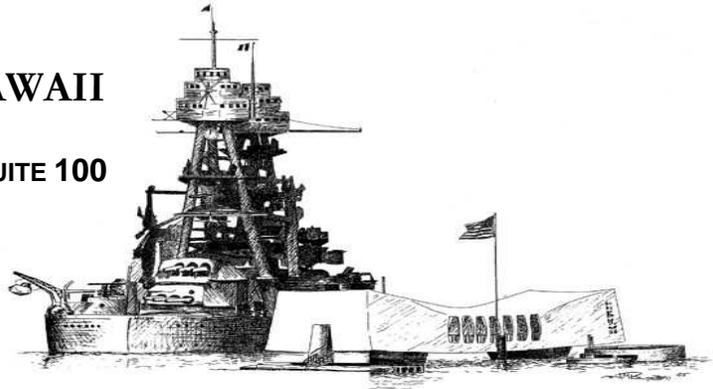


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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POC: Chief David Rush

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USS Russell, USS Paul Hamilton to surge deploy with Reagan Carrier Strike Group

(PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII) -- The Pearl Harbor-based guided missile destroyers USS Russell (DDG 59) and USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60) will depart on Saturday, Feb. 3, as part of the USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76) Carrier Strike Group surge deployment.

USS Paul Hamilton, which departed on Jan. 26, returned to Pearl Harbor upon reassignment to the Reagan Strike Group.

USS Ronald Reagan and attached ships of the Reagan Carrier Strike Group surge deployed to the 7th Fleet Area of Operations from Naval Station North Island on Jan. 27. Surge deployments are part of the Navy's Fleet Response Plan (FRP), which ensures ships are able to respond to real-world situations by maintaining high states of readiness during their surge windows.

In addition to USS Russell and USS Paul Hamilton, the Reagan CSG is comprised of Commander Carrier Strike Group 7 (CCG 7), Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 14, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 7, and the guided-missile cruiser USS Lake Champlain (CG 57).

Reagan's embarked air wing consists of the F/A-18C Hornet, F/A-18E/F Super Hornet, EA-6B Prowler, E-2C Hawkeye 2000, C-2A Greyhound and SH-60F/HH-60H Seahawk. The aircraft can be used to conduct strikes, support land battles, protect the CSG or other friendly ships, and implement a sea or air blockade.

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STRIKE GROUP 2-2-2

The Reagan Carrier Strike Group will support Pacific Command presence in the Seventh Fleet Area of Operations.

These strike groups will support Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa, and will conduct Maritime Security operations. They will also work closely with allies to build regional security and long-term stability.

USS Russell's commanding officer is Cmdr. Brad Cooper, and USS Paul Hamilton's commanding officer is Cmdr. Christopher Bushnell.

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 attending the departure please contact Chief David Rush, Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs Office, by 3pm Friday, Feb. 2, at 473-3788. Media will be met at the Pass and ID parking lot adjacent to the Nimitz Gate at 3pm on Saturday, Feb. 3 to be escorted to the pier.

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