SSGN USS Florida Returns From 800-Day Deployment



The Ohio-class guided-missile submarine USS Florida (SSGN 728) returns to its homeport, Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia, May 9. The ship was forward deployed for more than 800 days. U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Aaron Saldana

ARLINGTON, Va. — A U.S. Navy nuclear-powered Ohio-class guided-missile submarine has returned from a deployment lasting more than 800 days, or 30 months, the Navy said.

"USS Florida (SSGN 728) returned to its homeport of Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia, May 9, after operating forward-deployed for more than two years supporting the U.S. Africa, Central and European Combatant Commands," said Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Ashley Berumen, Commander, Submarine Group 10 Public Affairs, in a May 13 release.

The impressive length of the deployment took two crews, alternating in operating the submarine. The submarine sailed more than 98,000 nautical miles during the deployment.

Like the Ohio-class ballistic-missile submarines, the Ohio-class guided-missile submarines have two crews, Blue and Gold, that alternate periodically in operating the submarine.

"These crews of roughly 160 Sailors alternate manning the submarine and typically deploy with the ship for three months before swapping," the release said. "Blue crew brought the submarine back to its homeport. The crew that isn't deployed trains at Trident Training Facility Kings Bay, conducting a rigorous training program, including simulated missions and scenarios they could encounter while at sea. This constant training regimen helps ensure the crew is always tactically and operationally ready."

Sailors assigned to the Ohio-class guided-missile submarine USS Florida (SSGN 728) (Blue) stand on the top side of the ship as it returns to its homeport, Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia, May 9. U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Ashley Berumen

The Florida is one of four SSGNs in the fleet. Commissioned in June 1983, it completed more than 50 ballistic-missile patrols before its conversion to an SSGN in 2003-2006. The Ohio-class SSGNs can carry up to 154 Tomahawk cruise missiles and can be configured to deploy up to 66 special operations forces and their equipment.

“For the past 30 months, USS Florida has been forward-deployed, providing our combatant commanders with not only one of the most versatile and clandestine platforms the United States Navy has to offer, but also one capable of delivering an absolutely devastating punch at our timing and tempo,” said Vice Adm. Daryl Caudle, Commander, Naval Submarine Forces, in the release.

“Most submarines don’t operate forward-deployed like this for this amount of time, especially without a real home base,” said Capt. Brian Tothero, Florida (Blue) commanding officer, in the release. “So, after being sort of homeless for the past 30 months, it’s nice to be back in Kings Bay.”

The Florida went through a 30-day continuous maintenance availability (CMAV) in Souda Bay, Crete, conducted by the Trident Refit Facility Kings Bay. The facility completed more than 16,000 hours of work and shipped more than 69,000 pounds of equipment, making it the largest CMAV in the history of any forward-deployed submarine, the Navy said.

“As a massive team effort among our international partners, submarine staffs, Trident Refit Facility, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Seal Delivery Vehicle Teams, Strategic Weapons Facility Atlantic, U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet staffs, Navy

Undersea Warfare Center, Naval Sea Systems Programs, the DoD logistics enterprise and Strategic Systems Programs, we completed multiple maintenance availabilities, unprecedented in scope, in forward-deployed, isolated environments ranging from the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea," said Capt. Seth Burton, commanding officer of USS Florida (Gold), in the release.