brown](#), the largest ship in NOAA’s fleet. The overhaul is expected to extend the life of the vessel, first launched in 1996, by an additional 15 years. Work is scheduled to be complete by summer 2024.

“Here on the Gulf Coast, we’re intimately familiar with the breadth and importance of NOAA’s mission, so we’re proud to be entrusted to extend the service life of the *Ronald H. Brown*,” said Ben Bordelon, President and CEO of Bollinger Shipyards. “The refit will be performed by our team at our newly acquired Bollinger Mississippi Repair facility, which is capable of executing projects from simple to the most complex, and doing so with the highest levels of quality, support and service in our industry. We look forward to supporting the NOAA mission with a vessel that will continue to serve as a platform for cutting-edge research and exploration for many years to come.”

“NOAA Ship *Ronald H. Brown* is a global class vessel supporting scientific research to increase our understanding of climate and the ocean,” said NOAA Commissioned Corps Capt. Amanda Goeller, Commanding Officer of NOAA Marine Operations Center – Atlantic. “These repairs, system overhauls and modernization will allow the ship to continue operating for many years to come.”

The refit of the 27-year-old ship will be performed at Bollinger Mississippi Repair in Pascagoula, Mississippi, adding an additional 15 years to the original 30 year expectant service life of the vessel. During the refit modification, the propulsion system will largely be replaced with new more environmentally friendly diesel generators,

renewal of the bow thruster and propulsion motors, new switchboards, control systems, and alarms. Additional ship systems that are scheduled to be upgraded include the potable water plants, sewage plant, uncontaminated seawater sampling system, HVAC systems, tank level indicators, navigational components, radar renewals, overhead lighting, and ballast and exterior fuel tank vent renewals. Bollinger will replace much of the ship's piping, along with steel as identified by the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS).

The vessel refit is scheduled to be completed and redelivered to NOAA in August 2024.

To perform the work, over 100 jobs will be created at Bollinger Mississippi Repair, where the company will be looking to hire Pipefitters, Pipe Welders, Shipfitters, Ship Welders, Riggers, Scaffold Builders, and other production support positions. Additional positions need to be filled to continue repair work on semi-submersible rigs and marine vessels on drydock and at the wet dock.

The ship is named to honor the late Ronald H. Brown, the first African American to serve as Secretary of Commerce. Brown made it his mission to generate jobs and provide opportunities for ordinary Americans, and he was an ardent supporter of the NOAA fleet. He was killed in a plane crash on April 3, 1996, while on a trade mission to Bosnia.

100+ RI Students Connect with Industry, Explore Careers in Defense



[Release from SENEDIA](#)

Providence, RI – Project MFG, SENEDIA, the alliance for defense tech, talent, and innovation, and General Dynamics Electric Boat hosted the inaugural Project MFG Rhode Island Maritime Welding Competition yesterday at the Providence Career & Technical Academy. At the event, Trey Lazauskas from CHARIH0tech was awarded first prize for successfully welding a model submarine.

This collaborative effort, which drew more than 100 students from the region, was organized to raise awareness about high-skill, high-tech, high-wage careers in submarine shipbuilding and maritime manufacturing, including welding, machining, and logistics. In addition to a career expo where students could learn more about opportunities in the industry, more than a dozen employers were on site to engage with and begin recruiting students.

“The workers we will need in the future to build the submarines we are contracting for today are only in elementary school. That’s how significant and sustained the demand is for fostering the pipeline for next-generation talent,” said Shawn Coyne, vice president of Human Resources at General Dynamics Electric Boat. “We have to engage young people early and often, showcasing the benefits and sense of purpose behind careers in defense, and offer them hands-on learning opportunities like Project MFG.”

The full day event featured elected leaders and dignitaries—including Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Senator Jack Reed, who got an up-close look at the “[welding wars](#).” Reed was also joined by Senator Sheldon Whitehouse and Congressman Seth Magaziner, who underscored the importance of the defense economy to Rhode Island.

The event allowed students from high school CTE programs to gain real-world experience and exposure to leaders and employers in the defense manufacturing space. As part of Project MFG Connect, a career exploration event, representatives from local career and technical education programs, industry experts, and employers came together to showcase the careers available in the industry. The next-generation workforce in turn had the opportunity to network with and hear from government officials, defense business leaders, industry partners, and members of the armed forces who discussed the critical trade skills needed for defense

manufacturing.

“Including events like Project MFG Connect is imperative for the future. We want to show potential students how challenging and rewarding manufacturing jobs are,” said Ray Dick, Project MFG founder. “Connecting young students from the local community and showcasing the exciting opportunities available right at home is an important part of our mission and one of the ways we promote the prestige of manufacturing.”

Project MFG’s Maritime Welding Competition featured four technical training programs with 16 local competitors. Competitors were tested on skills required for shipbuilding while completing a challenging air pressure vessel project.

“I want to congratulate all of the students and schools that participated and took this opportunity to explore the important careers related to submarine shipbuilding,” said Molly Donohue Magee, executive director of SENEDIA. “These students are our future manufacturing workforce, filling the needed high-tech, high-demand, high-wage jobs to help ensure our national security.”

Competitors raced against a two-hour clock to finish a challenge that tested skills required for shipbuilding. They were cheered on by the U.S. Navy Department of Defense, and industry partners, leaders, and government officials. After showcasing their skills, the top three welders were announced: Trey Lazauskas of CHARIH0tech in first place; Asa Hoxie, also of Chariho High School, in second place; and Giovanni Lacap of PCTA in third place.

In addition to the competitors, program participants included PCTA students from the welding program and several other CTE programs in the Construction, Engineering, Computer Science and Transportation industry clusters, along with 60 students representing Mount Pleasant, Hope, Central, Juanita Sanchez,

and 360 High Schools and the Newcomers' Academy. Many of the student attendees have already secured full-time job offers at Electric Boat.

"The Office and Career and Technical Education at PPSD is thrilled to partner with SENEDIA, Electric Boat and General Dynamics to create high wage/high growth opportunities for our graduates," said Brett Dickens, CTE director of the Providence Public Schools.

SENEDIA, the alliance for Defense tech, talent, and innovation, is a catalyst for thought leadership, technical innovation, and workforce development. SENEDIA connects, convenes, and partners to support talent, innovation, and growth. For more information on SENEDIA, please visit www.senedia.org.

Navalist: Investment in Carrier Air Wings Needed to Keep Carriers Relevant



SOUTH CHINA SEA (April 22, 2023) F/A-18F Super Hornets from the “Mighty Shrikes” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 94 fly in formation above the aircraft carrier USS Nimitz (CVN 68) during an all-domain joint exercise, demonstrating unique theater-wide multi-discipline high-end warfighting capability, maritime superiority, power projection, speed of maneuver and readiness. VFA-94 is attached to the Nimitz Carrier Strike Group, currently underway in U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations conducting routine operations. 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, and routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region. (U.S. Navy photo)

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy’s aircraft carrier force is losing relevance because of a lack of investment in the aircraft that it carries, a naval analyst said.

“We are a carrier-based force, so we have the 11 aircraft carriers mandated by law,” said Dr. Jerry Hendrix, senior fellow of the Sagamore Institute, a retired Navy captain, and former director of the Navy History and Heritage Command,

speaking May 1 at an event at the Hudson Institute, a Washington think tank. "We built our navy around the aircraft carrier ever since the Battle of Midway. It is the preeminent platform in our navy. And yet, because of the lack of investment in the carrier air wing itself, the carriers themselves are losing their relevance."

"We're actually seeing this in wargame activities, whether it's wargames in the commercial or civilian sector or academic sector or whether the things we're hearing out of the Pentagon, where the carriers are having lesser and lesser roles to play in some of these wargames," Hendrix said. "So, if you want the carrier to remain relevant as a centerpiece, you have to make significant investments in that carrier air wing to get to a long-range, penetrating strike capacity back that will allow those carriers to operate in anti-access/area-denial environments."

Hendrix also said the Navy needs to look hard at the force mix between the Atlantic and Pacific regions. He said he believes a greater submarine capacity is needed in the Pacific region than necessarily in the Atlantic, despite the fact that the primary Russian naval threat is its attack submarine force.

He noted the Navy's return to building frigates, with the Constellation-class guided-missile frigate now under construction.

"We need to have the frigate be a frigate, providing presence, convoy escort," he said. "Don't ask every frigate to be a destroyer and don't ask every destroyer to be a cruiser and a battleship – it's what we've done in recent years. We need to look at that small-end, small-capacity, small surface combatants and drive more investment into whether it's manned or unmanned, getting back out there to be able to operate in small, confined spaces but also build more platforms at a cheaper price."

Hendrix indicated that he sees the traditional carrier strike group as needing to be re-thought.

“I would see us really departing from the tried and the true, the standard method of one carrier, two cruisers, four destroyers, and two attack submarines,” he said. “I want to see the fleet of the future look significantly different than the fleet of today. In fact, if it doesn’t, we’ve made a strategic mistake at that point.”

George Washington to replace Ronald Reagan as the forward-deployed carrier in Japan in 2024



190930-N-N0101-122 NEWPORT NEWS, Va. (Sept. 30, 2019) The aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) is helped out of a drydock at Newport News Shipbuilding after completing a refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH). In addition to defueling and refueling its power plant, George Washington completed major structural updates to the island, mast and antenna tower; all aircraft launch and recovery equipment has been upgraded; the ship's hull has been repainted, including sea chests and freeboard; the propeller shafts have been updated and refurbished propellers installed. (U.S. Navy photo courtesy of Huntington Ingalls Industries by Ashley Cowan/Released)

[Release from Commander, Naval Air Forces](#)

28 April 2023

In coordination with the government of Japan, Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) will return to U.S. 7th Fleet, replacing USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) as the forward-deployed Naval Forces-Japan (FDFN-J) aircraft carrier,

forward-deployed to Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan in 2024.

This marks the second time George Washington has served as the FDNF-J aircraft carrier, arriving in Japan in 2008 as the first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to be forward-deployed to Japan before being relieved by Ronald Reagan in 2015.

Prior to George Washington's return to Japan in 2024, Ronald Reagan will depart Yokosuka and relocate to Bremerton, Washington, to conduct a scheduled docking planned incremental availability period at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard & Intermediate Maintenance Facility after completing nearly a decade of service in the Western Pacific.

More details will be announced closer to the actual movement of the carriers.

The United States values Japan's contributions to the peace, security and stability of the Indo-Asia-Pacific and its long-term commitment and hospitality in hosting forward-deployed U.S. forces. These forces, along with their counterparts in the Japan Self-Defense Forces, make up the core capabilities needed by the alliance to meet our common strategic objectives.

George Washington is currently undergoing refueling and complex overhaul (RCOH) at Newport News Shipbuilding-Huntington Ingalls Industries. RCOH is a multi-year project performed only once during a carrier's 50-year service life that includes refueling the ship's two nuclear reactors, as well as significant repairs, upgrades, and modernization. Ronald Reagan, the flagship of Carrier Strike Group 5, is currently forward deployed to the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet area of operations.

NPS, Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability Team Up for Department of the Navy's Latest Climate Tabletop Exercise



Kevin Mulligan of Google Public Sector briefs the findings from one of the teams participating in the Department of the Navy Climate Tabletop Exercise II at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). The exercise, held in partnership with the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability, brought together Mulligan and other participants from the Department of Defense, federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to identify problems and potential solutions in support of the Navy's climate strategy.

[Release from Naval Postgraduate School](#)

MONTEREY, Calif. – The Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) hosted the second Department of the Navy (DON) Climate Tabletop Exercise (DON Climate Action II) in partnership with the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability, April 27-28.

The tabletop exercise convened participants from the Department of Defense, federal agencies, Congress, think tanks, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to generate solutions in support of DON's comprehensive climate strategy, "Climate Action 2030," and broader sustainability goals. Under a recently realized academic partnership, NPS and the Doerr School will pursue identified solution sets in order to provide concrete actions and outcomes to advance the DON's climate priorities and sustainability initiatives.

"For the Department of the Navy, climate readiness is mission readiness: it makes us better warfighters," said Meredith Berger, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment (EI&E) and the Navy's Chief Sustainment Officer. "Our installations – whether at home or abroad – are where warfighting begins, our power projection platforms. We exercised elements and generated actions that ensure that these platforms are survivable and that the coastal communities that we call home are just as resilient."

During the two-day event, participants concentrated on three focus areas – water security, energy security, and coastal resilience – and briefed their results to a group of senior leaders including Berger, NPS President retired Vice Adm. Ann Rondeau, and Dr. Arun Majumdar, dean of the Doerr School of Sustainability.

The six exercise teams – two for each focus area – worked to identify problem statements, challenges, and specific

solutions. A common outcome among all team members was a deeper resolve, commitment to action and further collaboration.

Each team also spoke to the need to lowering barriers to establish and strengthen partnerships between DOD, industry, academia and civic leaders to leverage the combined talents and resources towards a shared goal of protecting our communities and people. The senior evaluation group committed to supporting these efforts and the applied research necessary to inform purposeful solution development with new incentives to stimulate investments.

Additionally, 90 days from the conclusion of the exercise, NPS will coordinate a plan of action and milestones across participant stakeholders on how to accomplish the following solutions identified during the exercise:

- Establish a partnership agreement between the Department of the Navy and the Port of San Diego to add the sharing of data and testing to improve climate resilience using the Port's Blue Economy project.
- Ensure installations have personnel identified to develop, manage, and advance their water policies with a focus on looking across the fenceline and viewing water as a shared resource.
- Develop a master plan framework that directly connects climate risk with readiness and mission assurance.

"The direction we have received from the President and our nation's defense leadership is clear – climate action is a national security imperative," said Rondeau. "Our future Navy and Marine Corps warfighters must be prepared to address and account for the effects of climate change in their operational planning. Here at NPS, we are proud to work with the Doerr School of Sustainability to address these challenges and seek out climate solutions that will benefit not only the

Department of the Navy, but our nation as a whole.”

The collaborative effort involving DON leadership and two prominent California educational institutions is the latest example of the Navy’s commitment to pursue climate-informed solutions.

In May 2022, the Navy released “Climate Action 2030,” building on a decades-long foundation of climate action, and setting the DON on a course to meet national and global targets to reduce the threat of climate change. In this strategy, Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro identified climate change as “one of the most destabilizing forces of our time, exacerbating other national security concerns and posing serious readiness challenges.” He charged the DON with building a climate-ready force by increasing climate resilience and reducing the climate threat.

One month later, the Navy held its first Climate Tabletop Exercise in Washington, D.C., examining the impacts of climate change on Navy and Marine Corps missions, readiness, and warfighting capacity.

DON Climate Action II not only built upon the outcomes and lessons learned from the inaugural effort, it also capitalized on the Educational Partnership Agreement (EPA) between NPS and the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability, finalized in December 2022. Faculty from both institutions came together during the exercise to focus on coastal resilience and operational readiness in a world impacted by climate change.

“Building solutions to the challenges of climate change depends on turning knowledge and innovation into impactful solutions,” said Majumdar. “This tabletop exercise – along with the broader collaboration between Stanford University and the U.S. Navy – allows us to identify the connections and gaps in our knowledge. It then provides a forum for taking this wealth of insights, data, and information and laying the

groundwork for solutions that make a difference.”

Berger is visiting NPS as part of a series of visits across the country from Earth Day to Arbor Day to demonstrate the work of the Department of the Navy and the EI&E portfolio to highlight the importance of Communities, Climate Action, and Critical Infrastructure.

The Naval Postgraduate School provides defense-focused graduate education, including classified studies and interdisciplinary research, to advance the operational effectiveness, technological leadership and warfighting advantage of the Naval service. For additional information, visit NPS online at <https://nps.edu>.

Berger: Lack of Amphibs Left AFRICOM with No Sea-Based Option for Sudan Evacuation



MEDITERRANEAN SEA (April 30, 2022) The San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship USS Arlington (LPD 24), center, and the Military Sealift Command Henry J. Kaiser-class fleet replenishment oiler USNS Laramie (T-AO 203), background, sail through the Mediterranean Sea while conducting a replenishment-at-sea, April 30, 2022. Arlington, assigned to the Kearsarge Amphibious Ready Group, is on a scheduled deployment under the command and control of Task Force 61/2 operating in U.S. Sixth Fleet in support of U.S., Allied and partner interests in Europe and Africa. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class John Bellino)

WASHINGTON – The presence of an amphibious ready group (ARG), with a Marine expeditionary unit (MEU) embarked, gives a regional combatant commander an option to respond to a crisis ashore. When the United States government decided to evacuate its embassy in Sudan on April 23, last week, no ARG-MEU was available in the region.

Similarly, if the United States government had decided that projecting a force ashore in Sudan was needed to protect or

evacuate some 15,000 Americans in Sudan, it would have had few options.

To Marine Corps Commandant General David. H. Berger, testifying April 2 before the House Armed Services Committee, the Sudan crisis is an example of the lack of a crisis response capability that the Navy and Marine Corps amphibious warfare forces, if nearby, could have provided to the combatant commander, in this case, Marine General Michael E. Langley, commander, U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM).

To Berger, the crisis illustrated yet again why the nation's need for 31 [large and medium amphibious warfare ships] to provide the crisis response and deterrence capabilities needed by U.S. combatant commanders.

Berger was referring to the statutory requirement in the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act for the Navy to sustain a fleet of a minimum of 31 amphibious warfare ships. Without such a force, there would be occasions when response would be lacking.

"We would have gaps during the year when we would not have an at-sea capability for the combatant commander when something happens," Berger said. "We would not be deterring; we would not be in a position to respond. In places like Türkiye or places like Sudan, I feel like I let down the combatant commander, because General Langley needs options. He didn't have a sea-based option. That's how we reinforce embassies. That's how we evacuate them. That's how we deter.

"It opens up risks for the combatant commander," Berger said. "We have to have 31 [large and medium amphibious warfare ships] at a minimum; nothing less."

Flag Officer Assignments

[Release from the U.S. Defense Department](#)

The secretary of the Navy and chief of naval operations announced the following assignments:

Rear Adm. Thomas J. Moreau will be assigned as vice director, J-4, Joint Staff, Washington, D.C. Moreau is currently serving as director, Supply, Ordnance and Logistics Operations Division, N4L, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, D.C.

Rear Adm. Christopher J. Sweeney will be assigned as director, Warfare Development, N72, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, D.C. Sweeney is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group Eleven, Everett, Washington.

Rear Adm. Thomas S. Wall will be assigned as deputy chief of staff, Submarines, Maritime Command Headquarters; commander, Submarines, NATO; and deputy commander, Submarine Group Eight, Northwood, United Kingdom. Wall is currently serving as deputy/reserve deputy commander, Submarine Force, Atlantic, Norfolk, Virginia.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Tracy L. Hines will be assigned as deputy director, Information Warfare, U.S. Space Command, Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado. Hines is currently serving as Navy cyber security division director, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, D.C.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Gregory C. Huffman will be assigned as senior military official, Guam/Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Island/Federated States of Micronesia/Republic of Palau/U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, Apra, Guam. Huffman is currently serving as commander, Carrier Strike Group Twelve,

Norfolk, Virginia.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Christopher D. Stone will be assigned as commander, Expeditionary Strike Group Seven; commander, Task Force Seven Six; and commander, Amphibious Force, Seventh Fleet, Okinawa, Japan. Stone is currently serving as special assistant to the vice chief of naval operations, Washington, D.C.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Derek A. Trinque, selected for promotion to rear admiral, will be assigned as director, Strategy, Policy, Programs, and Logistics, J5/4, U.S. Transportation Command, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. Trinque is currently serving as commander, Expeditionary Strike Group Seven; commander, Task Force Seven Six; and commander, Amphibious Force, Seventh Fleet, Okinawa, Japan.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Kurt J. Rothenhaus will be assigned as chief of naval research, Arlington, Virginia. Rothenhaus is currently serving as program executive officer, Command, Control, Computers, Communications and Intelligence, Naval Information Warfare Systems Command, San Diego, California.

Rear Adm. (lower half) Michael S. Sciretta will be assigned as director, Maritime Operations, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, Norfolk, Virginia. Sciretta is currently serving as commander, Standing NATO Maritime Group Two, Naples, Italy.