Littoral Combat Ship Deploys to WestPac, Ending 18-Month Gap



Lt. Thomas Cummings, assigned to the Independence-class littoral combat ship USS Montgomery (LCS 8), communicates with the Philippine Navy from the ship's bridge as Montgomery arrives in Davao City for a scheduled port visit. U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Tristin Barth

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy has deployed a littoral combat ship to the Western Pacific for the first time in 18 months, the first of three LCSs the service plans to deploy this year.

The first LCS deployment this year apparently was kept quiet by the Navy until the service published a July 1 web article by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Greg Johnson of commander, Logistics Force, Western Pacific/CTF 73 Public Affairs, of the Independence-class USS Montgomery (LCS 8) making a port call in Davao, Philippines, on June 29.

The last LCS to deploy, USS Coronado (LCS 4), returned from the Western Pacific on Dec. 5, 2017. It had been preceded by the USS Freedom (LCS 1) and its Freedom-class sister ship, USS Fort Worth (LCS 3), in 2015 and 2016, respectively.

The commander of Naval Surface Forces told reporters in a Jan. 11 teleconference that LCS deployments would resume in 2019, saying that the Independence-class LCSs USS Montgomery and USS Gabrielle

Giffords (LCS 10) would deploy from the West Coast and that the first LCS deployments from the East Coast, departing from Naval Station Mayport, Florida, would be undertaken by the Freedom-variant LCS USS Detroit (LCS 7), followed by sister ship USS Little Rock (LCS 9) in 2020.

For all of these deployments, the ships will carry the full surface warfare mission package, Brown said.

“It’s happening,” Brown said during the teleconference, noting that from then on “there will always be LCS forward-deployed.”