

# USS Illinois Returns Home from Indo-Pacific Deployment



[Release from Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet Public Affairs](#)

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July 19, 2023

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JOINT BASE PEARL HARBOR-HICKAM, Hawaii – The Virginia-class fast-attack submarine USS Illinois (SSN 786) returned to Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam on July 3, following a seven-month deployment.

Illinois deployed from Pearl Harbor in December 2022, during which the submarine and its crew performed a full spectrum of

operations, to include anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare missions in the Indo-Pacific region.

“The Illinois crew demonstrated the extreme resiliency and endurance required to operate at sea,” said Illinois Commanding Officer Cmdr. Daniel McNab, from Brewster, Minnesota. “Operating a deployed submarine through the most remote parts of the Pacific is incredibly challenging. The strength of our families and support from home was essential to accomplishing our mission of defending a free and open Indo-Pacific region. It has been the highest honor of my career to serve at sea with this amazing crew. I could not be more proud of my Sailors, their families, our Illinois supporters, and the dedication each of them has to our nation.”

During the deployment, the crew traveled approximately 35,000 nautical miles under the sea. The Sailors aboard Illinois trained to be combat-ready prior to departure and maintained those standards throughout the deployment.

“The grit and positive attitude displayed by the entire Illinois crew has been extraordinary,” said Illinois Chief of the Boat Master Chief Fire Control Technician (Submarines) Mark Walter, from Burke, Virginia. “Every day, Illinois Sailors demonstrated our ability to maintain a sustained presence at sea. Special thanks are owed to all the families for keeping our home front secure. Our nation is stronger and our loved ones are safer because of your sacrifice.”

During the deployment, 41 Illinois Sailors became fully qualified in submarines and earned their Submarine Warfare Specialist designation known as “dolphins”.

“The most unforgettable moment of deployment was when I qualified in submarines, especially because I was pinned on my birthday,” said Torpedoman Fireman Apprentice Jeremiah J. Bruce from Montgomery, Alabama. “Earning my silver dolphins

was tough and it took a lot of sleepless nights of studying. It was achievable with help from the entire crew along the way. I'm extremely proud and appreciative to be a part of the Illinois team."

Illinois was commissioned Oct. 29, 2016, and is the 13th Virginia-class submarine. It is 377 feet long with a beam of 34 feet. USS Illinois is the second ship to be named for the nation's 21st state, the first being the battleship USS Illinois (BB 7) which was in service from 1901 to 1920, serving as part of President Theodore Roosevelt's "Great White Fleet".