

Littoral Combat Ship Successfully Launches Naval Strike Missile



USS Gabrielle Giffords launches a Naval Strike Missile on Oct. 1 during exercise Pacific Griffin. The NSM is a long-range, precision-strike weapon that is designed to find and destroy enemy ships. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist Kenneth Rodriguez Santiago

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii – The Independence-variant littoral combat ship USS Gabrielle Giffords successfully demonstrated the capabilities of the Naval Strike Missile (NSM) on Oct. 1 during Pacific Griffin, U.S. Pacific Fleet public affairs announced in a release.

Pacific Griffin is a biennial exercise conducted in the waters near Guam aimed at enhancing combined proficiency at sea while strengthening relationships between the U.S. and Republic of Singapore navies.

“Today was a terrific accomplishment for USS Gabrielle Giffords crew and the Navy’s LCS class,” said Cmdr. Matthew Lehmann, the ship’s commanding officer. “I am very proud of all the teamwork that led to the successful launch of the NSM.”

The NSM is a long-range, precision-strike weapon that can find and destroy enemy ships at distances up to 100 nautical miles. The stealthy missile flies at sea-skimming altitude, has terrain-following capability and uses an advanced seeker for precise targeting in challenging conditions.

Rear Adm. Joey Tynch, commander of Logistics Group Western Pacific, who oversees security cooperation for the U.S. Navy in Southeast Asia, said Gabrielle Giffords’ deployment sent a

crystal-clear message of the continued U.S. commitment to maritime security in the region.

“LCS packs a punch and gives potential adversaries another reason to stay awake at night,” Tynch said. “We are stronger when we sail together with our friends and partners, and LCS is an important addition to the lineup.”

The NSM aboard Gabrielle Giffords is fully operational and remains lethal. The weapon was first demonstrated on littoral combat ship USS Coronado in 2014. It meets the Navy’s over-the-horizon requirements for survivability against high-end threats, demonstrated lethality, easy upgrades and long-range strike capability.

The Gabrielle Giffords deployment marks the first time that an NSM has sailed into the Indo-Pacific region.

Gabrielle Giffords, which is on its maiden deployment, arrived in the 7th Fleet area of responsibility on Sept. 16 for a rotational deployment to the Indo-Pacific region. This marks the first time two LCS have deployed to the Indo-Pacific region at the same time. Gabrielle Giffords is the fifth LCS to deploy to U.S. 7th Fleet, following USS Freedom, USS Fort Worth, USS Coronado and the currently deployed USS Montgomery.

Gabrielle Giffords will conduct operations, exercises and port visits throughout the region as well as work alongside allied and partner navies to provide maritime security and stability, key pillars of a free and open Indo-Pacific.