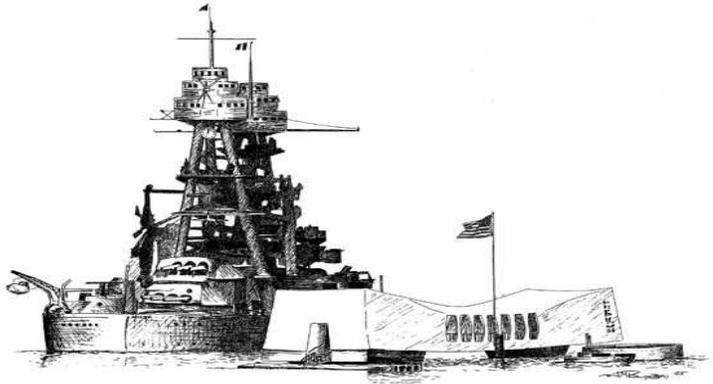


NEWS RELEASE

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Navy succeeds in extracting USS Port Royal

PEARL HARBOR – The Navy freed USS Port Royal (CG 73) this morning after the guided missile cruiser spent three days aground about a half-mile south of Honolulu Airport.

Removing approximately 500 tons of seawater and about 100 tons of anchors, anchor chains and other equipment sufficiently lightened the ship for this morning's successful extraction. The salvage ship USNS Salvor (T-ARS-52), the Motor Vessel Dove and seven Navy and commercial tugboats provided the necessary pulling power for this morning's operation. The pull began at 2 a.m. and the ship was freed within 40 minutes.

Navy, Coast Guard and the state Department of Health continue to monitor for any fuel leakage or spillage in this morning's operation.

“The Coast Guard will conduct an over flight at first light to determine whether there is any evidence of a spill,” said Capt. Barry Compagnoni, the U.S. Coast Guard Captain of the Port of Honolulu.

Added Rear Adm. Joe Walsh, deputy commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet: “The Navy will lead the effort to inspect and remediate the site of the grounding if necessary. Our priorities have been and remain the safety of the crew, the safety of the ship, and the safety of the environment. There have been no injuries associated with the grounding or our recovery efforts.”

After an initial assessment, the ship was being towed to Naval Station Pearl Harbor for closer inspection, assessment, and development of repair plans. The Clean Islands Council oil spill response vessel was following Port Royal into Pearl Harbor. Dry docking at Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard should be completed in approximately one week.

“It is our shipyard's legacy to keep the Pacific Fleet fit to fight,” said Capt. Greg Thomas, Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard Commander. “Every shipyard worker is ready to do what it takes to repair Port Royal and get her back to sea as soon as possible.”

Port Royal ran aground approximately 8:30 p.m. Thursday while off-loading some personnel into a small boat.

Efforts to refloat the ship on the high tide Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings were unsuccessful. In Sunday's try, which lasted four hours and involved Salvor, Dove and seven tugboats – four Navy tugs and three commercial tugs, the Navy was able to pivot Port Royal more than 20 degrees, but was unable to pull the ship free.

Homeported at Pearl Harbor, USS Port Royal was commissioned on July 9, 1994.