



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

## US-Japan Advance New Amphibious Capability

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PHILIPPINE SEA (NNS) -- The amphibious dock landing ship USS Ashland (LSD 48) became the first U.S. Navy ship in the 7th Fleet to conduct amphibious operations with the newly established Japan Ground Self Defense Force (JGSDF) Amphibious Rapid Deployment Brigade (ARDB) troops and their equipment Oct. 2.

JGSDF assault amphibious vehicles were recovered by Ashland Sailors and embarked Marines from 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) during humanitarian assistance and disaster response (HADR) training as a part of exercise Kaagapay Ng Mga Mandirigma Ng Dagat (KAMANDAG) 2.



“This is a milestone achievement and a significant step forward in capability development for Japan’s newly established amphibious force,” said Rear Adm. Brad Cooper, commander, Amphibious Force 7th Fleet. “The JGSDF and JMSDF (Japan Maritime Self Defense Force) have made enormous strides in their amphibious capability since establishment of the ARDB just six months ago. We are proud to work side-by-side with our friends from Japan and the Philippines during this exercise and look to the future with great anticipation to train together.”

KAMANDAG 2 is a bilateral, U.S., Philippine, military training exercise with U.S. forces being led by the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade. The Ashland crew is proud to participate in this exercise with both the Philippine and Japanese Forces,” said Cmdr. Patrick L. German, Ashland’s commanding officer.

Ashland will be working with allied nations and their marine forces conducting various amphibious operations focused on humanitarian and disaster relief (HADR) during the exercise.

Ashland, part of the Wasp Amphibious Ready Group, with embarked 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, is operating in the Indo-Pacific region to enhance interoperability with partners and serve as a ready-response force for contingency operations.

For more news from Commander, Amphibious Squadron 11, visit [www.navy.mil/local/cpr11/](http://www.navy.mil/local/cpr11/).

## Webmaster’s Note:

**USS *Ashland*** (LSD-48) is a *Whidbey Island*-class dock landing ship of the United States Navy. She was the second Navy ship to be named for Ashland, the home of Henry Clay, in Lexington, Kentucky.

**Henry Clay Sr.** (April 12, 1777 – June 29, 1852) was an American lawyer, planter, and statesman who represented Kentucky in both the United States Senate and House of Representatives. After serving three non-consecutive terms as Speaker of the House of Representatives.