USS Shoup Arrives in Fiji to Promote Maritime Security

SUVA, Fiji – The guided-missile destroyer USS Shoup arrived in Suva Oct. 3 as part of the ship's Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI) deployment.

"Our crew is excited to be in Fiji and is ready to execute the OMSI mission," said Cmdr. Andy Strickland, commanding officer of USS Shoup. "Partnering with the U.S. Coast Guard is a new experience for us, and it will demonstrate the extensive range of U.S. Navy assets in providing critical support to embarked boarding teams in enforcing fishery laws."

While in Suva, the USS Shoup will host distinguished visitors, conduct professional exchanges with Fijian sailors, and participate in community events during their port visit.

Shoup's visit to Fiji marks the first stop in the ship's OMSI deployment, which is a secretary of defense program aimed at diminishing transnational illegal activity on the high seas in the Pacific Island nations of Oceania's exclusive economic zones (EEZ) and enhancing regional security and interoperability with partner nations.

"Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing undermines efforts to conserve and manage global fish stocks," said Lt. Cmdr. Adam Disque, the 14th Coast Guard District response enforcement detachment, embarked aboard Shoup. "The goal of combined efforts by the Navy and Coast Guard through the Oceania Maritime Security Initiative mission is to deter these harmful practices. In partnership with Australia, New Zealand, France, and the Pacific Island Nations, OMSI further promotes extended maritime governance as well as economic and environmental stability throughout Oceania."

Through bilateral agreements, the U.S. Coast Guard assists 10

Pacific Island nations in patrolling the waters around their EEZs. Each of the nations have territorial waters stretching out 12 miles from shore. Beyond that, stretching out 200 nautical miles are EEZs, an area defined by national law that allows each nation exclusive rights to the exploration and use of maritime resources.

U.S. 3rd Fleet leads naval forces in the Pacific and provides the realistic, relevant training necessary for an effective global Navy and constantly coordinates with U.S. 7th Fleet to plan and execute missions that promote ongoing peace, security, and stability throughout the Pacific theater of operations.