USS America, USS New Orleans to Forward Deploy to Japan; USS Stethem, USS Wasp to Return to U.S.



PEARL HARBOR (Jan. 23, 2018) The amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA 6) and its amphibious ready group (ARG) are moored at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam.

SASEBO, Japan – The Navy announced that the amphibious assault ship USS America (LHA 6) and landing platform dock USS New Orleans (LPD 18) will become part of the U.S. 7th Fleet forward-deployed forces in Sasebo, Japan, the commander, Naval Forces Japan Public Affairs, said in a release.

The guided-missile destroyer USS Stethem (DDG 63) will shift its homeport to San Diego for its midlife modernization and the amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1) will shift its homeport to Norfolk, Virginia, to undergo scheduled maintenance.

America is capable of supporting the F-35B Lightning II, the Marine Corps vertical-lift variant of the Joint Strike Fighter, as part of an embarked U.S. Marine Corps Air Combat Element.

The United States values Japan's contributions to the peace, security and stability of the Indo-Pacific and its long-term commitment and hospitality in hosting U.S. forces forward deployed there. These forces, along with their counterparts in the Japan Self-Defense Forces, make up the core capabilities needed by the alliance to meet our common strategic objectives.

The security environment in the Indo-Pacific requires that the

Navy station the most capable ships forward. This posture allows the most rapid response times possible for maritime and joint forces and brings our most capable ships with the greatest amount of striking power and operational capability to bear in the timeliest manner.

Maintaining a forward-deployed force capability supports the U.S. commitment to the defense of Japan and the security and stability of the vital Indo-Pacific region.

America will provide the Marine Corps with a means of combat operations utilizing the F-35B fighter. New Orleans is capable of ship-to-shore movement by tilt-rotor and helicopter. In addition to combat operations, both ships can conduct humanitarian-assistance operations.