



Another example of a mission ready ship because of a U.S. Navy Port Engineer

USS Wasp Completes Historic Patrol in Indo-Pacific



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From USS Wasp Public Affairs

SASEBO, Japan (NNS) -- The amphibious assault ship USS Wasp (LHD 1) returned to Sasebo, April 26, after nearly two months of operations in the Indo-Pacific with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).

Wasp successfully embarked, maintained and supported near-daily flight operations of the F-35B Lightning II in that span, part of a first-ever operational deployment of the U.S. Marine Corp's fifth-generation stealth jet.

The operations were part of a routine and regularly scheduled patrol but brought together two San Diego-based destroyers to flex the composite of amphibious ships as an "Up-Gunned Expeditionary Strike Group."



"The crew worked very hard to prepare for this patrol, and I am proud to say they performed extremely well as we integrated with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit and introduced the F-35B Joint Strike Fighter to the fleet," said Capt. Colby Howard, Wasp commanding officer. "We now have a chance to enter port and prepare for our next adventure with 7th Fleet."

Over the course of the patrol, 31st MEU Marines and Wasp Sailors trained together in a wide range of missions, leveraging the ship's large flight deck for airlift of Marine infantry forces, well deck for landing craft movement, and expansive medical capabilities for casualty response drills.

The patrol culminated with the Sailors and Marines successfully completing the MEU's Certification Exercise (CERTEX). The certification signified that the combined team could conduct full range of operations, including beach raids, non-combat evacuations, mass casualty response, and the search and seizure of cargo vessels.

Supporting the F-35B demonstrated the adaptability and resiliency of the Wasp crew who worked hand-in-hand with MEU maintainers and pilots to streamline processes and ensure operations could be safely conducted.

"Our Sailors performed and the integration went well and as planned," said Wasp Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Department Leading Chief Petty Officer Master Chief Aircraft Maintencenceman Tom Kreinheder. "Just considering the overall concept of the performed maintenance requirements in support of the F-35B during its first deployment, it displays the efficiency of these Sailors in keeping the aircraft ready. Also taking into account the integration and training we received from the 31st MEU and the attached squadrons shows that our Sailors learned a great deal and took their skills to the next level."

Wasp will now enter a continuous maintenance availability (CMAV), a period dedicated to maintenance and repairs, as well as to test the ship's systems to certify they can perform at optimal standards.

Wasp arrived in Sasebo in January 2018 after transiting from Norfolk, Virginia, as part of a shift in forward-deployed assets to replace the amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6) as the Amphibious Force 7th Fleet flagship.



The Wasp Expeditionary Strike Group included the amphibious dock landing ship USS Ashland (LSD 48), the amphibious transport dock USS Green Bay (LPD 20), and two San Diego-based guided-missile destroyers, USS Sterett (DDG 104) and USS Dewey (DDG 105).

Wasp remains forward-deployed to Sasebo, Japan, to provide a ready-response for any contingency in the Indo-Pacific.

Webmaster's Note:

USS Wasp (LHD-1) is a United States Navy multipurpose amphibious assault ship, and the lead ship of her class. She is the tenth USN vessel to bear the name since 1775, with the last two ships named *Wasp* being aircraft carriers. She was built by the Ingalls Shipbuilding division of Litton in Pascagoula, Mississippi. *Wasp* and her sister ships are the first specifically designed to accommodate new Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) for fast troop movement over the beach, and Harrier II (AV-8B) Vertical/Short Take-Off and Landing (V/STOL) jets which provide close air support for the assault force.