

George Washington, Ronald Reagan Conduct Hull Swap



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SAN DIEGO – Nimitz-class aircraft carriers USS George Washington (CVN 73) and USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) conduct a hull swap on Naval Air Station North Island that sends Ronald Reagan to Bremerton, Washington, and returns George Washington to Yokosuka, Japan, as the Navy’s only Forward-Deployed Naval Forces-Japan (FDFNF-J) aircraft carrier effective Aug. 1.

The hull swap between Ronald Reagan and George Washington was planned in coordination with the government of Japan, and as a part of the 50-year lifespan of the U.S. Navy’s Nimitz-class aircraft carriers.

“USS Ronald Reagan has served exceptionally as America’s

forward deployed aircraft carrier for nearly a decade, projecting credible combat power while sailing and flying where international law allows and doing so with allies and partners throughout the Indo-Pacific,” said Rear Adm. Greg Newkirk, commander of Task Force 70 and Carrier Strike Group 5. “Reagan’s crew and those who have served aboard over the past several years should be tremendously proud of what they accomplished.”

George Washington relieving Ronald Reagan marks the second time the ship will serve as the FDNF-J aircraft carrier. In 2008, George Washington became the first nuclear powered aircraft carrier to serve as FDNF-J and was relieved by Ronald Reagan seven years later after a historic tri-carrier hull swap.

“For the last nine years, Ronald Reagan Sailors upheld the international rule of law and maintained a free and open Indo-Pacific alongside our allies and partners through their diligence and dedication towards our common goals,” said Capt. Daryle Cardone, Ronald Reagan’s commanding officer. “Their commitment has left a mark on the 7th Fleet area of responsibility and the impact we made will be continued as George Washington makes their way to Yokosuka, Japan. I know 7th Fleet is in good hands and as Ronald Reagan left behind a legacy of ‘peace through strength,’ George Washington will embody the ‘spirit of freedom’ in the Indo-Pacific once again.”

George Washington’s return to Japan continues the long-standing alliances and partnerships, and consistent U.S. presence in the Indo-Pacific region.

“Now is also an exciting time for the men and women of the USS George Washington, who are building on that ship’s history as Reagan’s predecessor in Yokosuka and re-establishing ‘GW’ as America’s forward-deployed aircraft carrier – a tangible and

enduring sign of our nation's commitment to peace, stability and freedom in the region," said Newkirk. "Over its previous years as our forward-deployed carrier, George Washington built a reputation for professionalism, confidence and true excellence in Japan across the Indo-Pacific. I know today's GW Sailors are trained and ready to retake the mantle, make their own mark in this consequential theater."

Prior to arriving in San Diego, the George Washington Carrier Task Group completed Southern Seas 2024, circumnavigating South America, and the Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group completed its final patrol as the FDNF-J aircraft carrier in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility.

"Having the George Washington back in Yokosuka is a new and exciting adventure for the crew, but it more importantly ensures the United States remains best positioned to meet common goals in the region," said Capt. Tim Waits, George Washington's commanding officer. "This nuclear aircraft carrier was a huge part of the foundation of trust between the U.S. and Japan, and that trust is the cornerstone of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific."

George Washington and crew are in the process of completing the hull swap, replacing USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) as the forward-deployed U.S. Naval Forces Japan aircraft carrier at Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan. As part of the transition, the embarked Air Wing and Staffs, which include Carrier Air Wing 5 (CVW 5) and Destroyer Squadron 15 (DESRON 15) will all cross deck to USS George Washington (CVN 73) bringing with them their vast operations experience operation on one of the most advanced and capable warships in the world. About 350 Sailors, 13 percent of the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) crew, will swap with USS George Washington (CVN 73) Sailors. With them, these Sailors will bring their Indo-Pacific and forward deployed experience to George Washington.