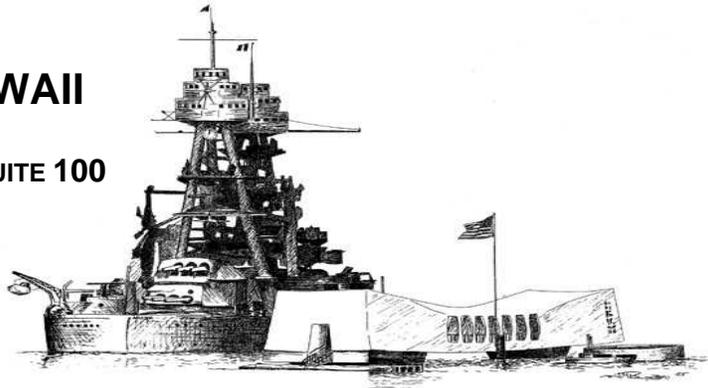


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Pearl Harbor-based USS Hopper to return
from Western Pacific deployment**

(PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII) -- The Pearl Harbor-based guided missile destroyer USS Hopper (DDG 70) is scheduled to return on Thursday, April 23, following a deployment to the Western Pacific.

USS Hopper departed on Jan. 20 as part of the Mid-Pacific Surface Combatant Operational Employment program.

The Mid-Pacific Surface Combatant Operational Employment program calls for the Hawaii-based surface combatants to focus on the Western Pacific by conducting intermediate/advanced training and regular deployments in the Western Pacific. The program also furthers America's Maritime Strategy by posturing credible power in the Western Pacific to protect our vital interests, assure our friends and allies and deter potential adversaries.

USS Hopper is commanded by Cmdr. Timothy J. Kott. The ship has a crew of approximately 350 officers and enlisted personnel. Guided missile destroyers operate in support of carrier strike groups, surface action groups, amphibious groups and replenishment groups and are multi-mission [Anti-Air Warfare (AAW), Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW), and Anti-Surface Warfare (ASUW)] surface combatants.

Media interested in covering the homecoming must contact Chief David Rush at 590-8363 by 5 p.m. Wednesday, April 22. Media will be met at the Pass & ID parking adjacent to Nimitz Gate at 8 a.m. on Thursday, April 23.

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