

USS Robert Smalls Departs Japan for Homeport Change to San Diego



YOKOSUKA, Japan – Ticonderoga class guided-missile cruiser USS Robert Smalls (CG 62) departed Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka today for a permanent homeport change to San Diego.

The departure ends the ship's forward-deployed tour to U.S. 7th Fleet and Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 5 and also marks the last U.S. Navy cruiser to leave Japan. Robert Smalls was replaced by Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Mustin (DDG 89).

"USS Robert Smalls has been a vital part of our forward deployed force," said Rear Adm. Jeffrey L. Heames, commander of CSG 5 and Commander, Task Force (CTF) 70. "She is the last cruiser to leave Japan. Her Sailors stood the watch here for

more than a decade and strengthened our alliance every day they were on station. We thank them for their service and thank Japan for its partnership and hospitality.”

Robert Smalls arrived in Yokosuka in 2015 as USS Chancellorsville and was renamed to USS Robert Smalls in 2023. During this tour the ship served as the strike group’s cruiser escort and operated continuously with Japan Maritime Self Defense Force units throughout the Pacific and alongside U.S. allies and partners during regional exercises.

Capt. Francisco X. Garza, commanding officer of USS Robert Smalls, said the underway is the ship’s final departure from Japan. “This is our sayonara, leaving Japan for the last time,” Garza said. “This crew, and the crews that came before us on this hull, earned the trust of our Japanese partners and of the strike group. We leave proud of that record and grateful for the time we had in Yokosuka. Freedom through Courage.”

This homeport change is a permanent change of station for the crew and their families.

Robert Smalls will transit to the U.S. West Coast and report to Naval Surface Forces, U.S. Pacific Fleet, upon arrival in San Diego. CTF 70 and CSG 5 remains forward deployed to Yokosuka in support of a free and open Indo Pacific.

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

From Lt. Cmdr. Spencer Marion, Commander, Task Force 70 / Carrier Strike Group 5, Oct. 1, 2026