

U.S. Navy Establishes Submarine Squadron Two at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard



The first 13 personnel assigned to Submarine Squadron 2 pose for a photograph outside their command building on the day of the unit's establishment Friday, Dec. 10. *U.S. NAVY / Chief Petty Officer Joshua Karsten*

KITTERY, Maine – The U.S. Navy established Commander, Submarine Squadron 2 in an official ceremony Friday, Dec. 10, at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, Submarine Readiness Squadron 32 said in a release.

The move revives a tradition tied to the original Submarine Squadron 2, which was established in New London, Connecticut, in the late 1930s. In 1941, the Navy sent SUBRON 2 to the Pacific, where it operated during World War II.

After the war, in October 1945, the squadron was back in New London, where it garnered the nickname "The Armada" because of the wide range of submarines under its oversight.

The squadron oversaw some of the first and last built in the Los Angeles class fast attack submarines as well as the Navy's only nuclear-powered deep submersible research vessel, NR-1. The first nuclear powered submarine, USS Nautilus (SSN 571) was one of nearly 100 submarines assigned to the squadron during its history as well.

Among the submarines assigned to the squadron over the years were the "Fleet Boats" Grouper (SS 214), Flying Fish (SS 229), Finback (SS 230), and Raton (SS 270); diesel submarines Atule (SS 403), Quillback (SS 424) and Sarda (SS 488); and the support ship Chewink (ASR 3).

The most recent previous iteration of Submarine Squadron 2 was disestablished in a ceremony in Groton, Connecticut, Jan. 13, 2012.

Rear Adm. Michael Holland, now chief of staff for U.S. Northern Command, was the commodore of Submarine Squadron 2 at the time of its disestablishment. Holland returned as the keynote speaker for the establishment ceremony Friday.

"The new establishment of Submarine Squadron 2 builds on a proud tradition dating back to the second World War," said Vice Adm. William Houston, commander, U.S. Naval Submarine Forces, Submarine Force Atlantic and Allied Submarine Command. "Over seven decades in operation, this squadron wrote a history of innovation, flexibility and a fierce dedication to mission accomplishment. Now, Squadron 2 will come back with a new home and a vital new role to play, ensuring the readiness of our fast attack submarines as they complete periods of maintenance at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and return to the fleet for deployment."

Capt. Daniel J. Reiss takes over as the commanding officer of the newly reestablished squadron, while Capt. Henry M. Roenke steps into the role of deputy commanding officer for readiness. Master Chief Petty Officer Frederick J. Richter is the command master chief, the senior enlisted service person at the squadron.

Squadron 2 will step in to provide administrative, manning, logistical, training, operational planning and readiness support for Los Angeles- and Virginia-class fast attack submarines homeported at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard during periods of maintenance and improvement.

Since 2012, Submarine Squadrons 12 and 4 provided operational oversight of submarines at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard from their location more than 150 miles away, at Naval Submarine Base New London, in Connecticut.

Capt. Matthew Boland, commanding officer of Submarine Squadron 12, was on hand at the Friday event to ceremonially relinquish oversight of the submarines currently homeported at PNSY.

"I'm honored and excited to help restore this storied squadron name alongside these dedicated submarine crews and the talented and hardworking team at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard," said Reiss. "Squadrons 12 and 4 did incredible work supporting the shipyard submarines over the last decade. And now, there is benefit to having a dedicated squadron staff on-site, focused on the unique needs of crews in this stage of their readiness cycle. These Portsmouth-based submarine crews face different challenges than those in Groton, and my team is energized to face those challenges with them. We look forward to getting these crews and their boats back in the fight, stronger and tougher than when they arrived."