U.S. Navy, JMSDF participate in Undersea Warfare Exercise

By MC3(SW) Devon Dow,
***USS George Washington* Public Affairs**

USS George Washington (CVN 73) (*GW*) participated in Undersea Warfare Exercise (USWEX) with U.S. and Japanese naval forces in the western Pacific Ocean June 21 to 25.

The exercise was conducted by elements from Commander, Battle Force 7th Fleet (CTF 70), Commander, Patrol and Reconnaissance Force, 7th Fleet (CTF 72), Commander, Submarine Force, 7th Fleet (CTF 74), Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15 and components from the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF). The exercise focused on training and coordination of anti-submarine warfare (ASW) efforts between the maritime partners.

"This year during USWEX we continued to strengthen interoperability between the U.S. Navy and the JMSDF and trained against tactics, techniques and procedures to develop new concepts in ASW," said Lt. Justin Santos, a surface operations officer for DESRON 15. "Throughout this exercise, I believe everyone involved has executed in a professional manner and to the best of their expertise."

During the exercise, *GW* and JMSDF Sailors, who were embarked aboard *GW* during USWEX, were tasked with locating, tracking and completing simulated engagements with allied submarines in their vicinity.

Santos said that working with the JMSDF provided unique opportunities for all involved to learn from one another, furthering the United States and Japan relationship, and show how they can further their joint operational efforts.

"During USWEX we were afforded the opportunity of working side by side with our JMSDF counterparts onboard *GW*," he said.

"They were standing watch during the exercise in the same spaces we were and holding briefs throughout the day alongside us as well. Having them onboard was a benefit to the success of this exercise."

(Left) *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) (*GW*) Executive Officer Capt. Daniel Grieco explains flight operations to JMSDF Rear Adm. Hiroshi Yamamura, commander of Escort Flotilla 4 June 20. Yamamura is embarked aboard *GW* to participate in the Undersea Warfare Exercise (USWEX).

U.S Navy photo by MC3 Rachel N. Hatch

Lt. Masanobu Kanamori, Undersea Warfare Staff escort for JMSDF's Flotilla 2, is one of the many JMSDF Sailors who has been onboard during the exercise. He said while he was taken back by the enormity of the ship, and the sights and sounds of the flight deck, working, eating and living on the *GW* contributed to the overall experience of USWEX.

"This has been a very big exercise and a great experience for me," he said. "I enjoyed being onboard the *GW* and working with the U.S. Navy Sailors, I learned a lot."

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation. Santos said he is optimistic about the two countries relationship in the present and the future.

"Our alliance with Japan demonstrates the strength in our commitment to one another and our ability to work together," he said. "This exercise is an example of just how strong our alliance really is."

Navy recognizes individual augmentees on fitness reports, evals

By Navy Personnel Command Public Affairs

To ensure the Navy's individual augmentees' (IA) service is properly recognized, the Navy has modified its Performance Evaluations and Advancement Eligibility.

U.S. Naval Hospital Yokosuka Sailors returning from individual augmentee (IA) duty stand at attention at an individual augmentee welcome home ceremony at Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka.

U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Bryan Reckard

Beginning Aug. 1, regular reporting seniors must maintain regular performance evaluation continuity and use a new billet code subcategory (Block 21) code "INDIV AUG" to break out those Sailors who serve in an IA assignment, according to Naval Administrative Message NAVADMIN 215/10.

The NAVADMIN explains a Sailor is considered IA when: in receipt of individual deployment orders from Naval Personnel Command to include IA Manpower Management Assignments, Global War on Terrorism Support Assignments (GSA), Mobilized Reserve Personnel not mobilized as part of an established commissioned Reserve component unit, health services augmentation program support personnel and Overseas Contingency Operation Support Assignment.

If a Sailor's reporting period occurs while on an IA, reporting seniors use the new billet code as long as the Sailor was at the parent command 240 days or less, or if the performance period is less than 240 days. Additionally, if the Sailor finished an IA before the reporting period ends, reporting seniors still use the new billet subcategory if the Sailor has been at the parent command 180 days or less. Those Sailors who exceed the 240- or 180-day periods will be evaluated with their peers.

The message also contains specific guidance for revised advancement eligibility and performance mark average (PMA) computations. For Sailors serving on an IA with reports after Aug. 1 the following guidance is provided:

• Concurrent performance evaluation completed while on an IA assignment will count toward PMA calculations and for time in rate waivers if a "Promotable" or higher promotion recommendation is assigned.

• Compute PMA using all evaluations in the respective paygrade, including frocked, for the computation period announced.

• Commanding officers and officers in charge may waive up to one year of the required time in rate for Sailors in grades E-5 and E-6.

For more details regarding the changes, read the NAVADMIN at www.npc.navy.mil.

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The four-day exercise allowed the two allied navies to locate, track and complete simulated engagements with friendly submarines in the vicinity.

Though the exercise highlighted the 15,412 nautical mile journey, it's the return to Yokosuka that will drive most of the crew's joy, Lausman added.

"As always, it is a pleasure to be reunited with family and loved ones whenever service to our country permits," he said. "It is through their support that allows us to do our job deployed away from home protecting the freedoms we value."

"I'm excited that we're returning and have the opportunity to celebrate the U.S. and the birthday [of the *GW*] in port," said Culinary Specialist Seaman Chao Ye. "I'm going to call my mom as soon as we pull back into port and for the holiday. I'm looking forward to hanging out with my friends and relaxing."

GW is the fourth naval vessel to bear the name of our nation's first president. The ship's motto, the "Spirit of Freedom," was inspired by a letter George Washington wrote in 1774 describing the mood of the people before the start of the Revolutionary War.

In May 2008, the *GW* transitioned from Norfolk, Va. to the forward-deployed naval forces in Yokosuka, Japan and became the Navy's first permanently forward-deployed nuclear-powered aircraft carrier replacing *USS Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) as the only forward-deployed aircraft carrier in the world.