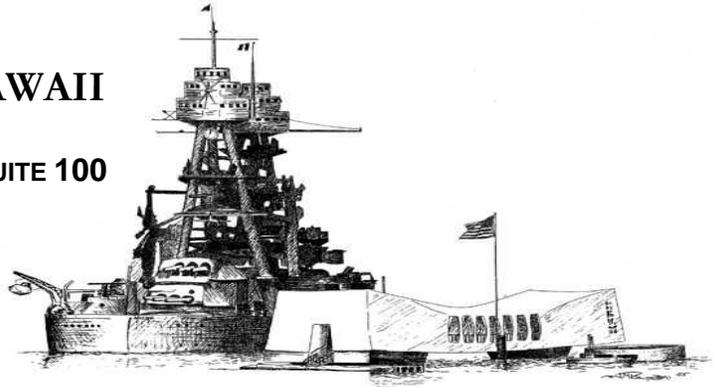


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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POC: Chief David Rush

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**USS O’Kane, USS Paul Hamilton to deploy with
Stennis Carrier Strike Group**

(PEARL HARBOR, HAWAII) -- The Pearl Harbor-based guided missile destroyers USS O’Kane (DDG 77) and USS Paul Hamilton (DDG 60) will deploy on Friday, Jan. 26, as part of the USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74) Carrier Strike Group.

The carrier, with Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 9, USS Antietam (CG 54), and USS Preble (DDG 88), deployed from San Diego Saturday, Jan. 20. Stennis is the flagship for Commander, Carrier Strike Group (CCSG) 3, headed by Rear Adm. Kevin M. Quinn.

Stennis’ 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.

The Stennis Carrier Strike Group will operate in the Persian Gulf region with the Eisenhower Carrier Strike Group, already in the Central Command Area of Operations. The presence of two aircraft carriers, while not unprecedented, demonstrates U.S. resolve to bring security and stability to the region.

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STRIKE GROUP 2-2-2

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 O'Kane's commanding officer is Cmdr. James Joseph Duke, Jr., 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 media availability please contact Chief David Rush, Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs Office, by 3pm Thursday, Jan. 25, at 473-3788. Media will be met at the Pass and ID parking lot adjacent to the Nimitz Gate at 9 am on Friday, Jan. 26 to be escorted to the pier.

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