USS Higgins Completes Expeditionary Missile Reload Simulation At Sea



From MC2 Trevor Hale, Aug. 25, 2025

CLEVELAND BAY, Australia – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Higgins (DDG 76) simulated an expeditionary reload of a Standard Missile (SM) 2 while anchored in the vicinity of Townsville, Australia, July 28.

The exercise demonstrates enhanced expeditionary logistics capabilities essential for sustained naval operations in the Indo-Pacific region. U.S. Navy's Commander, Logistics Group Western Pacific/Task Force 73 (COMLOG WESTPAC/CTF-73) led the reload effort ashore.

“This successful rearm event was the result of exceptional teamwork between the ship’s crew, shore support teams, and technical experts,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Kevin Kodrin, COMLOG WESTPAC/CTF-73 ordnance officer. “Exercises like this are critical to validating our ability to safely and effectively reload at sea, ensuring our ships remain combat-ready whenever and wherever needed.”

In 2023 and 2024, U.S. Navy destroyers conducted expeditionary vertical launching system (VLS) reloads in Eden, Australia, and Darwin, Australia, respectively. Following exercise Talisman Sabre in September 2023, the USS Rafael Peralta (DDG 115) rearmed with an SM-2 in Eden, while the USS Dewey (DDG 105) followed exercise Kakadu with an SM-2 reload in Darwin in September 2024.

The Higgins operates under Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15, the Navy’s largest DESRON and the U.S. 7th Fleet’s principal surface force, and Task Force 70.

“We are strengthening distributed logistics capabilities that enhance our collective operational readiness across the Indo-Pacific,” said Rear Adm. Eric Anduze, commander,Task Force 70. “This gives our warfighters a tremendous amount of agility to strike from sea, move, reload, reposition and strike again. It represents a lethal tactical advantage that helps us protect the safety and prosperity of the region.”

COMLOG WESTPAC/CTF-73 sustains the U.S. Navy’s maritime forces and is responsible for all diving and salvage operations in the Western Pacific in support of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Task Force 70 directs the preponderance of forward-deployed air and surface maneuver and striking forces in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations, overseeing DESRON 15, Helicopter

Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 51 and expeditionary Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 131, as well as the ships and aircraft operating under Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 5, including the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73), the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Robert Smalls (CG 62), the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Shoup (DDG 86) and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5.

U.S. 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet and routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region.