



**USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD 6) Public  
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## **PHIBRON 11 Holds Change of Command**

*By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Matthew M. Bradley, USS Bonhomme Richard Public Affairs*

SASEBO, Japan - Capt. Cathal O'Connor relieved Capt. Bradley Lee as Commander Amphibious Squadron 11 (CPR 11) during a ceremony held aboard the forward-deployed amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) Aug. 3, 2012.

Sailors, Marines, family members, distinguished guests from the community and leaders from the Japan Maritime and Ground Self Defense Forces attended the ceremony.

Lee assumed command of CPR 11 Jan. 20, 2011. During his tenure, Lee led CPR 11 through several multinational exercises with partner nations throughout the Western Pacific as well as efforts to assist Japan after a Devastating earthquake and tsunami, during Operation Tomadachi. He also oversaw the hull swaps between USS Essex (LHD 2) and Bonhomme Richard as well as the USS Harpers Ferry (LSD 49) and USS Germantown (LSD 42).

"It is an honor and a pleasure to stand before you today to mark the completion of my tour as Commodore of Amphibious Squadron 11," said Lee. "Bonhomme Richard, it has been an honor to call your ship the flag ship. Thank you for the support that continues to this very day. The crew has been nothing but supportive of CPR 11."

O'Connor previously served as the CPR 11 deputy commodore. His previous tours include commanding officer of USS Rushmore (LSD 47), executive officer of USS Tortuga (LSD 46), and chief of staff for Commander Task Force 76.

"Today is a special day. It gives us the chance to pause and reflect on where we have been what we are and what we may yet become," said O'Connor. "It also gives me a chance to thank Capt. Lee and his staff for their remarkable performance over the last 18 months."

The guest speaker for the ceremony was Rear Adm. Jeffrey Harley, commander, Amphibious Force 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet, Expeditionary Strike Group 7 and Task Force 76.

During the ceremony Harley commented on Lee's leadership and impact on CPR 11.

"I'm blessed to be here today to speak and witness the historic tradition of the change of command ceremony, and to speak of the many accomplishments of Commodore Lee has made to our country and great Navy," said Harley. "Commodore Lee Organized planned and led the ships and staff in numerous key bi-lateral and multi-lateral exercises."

Bonhomme Richard is the lead ship of the only forward-deployed U.S. Amphibious Ready Group and serves as the flagship for Combined Task Force 76, the Navy's only forward-deployed amphibious force commander. Task Force 76 is headquartered at White Beach Naval Facility, Okinawa, Japan, with a detachment in Sasebo, Japan.