

# Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group Conducts Exercises with the JMSDF



Aircraft from Carrier Air Wing 9 and Japan Air Self-Defense Force fly over the Sea of Japan as the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), center, the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Mobile Bay (CG 53), left, JMSDF Kongō-class guided-missile destroyer JS Kongō (DDG 173), right, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Murasame-class destroyer JS Inazuma (DD 105), back left, and the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Spruance (DDG 111) sail in formation during a U.S.-Japan bilateral exercise. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Aleksandr Freutel*

SEA OF JAPAN – The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group, along with JS Inazuma (DD 105) and JS Kongo (DDG 173), from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, completed bilateral exercises in the Philippine Sea and East China Sea on April 18, said the strike group's public affairs.

USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), USS Mobile Bay (CG 52) and USS Spruance (DDG 111) of Carrier Strike Group 3 and JS Inazuma (DD 105) and JS Kongo (DDG 173) of JMSDF Escort Division 11 engaged in various joint events to include enhanced maritime communication operations, air warfare training, and various other drills to hone in on integrated maritime operations and combat readiness.

“Our enduring commitments to our relationships in the Indo-Pacific region continue to grow and blossom through integrated and bilateral at-sea exercises including the Japan Maritime Self Defense Force,” said Rear Adm. J. T. Anderson, commander, CSG 3. “These exercises demonstrate our collective combat-credible capabilities while safeguarding our shared interests and values.”

Coordinated maritime engagements and operations with international partners are part of the U.S. Navy’s routine presence in the Indo-Pacific. Since arriving in the U.S. 7th Fleet region in January, CSG 3 units have participated in multiple operations and exercises to include dual carrier operations with USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70), exercises Noble Fusion and Jungle Warfare 2022 and a long-range air demonstration.

The Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group consists of CSG 3 and includes aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72); Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9; Destroyer Squadron 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).

Abraham Lincoln’s embarked air wing consists of the “Wallbangers” of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 117; “Titans” of Fleet Logistics Multi-Mission Squadron (VRM) 30; “Chargers” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 14; “Tophatters” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 14; “Black Aces”

of VFA 41; “Wizards” of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 133; “Black Knights” of Marine Fighter Attack Squadron (VMFA) 314; “Vigilantes” of VFA 151 and “Raptors” of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 71.

ABECSG departed its homeport for a scheduled deployment to the Indo-Pacific on Jan. 3.

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## USS The Sullivans Returns Home After Back-to-Back Deployments



The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans (DDG 68) pulls into port in Copenhagen, Denmark, March 21, 2022. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd*

*Class Mark Klimenko*

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS The Sullivans (DDG 68) returned to Naval Station Mayport after a three-month deployment to the European theater of operations on April 18, said U.S. 2nd Fleet Public Affairs.

This surge deployment follows a 2021 deployment with the Royal Navy's HMS Queen Elizabeth Strike Group (CSG-21), from which The Sullivans returned home just before Thanksgiving.

The Sullivans was in sustainment when it departed Naval Station Mayport in January 2022. Ships in the sustainment phase of the Optimized Fleet Response Plan remain ready for contingency tasking before entering a maintenance phase.

“Despite the dynamic schedule and demanding operational tasking, The Sullivans crew displayed resiliency, grit and determined self-sufficiency to accomplish all missions,” said Cmdr. James Diefenderfer, Jr., commanding officer of The Sullivans. “We are incredibly proud of our team's accomplishments.”

The crew navigated over 20,000 nautical miles, operating in the Irish, North and Baltic Seas, and conducted 12 sea and anchor details, 11 underway replenishments, and port visits to Copenhagen, Denmark; Rotterdam, The Netherlands; Ponta Delgada, Portugal; and Rota, Spain.

While deployed, The Sullivans participated in NATO Exercise Dynamic Guard 2022 in the North Sea. Dynamic Guard, hosted by Norway, is a biannual, multinational electronic warfare exercise series designed to provide tactical training for the NATO Response Force and NATO national units. For the first time in three years, two U.S. vessels participated to further enhance the ongoing cooperation, strength and interoperability between NATO Allies.

The Sullivans continued operations with three NATO countries

within Standing NATO Maritime Group (SNMG) 1, which was comprised of the German navy Type 702 Berlin-class replenishment ship FGS Berlin (A1411), the Royal Netherlands Navy Karel Doorman-class multi-purpose frigate HNLMS Van Amstel (F831) and the Royal Danish Navy Iver Huitfeldt-class frigate HDMS Peter Willemoes (F362).

During the ship's 2021 deployment, the crew operated with the Royal Danish Navy Absalon-class frigate HDMS Esbern Snare (F342) in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations. Almost a year later, Esbern Snare escorted The Sullivans through the Danish Strait, demonstrating expert seamanship, navigation and cooperation through one of the busiest waterways in the world.

"While we take time to recover and spend well deserved time at home, we are focusing our efforts on ensuring The Sullivans can continue to operate at peak performance for years to come," said Diefenderfer. "Our immediate mission is the expert execution of our maintenance availability and continued training to prepare the ship and crew for future tasking. I know this crew will be ready for whatever comes next – we stick together."

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## **USS Mitscher Returns to Norfolk After Surge Deployment**



A Sailor assigned to the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Mitscher (DDG 57) embraces his wife after the ship's return to homeport, Naval Station Norfolk, April 16. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Ryan Seelbach*

NORFOLK, Va. – Nearly 300 Sailors arrived home to Naval Station Norfolk aboard the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Mitscher (DDG 57) on April 16 following a surge deployment to the European theater of operations, said the ship's public affairs.

Mitscher rapidly deployed in January to join the Harry S. Truman Carrier Strike Group (HSTCSG) in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations.

This was the ship's second homecoming in several months. Mitscher returned from an extended nine-month deployment with the Dwight D. Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group in September 2021.

While deployed, the ship conducted presence operations and defense of the HSTCSG with the Greek, Italian, Norwegian and Turkish navies.

“No nation can confront today’s challenges alone,” said Cmdr. Thomas McCandless, commanding officer of Mitscher. “A more resilient and rapidly innovating Navy, combined with a robust set of allies and partners, demonstrate NATO’s commitment to a free and open global commons. I can say without a doubt that our crew rose to the task. With a 10-day notice, Mitscher was able to onload ammunition and deploy with ease.”

The crew enjoyed one port visit to Aksaz, Turkey, where they toured several historical sites and experienced local hospitality.

“We arrived in theater and seamlessly integrated with forces who were already on station,” said McCandless. “Mitscher did indeed ‘seize the day.’”

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## **CMS: The Navy’s Seven Operational Imperatives for This Decade**



A Boeing unmanned MQ-25 aircraft is given operating directions on the flight deck aboard the aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77). Its initial operating capability as an aerial refueling tanker will extend the range, operational capability and power projection of the carrier air wing and carrier strike group. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Brandon Roberson*

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday laid out a 500-ship force earlier this year ahead of the current defense budget submission. The service has worked to balance between recapitalizing for a new, 2045 force structure, and what it needs for the so-called "fight tonight," approaching period of 2027-2030 when China may attempt reunification with Taiwan by force.

Grouping these by operational level of war problems can help the Navy prioritize between what it needs today in case of Chinese or additional Russian aggression now, and what the service needs as it moves toward its future force structure. These are not in a specific priority, but the final imperative

is the most vital.

1. Readiness of the existing force: Some experts would suggest that the only “ready” navy units are those currently deployed and those coming to relieve them. While not as exciting as new construction, the funding for regular scheduled overhaul and updating of current Navy ships, the training of their crews and their outfitting in terms of spare parts, fuel and above all ammunition is of vital importance. Only 30% of the total cost of any new ship is incurred in its building with a full 70% devoted to the upkeep and maintenance of the ship across its lifetime. Like a car that does not receive regular dealer service, a warship that does not undergo regular maintenance starts to decline in overall readiness. Paying these readiness bills on time ensures that the existing force is ready in the event of hostile action.
2. Logistics, logistics, logistics: The bogged-down Russian invasion of Ukraine again shows that amateurs do tactics and experts think about logistics. Current U.S. naval combat logistics and sealift forces are small, aged in years and designed around a “just in time, hub and spoke” delivery method that maximizes peacetime efficiency but is ill-suited to fleet-level combat. This is especially true in terms of the Navy’s “distributed maritime operations” doctrine that needs a distributed logistics force for resupply during extended combat operations. Rebuilding both combat logistics and sealift to include delivery “over the beach” of fuel and supplies to Marines must remain a top operational imperative.
3. Get the M/Q-25A in the air before 2025: The Navy and Marine Corps have made great strides in carrier air wing aircraft readiness since 2016, but the services must go the extra mile to further reduce the burden on the F/A-18 E/F force and extend the range of the carrier air

wing in general. Carrier aircraft have adopted “buddy tanking” for years to extend the range of strike aircraft in an increasingly dangerous Indo-Pacific menaced by People’s Republic of China missiles and aircraft. Getting the M/Q-25A drone tanker integrated into the airwing not only extends its strike range now but is a bridge to using the drone as a potential unmanned strike aircraft.

4. Scouting the bridge to unmanned futures: There is still uncertainty surrounding projected Navy unmanned systems. Congress does not seem fully convinced the Navy can make them work in combat, and many questions remain on the network connectivity and reliability of these platforms over extended periods of time at sea. However, one aspect of unmanned systems is proving itself in the here and now. Unmanned units employed as long-term distributive sensors are operating commercially with great success in measuring current, temperature and a host of other environmental factors. The U.S. Navy 5th Fleet, located in the Persian Gulf region, just completed a very successful experiment with an unmanned intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance platforms called Task Force 59. TF 59’s unmanned units successfully operated over time and provided commanders with real-time information crucial to targeting opponent ships, submarine and aircraft. Naval tactics expert Capt. Wayne Hughes said being able to “attack effectively first” depended on effective scouting that found opponents without revealing one’s own force locations. Expendable unmanned scouting units can fulfill that function and serve as an operational bridge to further unmanned systems development.
5. Train to Fight: Perhaps a subset of the readiness and scouting imperatives, but it’s still vital to train to fight at expected levels of organization and chaos. Throughout much of the post-Cold War era individual Navy carrier strike or amphibious ready groups ventured alone

as deployed assets, secure in general U.S. sea control over wide areas of the world's oceans. The rise of the PRC's navy and the return of a revanchist Russia has ended that blanket level of security and U.S. naval forces will again have to fight for sea control before undertaking other missions. Training to fight at larger levels of organization such as the three-carrier battle force gets Sailors and Marines used to operating in these larger formations. As Russia's ground force mishaps in Ukraine have shown, if forces do not train and get used to fighting in larger formations it is unlikely that they will perform well in combat in those groupings.

6. Stay ahead in the undersea environment: Many documents extol the U.S. lead in undersea systems, especially in its nuclear attack and ballistic missile submarine designs. Since the days of the Walker Spy ring in the 1980s, however, the Russians and others have sought to duplicate or steal elements of the U.S. undersea advantage. No such advantage can be taken for granted as well and the U.S. Navy should seek to expand its undersea capabilities with supporting unmanned systems and forward-deployed infrastructure to support undersea operations. The Navy had 11 deployable submarine tenders at the end of the Cold War and today has only two. If fleet operations (including submarines) must be distributive, then submarine maintenance and logistics, especially weapons reloading, should be equally dispersed as needed. The only way to get there is by adding more submarine tenders to the fleet.
7. It's time to take the maritime strategy "off the shelf." Back in June 1990 during his confirmation hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee as Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Frank Kelso was asked by Sen. John McCain what the Navy intended to do with its maritime strategy to globally fight the Soviet Union now that the communist state appeared in full retreat and

the Cold War over. Kelso responded, "Military strategy needs a specific enemy," and with the end of the Cold War, "the issues before us seem to be ones of naval policy and not strategy." Kelso further stated the maritime strategy for combatting a global great power opponent should be "put on the shelf" and could be "taken down" when needed if another global opponent reappeared. The U.S. now faces two nuclear-armed great power opponents and it's time to pull a maritime strategy down from Kelso's shelf. It will not be the same as its 1980s predecessor, but only a service-generated blueprint that serves as a guide, and not a directive for combatant commanders to follow can integrate all these operational imperatives in a single, authoritative source. A strategy that gives Congress and the American people an idea of what their Navy does in peace and what it could do in war is vital to securing public support for the other operational imperatives. It should speak in terms of numbers of ships, maps, geographic lines of effort that show what the Navy might do, which allies and partners might join the U.S. war effort, and suggest what goals the U.S. would pursue in great power war to have a definition of how such a conflict might end. Open-ended commitments in the Middle East over decades have soured the public on any extensive military operations and telling them "how wars end" is just as important as how the military means to wage them.

All these operational imperatives are important, but the strategy is perhaps the most valuable as it ties together all of the imperatives in a single package for both Congress, American citizens and the industrial organizations that can bring the other imperatives to life.

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# USS Forrest Sherman Returns to Norfolk from Surge Deployment



The USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98) returned to Naval Station Norfolk on April 13 after a surge deployment. *U.S. NAVY*  
NAVAL STATION NORFOLK – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Forrest Sherman (DDG 98) returned home to Naval Station Norfolk on April 13 following a surge deployment, the U.S. 2nd Fleet said.

Forrest Sherman operated with NATO Allies and partners in the Eastern Atlantic, North Sea and Baltic Sea over the past three months.

The crew conducted over 200 hours of flight operations, 11 drills with NATO Allies and partners, six strait transits and six replenishments-at-sea. The drills required close coordination of maneuvering operations, cross-deck flight operations, and flashing light and flag-hoist drills with navies from Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland and Sweden.

During the deployment, Forrest Sherman completed port visits to Stockholm, Sweden, and Gdansk, Poland, strengthening the U.S. commitment to security in the region. While in port Stockholm, the crew hosted Ambassador Erik Ramanathan, the U.S. ambassador to Sweden; Rear Adm. Ewa Skoog Haslum, chief of the Swedish navy and commander maritime component command; and several Swedish flag officers. In port Gdansk, members of the crew volunteered in a community relations event where they assisted in the packing, loading, sorting and distribution of donations to Ukrainian refugees in the Gdansk region.

“The Forrest Sherman crew displayed their relentless fighting spirit during this deployment,” said Cmdr. Greg Page, commanding officer of the ship. “Their dedication to executing the mission is evident in their hard work. They are deeply committed to each other and this ship, which was evident when they were tasked to prepare for this deployment under a condensed certification timeline. The crew was excited to showcase our ship’s capabilities while operating with NATO Allies and European partners in theater.”

U.S. 2nd Fleet, re-established in 2018 in response to the changing global security environment, develops and employs maritime forces ready to fight across multiple domains in the Atlantic and Arctic in order to ensure access, deter aggression and defend U.S., allied and partner interests.

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# Erik K. Raven Sworn in as Undersecretary of the Navy



Erik K. Raven, left, is sworn in as the 34th undersecretary of the Navy by Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro April 13. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class T. Logan Keown*

WASHINGTON – Erik K. Raven was sworn into the Department of the Navy as undersecretary of the Navy during a private ceremony at the Pentagon on April 13, the Navy announced.

It is such an honor to join the Navy and Marine Corps team after spending the last 24 years on Capitol Hill,” said Raven. “Throughout my career, I have established some great relationships within the Department of the Navy and I look forward to building more. I am thrilled to join Secretary Del Toro, the assistant secretaries of the Navy, the chief of

naval operations, commandant of the Marine Corps and everyone else in the department on our shared priorities of strengthening our maritime dominance, building a culture of warfighting excellence and strengthening our relationships with strategic partners.”

Born in San Francisco, Raven graduated from College of Marin with a Bachelor of Arts in international relations from Connecticut College and a Master of Arts degree in international history from the London School of Economics.

Raven began his career in the offices of Sens. Dianne Feinstein, Edward Kennedy and Robert Byrd, serving in a variety of staff roles. In 2006, Raven became a professional staffer for the United States Senate Committee on Appropriations. He has since served as principal adviser to the Democratic chairs and vice chairs of the Committee on Appropriations and Subcommittee on Defense on budget matters relating to the Department of Defense and intelligence community.

On Dec. 13, 2021, President Biden nominated Raven to be the next undersecretary of the Navy and he was confirmed by the Senate on April 7.

“The Department of the Navy welcomes Undersecretary Raven with open arms. I have no doubt he will utilize his extensive congressional experience to benefit the Sailors, Marines and civilians in the Department,” said Del Toro. “I also want to thank Assistant Secretary for Energy, Installations and Environment Meredith Berger for performing the duties of undersecretary these last eight months. Her professionalism, thoughtfulness and recommendations have been critical when we announced the AUKUS partnership, collectively responded to the situation impacting Red Hill and the people of Hawaii, rolled out the [fiscal year 2022-2023] budget and handled countless other issues both internal and external to the department.”

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# Navy Recovers E-2D from Wallops Island and Chincoteague



A Navy E-2 Hawkeye conducts field carrier landing practice at Wallops Flight Facility at its ribbon-cutting ceremony in 2013. *U.S. NAVY*

NORFOLK, Va. – The Navy successfully recovered the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye that crashed in the vicinity of Wallops Island and Chincoteague, Virginia, April 12, the service announced.

U.S. Navy divers from Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit 2 recovered the aircraft with collaboration from other

interagency partners, as well local and federal actors. MDSU 2 specializes in salvage, a Navy mission area that includes recovery of submerged objects.

“As Navy divers, we stand ready to conduct diving and salvage operations in any environment,” said Cmdr. Steve Cobos, commanding officer of MDSU 2. “We are grateful we could use our salvage expertise to help clear the site and safely recover the aircraft for the community and the surrounding environment.”

Safety of personnel and preservation of the environment and surrounding wildlife were top priorities in salvage efforts and the Navy consulted with various local, state and federal entities to ensure salvage efforts were safe for personnel, the environment and the community.

Navy divers recovered the E-2D by cutting the aircraft into sections and preparing each section to be lifted with a sling. A crane lifted each section out of the water and barges transported the aircraft pieces offsite. MDSU 2 also surveyed the site and surrounding area to identify and recover aircraft debris.

The E-2D aircraft, attached to Airborne Command and Control Squadron (VAW) 120, crashed March 30. The mishap, which left one service member dead and two injured, remains under investigation.

“We really appreciate the support from MDSU 2 and from the numerous local and state officials who assisted with recovery operations,” said Cmdr. Martin Fentress Jr., commanding officer of VAW-120.

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# New Task Force 153 to Patrol Red Sea, Bab al-Mandeb Strait, Gulf of Aden



Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, U.S. 5th Fleet and Combined Maritime Forces, speaks to Maj. Gen. Abdullah Hassan Al-Sulaiti, commander of the Qatari Emiri Naval Forces, at the Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference in Doha, Qatar, March 21. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Mark Thomas Mahmood*

ARLINGTON, Va. – Combined Maritime Forces, or CMF, the U.S.-led multi-national coalition of forces enforcing maritime security in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, is establishing a fourth task force to enhance the security of the region.

CMF is establishing Commander Task Force 153 (CTF-153) on April 17, with ceremonies to be held at U.S. 5th Fleet

headquarters in Manama, Bahrain, said Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, commander of the CMF, whose duties also include commander, U.S. 5th Fleet, and commander, Naval Forces, U.S. Central Command. Cooper briefed reporters on the new task force in an April 13 press teleconference.

CTF-153 will patrol the waters of the Red Sea, the Bab al-Mandeb Strait and the Gulf of Aden in an effort to expand capacity to cover those regions to counter activities such as human trafficking and smuggling of weapons and illegal drugs.

The region also has seen combat action from Iran-supported Houthi rebels in Yemen firing missiles at shipping in the areas and using explosives-loaded attack boats.

Cooper said the new task force will “definitely increase our deterrence posture” in the region.

As the CMF’s fourth task force, CTF-153 joins CTF 150, responsible for maritime security outside the Persian Gulf in the Gulf of Oman and North Arabian Sea; CTF-151, the counter-piracy task force; and CTF-152, responsible for maritime security inside the Persian Gulf.

With 34 member nations, the CMF is the largest standing naval partnership in the world. The member nations rotate command of the task forces. Cooper said he had “sufficient forces” to meet the CMF’s commitments.

Cooper said the maritime security efforts have “always been our best when we’re teamed with international partners,” and that the United States is “teaming with a lot of navies who are very capable.”

He singled out mention of the Egyptian navy, which joined the CMF a year ago and will strengthen the efforts to patrol the Red Sea and protect the Suez Canal.

CTF-153 will first be commanded by U.S. Navy Capt. Robert

Francis, who with his staff soon will embark on the command ship USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), which normally serves as the flagship of the U.S. 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea. An officer from a partner nation will assume command of CTF-153 later this year, Cooper said.

Cooper said that CTF-153 will typically include two to eight ships, plus maritime patrol aircraft as needed. The staff itself will be comprised of approximately 15 personnel.

He said that with the additional task force the CMF will “be able to connect in ways we simply haven’t been able to do in the past.”

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## **USS Annapolis Makes Fifth Submarine Homeported in Guam**



The Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS Annapolis (SSN 760) arrived March 28 at Naval Base Guam from Naval Base Point Loma, San Diego. *U.S. NAVY*

APRA HARBOR, Guam – The Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS Annapolis (SSN 760) arrived March 28 at Naval Base Guam from Naval Base Point Loma, San Diego, shifting its homeport as part of the U.S. Navy strategic laydown plan for naval forces in the Indo-Pacific region, Submarine Squadron 15 Public Affairs said April 10.

“My crew is proud to join the submarine force team in Guam,” said Cmdr. James Tuthill, Annapolis’s commanding officer. “It’s an excellent place to live, with a strong sense of community and a clear mission. We worked hard to get the ship through a shipyard period ahead of schedule, and we’re ready to assume our place on the front line.”

The security environment in the Indo-Pacific requires the U.S. Navy station the most capable ships forward. This posture allows rapid responses for maritime and joint forces and brings our most capable ships and submarines with the greatest

amount of striking power and operational capability to bear in the timeliest manner.

“I would like to personally extend a warm Hafa Adai to the Sailors and families of our fifth homeported submarine on Guam, USS Annapolis,” said Commander Joint Region Marianas Rear Adm. Benjamin Nicholson. “Guam and the Mariana Islands are incredibly important to the overall defense of the region, and this additional capability further underscores our commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

In accordance with the strategic laydown plan of 2021, Annapolis makes the fifth Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine to be homeported in Guam alongside USS Asheville (SSN 722), USS Key West (SSN 758), USS Jefferson City (SSN 759), and USS Springfield (SSN 761). USS Springfield arrived in Guam one week before USS Annapolis on March 21.

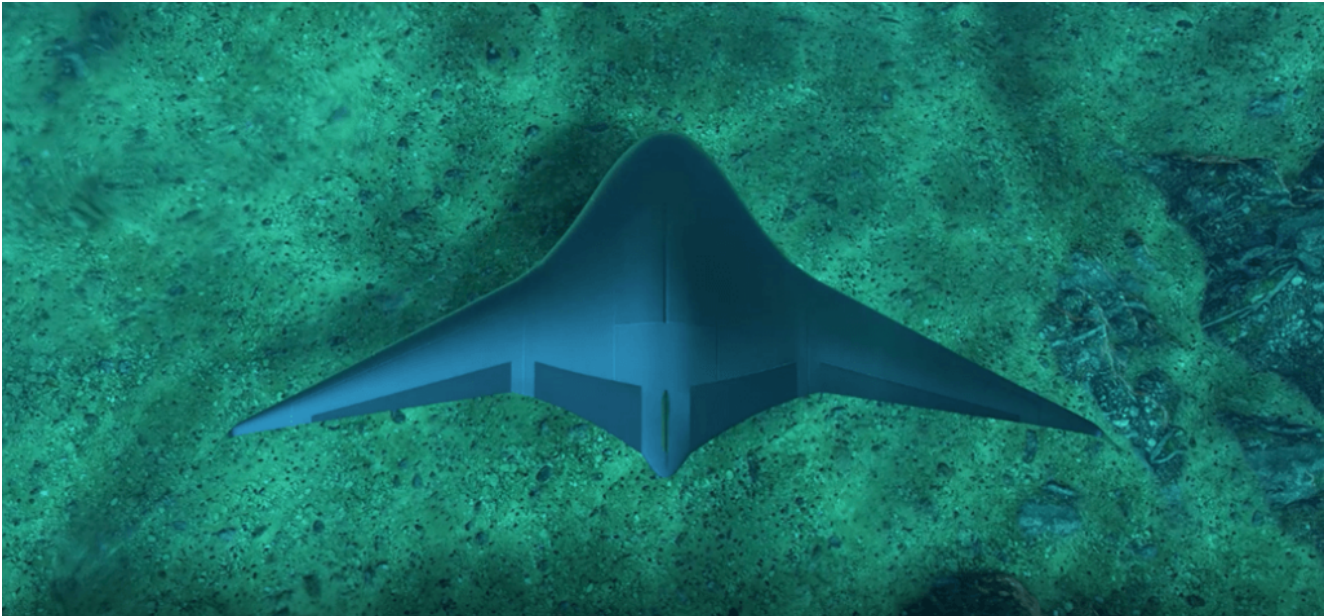
“As part of the U.S. Navy’s plan to put the most advanced and capable units forward, USS Annapolis completed a homeport shift from San Diego, California to Guam in order to support Indo-Pacific initiatives and missions,” said Capt. Bret Grabbe, commodore, Submarine Squadron 15.

Commissioned April 11, 1992, Annapolis is the fourth ship of the United States Navy named for the city of Annapolis, Maryland. Annapolis has a crew of approximately 16 officers and 127 enlisted Sailors.

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## **Martin Defense to Develop**

# Amphibious Autonomous Vehicle for Expeditionary Fuel Delivery



An artist's conception of Martin Defense Group's Manta Ray autonomous underwater vehicle. *DARPA*

ARLINGTON, Va. – A defense company in Hawaii has been tapped by the Office of Naval Research to develop an autonomous vehicle to deploy a fuel delivery system to support amphibious systems.

Martin Defense Group LLC of Honolulu has been awarded a \$15 million cost-plus-fixed-fee contract for the development of an Amphibious Vehicle for Unmanned Surface Mobility, the Defense Department said April 6.

“The AVUSM system provides the capability of autonomously delivering a lay-flat fuel line hose from a floating embarkment platform, through the surf-zone, to above a high-water mark line for fuel delivery in support of expeditionary advanced base operations,” the announcement said. “This is also known as a reach-to-the-beach capability. This contract provides for technology development and maturation with the

objective of transitioning the technology/capability to Navy and/or Marine Corps acquisition programs.”

Martin Defense also is the developer of the Manta Ray autonomous underwater vehicle for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. Work expected to be completed by April 5, 2025.