

THE AVENGER 77



2022 EDITION

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Looking Toward the Future



Avengers,

Happy New Year! After speaking with so many Sailors, I am glad to hear you enjoyed your well-deserved time off in France. Some of you met loved ones for a once in a lifetime opportunity to ring in the New Year in Paris. What an opportunity.

I also enjoyed the down time, specifically reflecting on an exciting and challenging year we just completed together, and taking time to purposely cast a vision for what I would like to accomplish personally and professionally in 2023.

Each New Year – and each new day – provide an opportunity for each of us to learn, improve, and grow.

President George H.W. Bush once said, “The American Dream means giving it your all, trying your hardest, accomplishing something. And then I’d add to that, giving something back. No definition of a successful life can do anything but include serving others.”

While we all reached personal goals in 2022, we accomplished more collectively than we did as individuals. I am proud of our teamwork, grit, and resilience. Your hard work and commitment to serve within and on our team is the key to our success. This is our greatest calling as a team - to challenge, lead, teach, and grow in service to one another, while at the same time in service to preserve our families, communities, and nation’s liberty, freedom, economic prosperity, justice and peace.

With that awesome responsibility for our team in mind, I want you to begin thinking about 2023.

- What do you want to achieve personally and professionally?
- What deployment goals are you working toward that you will miss out on if you don’t take the next right step today?
- If you already completed your deployment goals, what are you doing to challenge yourself between now and return to home port?
- What are you doing to help others achieve their goals?

Thinking beyond deployment, what do you need to do to prepare yourself financially, mentally, and spiritually for our return home?

- What discussions do you need to have with a mentor, friend, or your chain of command to help navigate a challenging situation when we return home?
- How will you prepare, plan, and complete part of your workload now to maximize time at home when we get back to Norfolk, Mayport, Oceana, Lemoore, and Woodby Island?

And thinking just a bit beyond our return and reintegration, what do you need to do to help your division or department think about a shipyard availability at the end of 2023?

- What schools and classes do you want to attend?
- How can you prepare yourself for the next challenge?

Here’s what I want you to do.

Write down your goals. The majority of goals that are not written down on paper are never achieved.

Make sure your goals are SMART Goals – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. If your goals don’t fit those metrics, then it will be tough to look back and determine if you are meeting your goals timely.

After you write down your goals, hang them proudly in a place you will see them every day, so you have a constant reminder of what you want to achieve. Share your goals with at least one person on the ship and off the ship. When you do this, you will be able to stay accountable, build relationships, and have someone keeping a watchful eye on your progress.

This may seem overwhelming. Don’t be overwhelmed. I just want you to raise your level of excellence 1% every day, and take one purposeful step toward your goal each day. Start by tying your shoes like John Wooten said and making your bed, like Adm. William McRaven, Navy Seal and former Commander of all U.S. Special Operations Forces said.

Increased qualifications, increased test scores, promotions, increased pay and quality of life, better relationships, stronger marriages, and being amazing parents – You can achieve all of these if you are purposeful with your time. So how are you going to spend your time in 2023?

I am incredibly proud of what we accomplished together in 2022, and it has been incredible to watch you learn and grow individually and as a team and family. I look forward to seeing you achieve your goals in 2023, while serving our great nation on this incredible team.

Take pride in standing the watch & answering the call of our nation.

Go make your goals and dreams come true in 2023!

D.T.M. Pollard
Commanding Officer
USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77)

TSTA/FEP



USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) completed Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA) and Final Evaluation Problem (FEP), March 1, 2022.





George H.W. Bush Completes TSTA/FEP

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Public Affairs

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) completed Tailored Ship's Training Availability (TSTA) and Final Evaluation Problem (FEP), March 1, 2022.

The ship concluded TSTA/FEP in cooperation with Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10 and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 7.

This assessment showed that our team of teams can continuously train and develop the skills we need them to have as tactically-minded watchstanders," said Capt. Robert Aguilar, commanding officer of USS George H.W. Bush. "We are a prepared, resilient team that will deter, and if necessary, defeat our nation's adversaries."

TSTA/FEP is an in-port and underway evolution designed to evaluate unit level proficiency and develop a ship's ability to self-train.

TSTA/FEP assesses the ship on its warfighting and damage control proficiencies by evaluating events such as General Quarters, medical emergency responses, replenishments at sea, and everyday watch standing.

"The entire crew of the USS George H.W. Bush has welcomed us with open arms and it resulted in rapid integration between our two teams," said Capt. Thomas Bodine, commander, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 7. "The foundation of teamwork and comradery that was built during TSTA/FEP will pay dividends as we integrate with the rest of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10 to form a lethal combat weapons system."

GHWB, CSG-10, and CVW-7 will join Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 26 and USS Leyte Gulf (CG-55) to begin the advanced/integrated phase of the Optimized Fleet Response Plan where they will sail together as the George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group.

George H.W. Bush provides the national command authority flexible, tailorable warfighting capability as the flagship of a carrier strike group that maintains maritime stability and security to ensure access, deter aggression and defend U.S., allied and partner interests.





GHWBCSG Completes Group Sail

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Public Affairs



The George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group (GHWBCSG) joined forces for Group Sail March 3-11. It was the first time that each element of the strike group worked together since the carrier returned from her last deployment.

"I'm incredibly proud of the work we've done here the past few weeks," said Rear Adm. Rick Cheeseman, commander, Carrier Strike Group 10, George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group. "It's amazing to watch a team work hard and take on the traits that we talk about in the Navy today like embracing the red and 'Get real, Get better.' Constructive criticism of ourselves and our teammates while being collegial and mission focused delivers impressive results."

George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group is led by Cheeseman and his staff, which is supported by the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 7 the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers of Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 26, an Information Warfare Commander, and the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55).

During Group Sail, the strike group executed command and control of each element to begin the integrated phase of training. This phase of training is an essential element of the force generation and training cycle for carrier strike groups and their supporting commands. It provides needed time for essential communication and interoperability to begin between units and the strike group.

"Down to the newest Sailor within our team of teams, everyone worked very hard during group TSTA/FEP, SWATT, Live Fire With a Purpose and finally Group Sail," said Cheeseman. "I'm sure a lot of our team is tired from working hard, and that's to be expected during training. But it's important that they know – even if they don't realize it in the moment – that they're an impressive team, and I know we're on a great path as we continue training."

GHWBCSG is an integrated combat weapons system that delivers superior combat capability to deter, and if necessary, defeat America's adversaries in support of national security. It achieves its mission by projecting the combined power of George H.W. Bush, Carrier Air Wing 7, Destroyer Squadron 26, its Information Warfare Commander, and the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55).



GHWB Live Fire with a Purpose



The aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) completed a live-fire exercise of its RIM-116 rolling airframe missile (RAM) while underway, Feb. 28.



DESRON-26 Live Fire with a Purpose



Change of Command



“The officers, chiefs, and Sailors of George H.W. Bush are deployment ready. They will perform and fight and win.”

- Capt. Robert Aguilar



Capt. Dave M. Pollard relieved Capt. George R. Aguilar as Commanding Officer of the aircraft carrier USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) during a ceremony May 19, 2022.

“My vision is to develop you as warriors to be the teachers, leaders, and ambassadors of your families, communities, our ship, the strike group, the United States Navy, and the United States of America.”

- Capt. Dave Pollard

COMPTUEX



Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10 completed Composite Training Unit Exercise (COMPTUEX), Jul. 1.

George H. W. Bush CSG Certified to Deploy

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Public Affairs



The Sailors, ships, squadrons and staffs of the George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group successfully completed the final deployment certification exercise, June 30.

In addition to the U.S. Navy participants, the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit from Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, the Italian destroyer ITS Caio Duilio (D 554) and submarines from Brazil and Colombia joined the strike group to increase interoperability and capability with allies and partners during composite training unit exercise (COMPTUEX), which was led by Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 4.

“The job of the embarked CSG 4 staff is to mentor, train and assess deploying carrier strike groups on the east coast,” said Rear Adm. Rich Brophy, commander, CSG 4. “Carrier Strike Group 10 demonstrated the flexibility and proficiency necessary to certify in all required mission areas. The strike group is fully ready for any contingency or operations ahead.”

COMPTUEX is designed to fully integrate the GHWBCSG, under the command of CSG 10, as a cohesive, multi-mission fighting force and test the group’s ability to carry out sustained combat operations from the sea. COMPTUEX lasts several weeks, during which units are tested on their proficiency and readiness for deployment through scenario-based, live training, that increases in complexity and intensity.

The exercise allowed the ships, aircraft, and staffs to work together in response to specific scenarios across all warfare areas, and to refine their ability to communicate and fight alongside one another in a realistic training environment that included academic, synthetic and live training events.

“I could not be prouder of our international maritime force and the way we worked together as a team during COMPTUEX,” said Rear Adm. Dennis Velez, commander, CSG 10. “The assessors pushed us to learn and grow, and I look forward to deploying with highly-competent and confident strike group. We are, and will continue to be, ready to fight and win at sea if required – there is nothing we cannot accomplish together.”

For the first time during a COMPTUEX, a marine expeditionary unit (MEU) integrated virtually into the events from Expeditionary Warfare Training Group, Atlantic (EWTGLANT). This training allowed the 26th MEU to increase staff proficiency across various warfighting functions and provided a unique experience to exercise naval interoperability.

“This is the first time that a marine expeditionary unit has integrated into a carrier strike group’s COMPTUEX,” said Col. Dennis Sampson, commanding officer of the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit. “This COMPTUEX allowed the 26th MEU to partner with Expeditionary Strike Group 2 as a higher echelon command mirroring a marine expeditionary brigade or the current Task Force 61/2 construct. Exercises like COMPTUEX provide the 26th MEU with a unique opportunity to enhance our core staff competencies across warfighting domains, contributing to the success of the naval expeditionary force within the construct of this exercise. Moreover, as we prepare to deploy with the Bataan Amphibious Ready Group, these realistic naval exercises provide opportunities for naval integration and opportunities to strengthen relationships across the amphibious ready group/marine expeditionary unit, while showcasing the relevance and operational capability the ARG/MEU provides to a fleet commander,” Sampson concluded.

During COMPTUEX, the strike group also conducted the fourth iteration of the NATO vignette developed by CSG 4 and Combined Joint Operations from the Sea Centre of Excellence (CJOS COE).

“The strike group seamlessly executed their transfer of authority during the NATO vignette,” said Vice Adm. Daniel Dwyer, commander of U.S. 2nd Fleet and director of CJOS COE. “These TOAs are an essential component of our activities together, and the importance of the Alliance, especially now, cannot be overstated. The NATO Alliance is stronger than ever, and any opportunity for our forces to train and exercise together increases

our ability to integrate when called upon.”

NATO vignette refers to a period of time during which a NATO command exercises command and control of exercise participants. The GHWBCSG team rehearsed a transfer of authority (TOA) of command and control between U.S. 2nd Fleet and Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO (STRIKFORNATO), NATO’s rapidly deployable joint headquarters in Portugal. The strike group used NATO reporting procedures, messaging formats and chat capabilities, reinforcing command and control and aligning communications channels to ensure a seamless process in the event of a crisis. NATO vignettes also support the development of interoperability requirements for future force generation and improve allied maritime command and control linkages that are vital in all phases of warfare.

“COMPTUEX was a great opportunity for ITS Duilio and the Italian Navy to improve our capability to operate within complex environments,” said Capt. Jacopo Rollo, Caio Duilio’s commanding officer. “This level of cooperation is essential between our navies and to strengthen the relationship and skills of our crews.”

Caio Duilio joined the GHWBCSG for COMPTUEX under the Cooperative Deployment Program, which prioritizes defense partnerships and capabilities between the U.S. and bilateral or multilateral partners to increase combined capability.



Deployment



Commander, Carrier Strike Group 10, George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group (GHWBCSG) deployed aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) from Naval Station Norfolk, Aug. 10.



George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group Deploys

USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) Public Affairs



Commander, Carrier Strike Group 10, George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group (GHWBCSG) deployed aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) from Naval Station Norfolk here, Aug. 10.

“We bring the full-range of U.S. and allied maritime power in support of national security and defense objectives wherever we sail,” said Rear Adm. Dennis Velez, commander, CSG-10, GHWBCSG. “Throughout our deployment we will continue to operate with and reassure our allies, maintain open sea lanes for trade and increased prosperity, and deter – or if necessary – destroy our adversaries.”

This marks the first deployment for George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) since 2017. The carrier completed an intensive maintenance availability after the 2017 deployment before she returned to the operational fleet to begin a robust deployment readiness cycle in late 2021.

“George H.W. Bush Sailors are warriors, leaders, teachers, and ambassadors operating forward, representing their families, hometowns, and the American people wherever we operate,” said Capt. David-Tavis Pollard, commanding officer of George H.W. Bush.

“President Bush said, “Let future generations understand the burdens and blessings of freedom. Let them say we stood where duty required us to stand.” We know what an awesome responsibility we have to preserve liberty, justice, and freedom while embodying the principles of service, grit, humility, and resilience our namesake showed throughout his lifetime.”

USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55), USS Delbert D. Black (DDG 119), and USS Farragut (DDG 99) recently departed from their homeports as part of GHWBCSG. Notably, Delbert D. Black is underway to begin her maiden deployment.

The GHWBCSG is an integrated combat weapons system that delivers superior combat capability to deter, and if necessary, defeat America’s adversaries in support of national security.

The GHWBCSG is comprised of the Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10 staff, George H.W. Bush, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 7, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 26 staff and units, the Information Warfare Commander, and the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55). In total, the strike group is a force of more than 6,000 Sailors, capable of carrying out a wide variety of missions around the globe.

George H.W. Bush provides the national command authority flexible, tailorable warfighting capability as the flagship of a carrier strike group that maintains maritime stability and security to ensure access, deter aggression and defend U.S., allied and partner

The ships of DESRON 26 within the GHWBCSG are USS Truxtun (DDG 103) homeported in Norfolk, Va., and USS Farragut (DDG 99) and USS Delbert D. Black (DDG 119) homeported in Mayport, Fl.

The squadrons of Carrier Air Wing Seven (CVW 7) embarked aboard George H.W. Bush are the “Jolly Rogers” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 103, the “Pukin’ Dogs” of VFA-143, the “Bluetails” of Carrier Airborne Early Warning Squadron (VAW) 121, the “Nightdippers” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 5 located in Norfolk, Va.; the “Sidewinders” of VFA-86 and the “Nighthawks” of VFA-136 located in Lemoore, Ca.; the “Patriots” of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 140 based in Whidbey Island, Wa; and the “Grandmasters” of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 46 located in Mayport, Fl.



USS GEORGE H.W. BUSH'S



STRAIT OF GIBRALTAR



DEPLOYMENT JOURNEY



SOUDA BAY, CRETE





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George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group Arrives in Souda Bay, Crete

Carrier Strike Group 10 Public Affairs



The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) – along with the embarked staff of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10, George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group (GHWBCSG) - arrived in Souda Bay, Crete, for a scheduled port visit Oct. 6, 2022.

The port visit provides an opportunity to further strengthen the enduring relationship between the United States and Greece, and allow the Sailors of GHWBCSG a chance to experience the allied nation's culture.

"The defense and security cooperation between the United States and Greece is at an all-time high. We value the relationship we have with our Greek allies and the bases and support facilities at Souda Bay continue to serve as a "crown jewel" in the eastern Mediterranean Sea that enable U.S. and NATO missions, interoperability, and security in the region," said Rear Adm. Dennis Velez, commander, CSG-10, GHWBCSG. "We are stronger when we work together with our allies, and also when we build upon the already strong relationships we have with them."

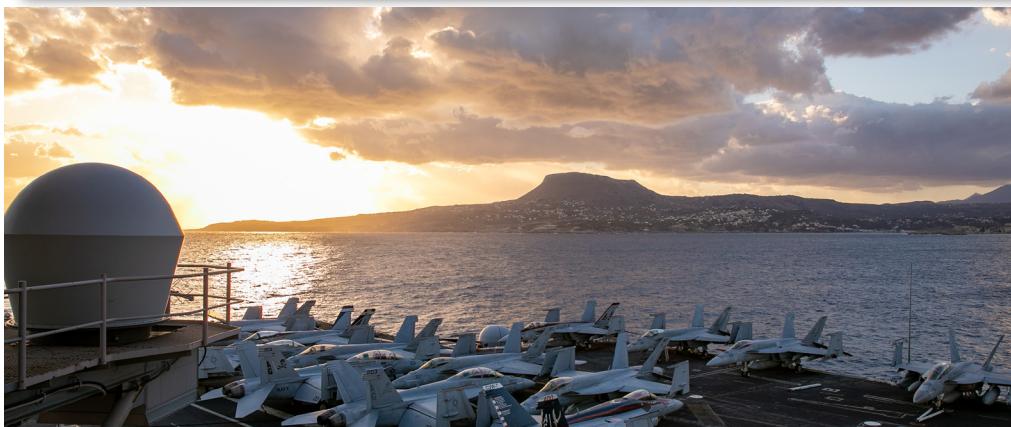
During their time in port, Sailors will depart the ship to experience and appreciate the people and culture in and around Souda Bay. It will be the ship's first port visit since departing Norfolk on Aug. 10, 2022 for a planned deployment.

"Our Sailors know the importance of our responsibility to represent our families, cities, states, and shipmates as Ambassadors wherever we go, and we look forward to enjoying a well-deserved port visit with our friends in Souda Bay," said Capt. Dave Pollard. "We value the importance of the relationships we have with our allies, and we look forward reinforcing and building upon that foundation."

The ship's Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) team worked with local and regional partners to line up a variety of tours and daytrips for Sailors to experience the region. Trips include a daylong hikes and trips to well-known historical and cultural sites.

In addition to MWR trips, Sailors will also have the opportunity to participate in clean-up events organized with and through local officials.

"It will be good to spend time in a beautiful country enjoying the local food, art, and history to recharge from being on the ship," said Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Handling) First Class Jose Mercado, George H.W. Bush's Sailor of the Year. "But we know it's also important to give back to the local community while we have these opportunities to enjoy the culture and learn about regional history."







Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO (STRIKFORNATO) and U.S. Sixth Fleet (SIXTHFLT) concluded Vigilance Activity Neptune Strike, the eighth phase of NATO's long-planned Project Neptune series of activities, from STRIKFORNATO headquarters in Oeiras, Portugal, Oct. 28.



Neptune Strike



NATO concludes successful Vigilance Activity Neptune Strike

Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO Public Affairs and U.S. Sixth Fleet Public Affairs



Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO (STRIKFORNATO) and U.S. Sixth Fleet (SIXTHFLT) concluded Vigilance Activity Neptune Strike, the eighth phase of NATO's long-planned Project Neptune series of activities, from STRIKFORNATO headquarters in Oeiras, Portugal, Oct. 28.

Neptune Strike demonstrated the combined capacity of the Alliance while underscoring allied and partner nations' commitments to deterrence and defense of sovereign Alliance territory. This activity and NATO's wider strategy deters adversaries and terrorist groups from spreading destabilization, widening disorder, or accruing decisive military advantage that would impact allies' security.

"Neptune Strike sits at the leading edge of NATO's vigilance activities, providing credible deterrence, and demonstrating the inherent flexibility of the carrier strike group while building high-end interchangeability among our NATO allies and partners on a firm foundation of trust," said Vice Adm. Thomas Ishee, commander of both SIXTHFLT and STRIKFORNATO. "The energy across the entire Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO team was palpable as we pushed the bounds of allied integration in the land, air and on the seas."

Throughout the two-week long vigilance activity, NATO servicemembers from several allied nations planned, briefed, and executed a variety of specific evolutions, including air-to-land integration with allies including Hungary, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Poland and Slovakia, maritime and interdiction activities, and air-to-air refueling and air-to-air rehearsal events throughout allied airspace.

While allied and partner aircraft flew together in the skies, the ships of the George H. W. Bush carrier strike group (GHWBCSG) sailed alongside multiple allied ships in the Adriatic and Ionian Seas. These included Albanian and Croatian ships, as well as members of Allied Maritime Command's Standing NATO Maritime Group (SNMG) 2 and Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures

Group (SNMCMG) 2, and the United Kingdom's Littoral Response Group (LRG).

"I could not be more proud of the teamwork, expertise and professionalism displayed by everyone in making Neptune Strike 22.2 a resounding success," said Ishee. "The evolution of Project Neptune is both a testament to the innovation of the NATO Alliance and a tangible demonstration that we truly are stronger together."

The diversity and complexity of evolutions conducted during Neptune Strike, through multiple domains and unique scenarios, continued to validate interoperability of a CSG within NATO command and control architectures to contend with a rapidly evolving security environment. The activity is proof of the warfighting advantage that characterizes allied interoperability and, ultimately, the strength of the most successful Alliance in history.

"Neptune Strike has again offered a perfect opportunity to fully integrate the combat power of a U.S. aircraft carrier into enhanced Vigilance Activity in direct support of NATO's commitment to deter conflict and defend allies. It has offered the chance to combine capabilities from a large number of nations in all warfare domains - on land, at sea and in the air - as a clear demonstration of allied unity of purpose and cohesion," said Royal Navy Rear Adm. James Morley, deputy commander, STRIKFORNATO. "It has further rehearsed STRIKFORNATO's role as the primary integrator for U.S. maritime combat power. The George H. W. Bush Carrier Strike Group is now even better prepared to execute complex missions in concert with wider allied efforts to defend the Euro-Atlantic area."

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's visit to the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) on Oct. 25 served as a key highlight of the activity. While aboard the ship, Stoltenberg reflected on the carrier's presence as a demonstration of U.S. capability and commitment to the Alliance, a general escalation of tension between

European powers, and how the conclusion of Neptune Strike - and its inclusion of more than 70 aircraft, 20 ships, and 5,000 personnel from 26 NATO allies and partners - demonstrates NATO's capability on the world stage.

"[Neptune Strike 2022] is a perfect example of the transatlantic bond - Europe and North America working together in NATO," Stoltenberg said. "[NATO's] strength helps to prevent any miscalculation by sending a clear message: NATO will protect and defend every inch of allied territory."

Participating nations in Neptune Strike included Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechia, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Türkiye, U.K. and the U.S.

Vigilance Activities are day-to-day activities, occurring in all domains and across SACEUR's area of responsibility, to ensure appropriate strategic awareness and force readiness required to sustain peace.

For over 80 years, U.S. Naval Forces Europe-U.S. Naval Forces Africa (NAVEUR-NAF) has forged strategic relationships with allies and partners, leveraging a foundation of shared values to preserve security and stability.



SPLIT, CROATIA





George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group Arrives in Split, Croatia

Carrier Strike Group 10 Public Affairs

The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) – along with the embarked staff of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10, George H.W. Bush CSG arrived in Split, Croatia, for a regularly scheduled port visit Nov. 3, 2022.

The port visit provides an opportunity to enhance the strong U.S.-Croatian partnership as the two nations work together for a stable, secure, and prosperous Europe, and allow the Sailors of George H.W. Bush CSG a chance to experience Croatian culture.

“Our ability to deter aggression and defend the alliance is stronger when we work together with our allies and partners like Croatia,” said Rear Adm. Dennis Velez, commander, CSG-10, George H.W. Bush CSG. “Our Sailors have worked with and shared cultural exchanges with Croatian Sailors and people throughout our deployment. Just recently, USS Leyte Gulf (CG 55) sailed with the Croatian missile boat Dubrovnik (RTOP-42) during the recent NATO vigilance activity Neptune Strike 22.2. But most importantly, the Croatian government provided safety for a number of our aviators and aircraft early in deployment when they needed to divert due to weather. That speaks to the Croatian spirit and the imperative of relationships in our collective defense.”

George H.W. Bush is anchored off the coast, and will host local officials and key leaders for a reception to honor the U.S.-Croatian relationship. Additionally, Sailors from the ship will take much deserved time off to experience Croatian culture in and around Split.

“The warriors of Team Jackpot – our leaders, teachers, and ambassadors - all know the important responsibility we each have to represent our families, cities, states, and nation with professionalism and dignity as we enjoy the opportunity to explore all Croatia has to offer,” said Capt. Dave Pollard, commanding officer of George H.W. Bush. “I was fortunate to bring a few hundred Sailors to Split in 2021 as commanding officer of USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), and I’m grateful to bring the nearly 5,000 Sailors embarked aboard Georg Herbert Walker Bush to enjoy it today.”

The ship’s Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) team arranged a variety of tours for Sailors to experience the area including rafting the Cetina River, hiking the Sibenik and Krka Waterfalls, and additional tours throughout the region.

Sailors will also have the opportunity to participate in two Thousand Points of Light community relations events organized with and through local officials at two local kindergartens – a nod to President George H.W. Bush’s inaugural address and the service-oriented organization that exists still today.

Strengthening partnerships during the port visit to Split builds enduring relationships and emphasizes our shared commitment to promoting safety and stability within the region, while seeking opportunities to enhance our interoperability as NATO allies.

U.S. Navy ships frequently stop in Croatia for maintenance and mutual security operations. Croatia is a hub for U.S. Navy cooperation, with the port city of Rijeka economically benefiting from over a billion Kuna in contracted services since 2011.





Multi-Carrier Operations



Projecting Power in the Med: NATO Strike Groups Demonstrate Combined Capabilities

Carrier Strike Group 10 Public Affairs



Capt. David-Tavis M. Pollard relieved Capt. George R. Aguilar as Commanding Officer of the aircraft carrier USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) during a ceremony May 19, 2022.

Civilian and military guests gathered to bid fair winds and following seas to Aguilar after a remarkable 30-year career in the Navy, and welcome Pollard.

Rear Adm. Dennis Velez, commander, Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10 and George H.W. Bush CSG, presided over the ceremony. Velez emphasized the importance of the capabilities the aircraft carrier brings to the carrier strike group.

“The mark of a strong team – the currency that really matters in the profession of arms – is trust,” said Velez. “Nothing is more important, and you’ve delivered trust through your leadership and prioritization of your team’s development, operating safely, and operational excellence.”

He also commended Aguilar on his career in service to the Navy.

“I think it’s a fair bet that a younger Robert Aguilar had no idea 30-plus years ago that he’d one day be the first Texan to lead the aircraft carrier named after President George H.W. Bush,” said Velez. “For the young Sailors in the crowd today, today is an example of where grit, determination, humility, and service can lead you in the U.S. Navy and the United States of America.”

Aguilar, a native of Natalia, Texas, and graduate of Texas Tech University, assumed command of George H.W. Bush in May 2020. During his speech, he lauded the readiness of George H.W. Bush Sailors.

“We have formed a team comprised of three staffs, six ships, 70 aircraft, and more than 7,000 hard-charging, well-trained American Sailors who will be victorious in our pursuit of Peace through readiness,” said Aguilar. “The officers, chiefs, and Sailors of George H.W. Bush are deployment ready. They will perform and fight and win.”

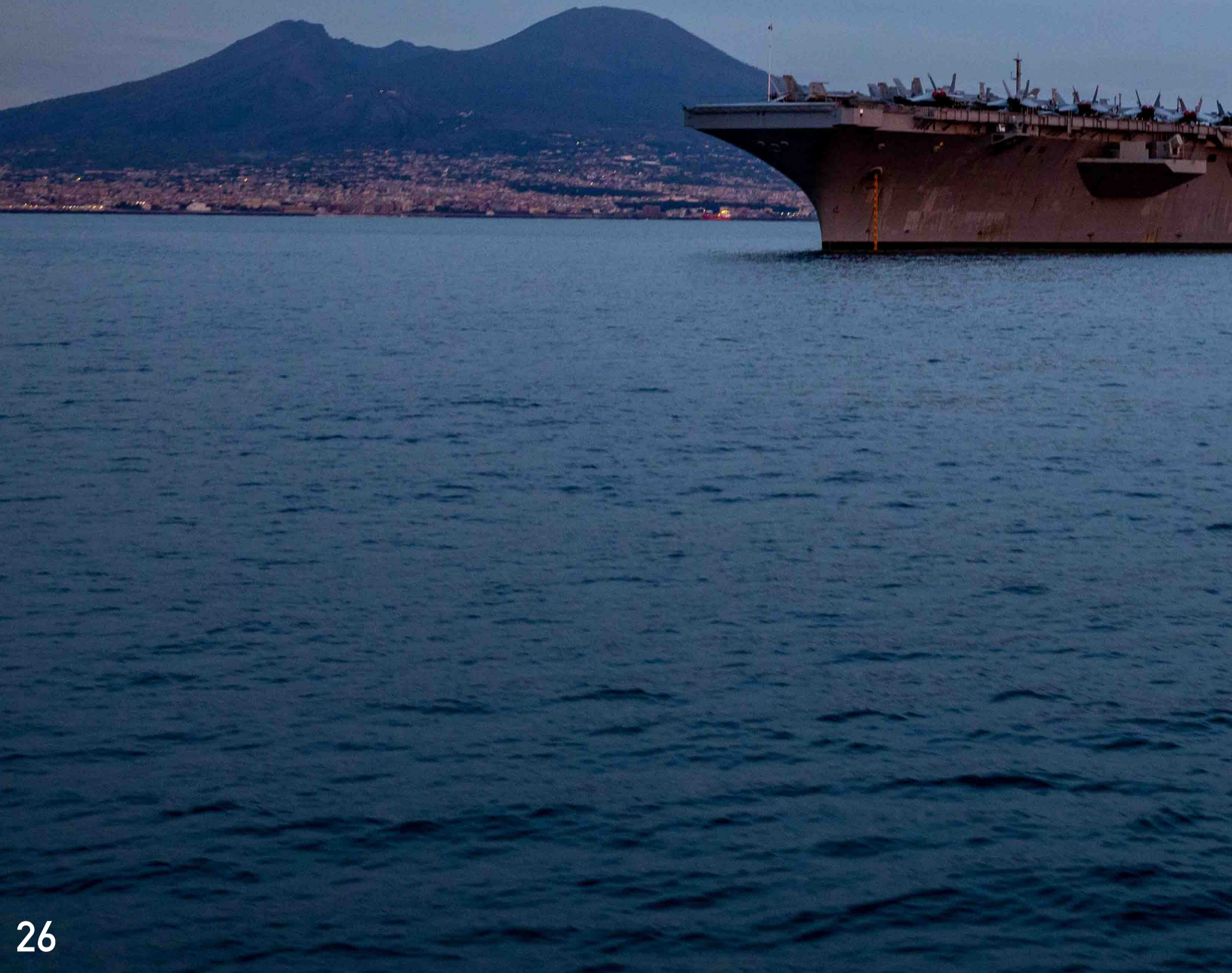
Pollard, a native of Corpus Christi, Texas, and a graduate of United States Naval Academy arrives as George H.W. Bush is preparing for a deployment with CSG-10.

“My vision is to develop you as warriors to be the teachers, leaders, and ambassadors of your families, communities, our ship, the strike group, the United States Navy, and the United States of America,” said Pollard. “Together, we will embody the legacy of service, grit, humility, and resilience of our namesake – President George H.W. Bush... Each of you is an essential member of the Avenger Team and a key to our success. There is nothing we cannot accomplish together.”

George H.W. Bush provides the national command authority flexible, tailorable war fighting capability as the flagship of the carrier strike group which maintains maritime stability and security in order to ensure access, deter aggression and defend U.S., allied and partner interests.



Naples, Italy





George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group Arrives in Naples, Italy

Carrier Strike Group 10 Public Affairs



The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) – along with the embarked staff of Carrier Strike Group (CSG) 10, George H.W. Bush CSG arrived in Naples, Italy, for a scheduled port visit Nov. 28, 2022.

The port visit provides an opportunity to enhance U.S.-Italian partnership as the two nations work together for a stable, secure, and prosperous Europe. It also allows the Sailors of George H.W. Bush CSG a chance to experience Italian culture.

“Our Strike Group has been operating with our partners and allies during our deployment to maintain safety and security throughout the European theater of operations,” said Rear Adm. Dennis Velez, commander of CSG-10, George H.W. Bush CSG. “From our first days of training as a strike group through today, we’ve strengthened our partnership and capability with our allies in the Italian Navy through training and operations. I look forward to working alongside the Italians during the rest of our deployment as we seek to strengthen our maritime partnership. I am grateful for the opportunity to visit Naples this week, and I know my Sailors are looking forward to meeting Neopolitans and learning first-hand about the rich history and culture of Italy.”

The George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group completed its pre-deployment training with the Italian ship Caio Duilio, operate with Carabinieri and the Cavour Carrier Strike Group recently during trilateral multicarrier operations, and steamed with Carabinieri and Andrea Doria through the Straits of Messina.

George H.W. Bush is anchored off the coast, and will host local officials and key

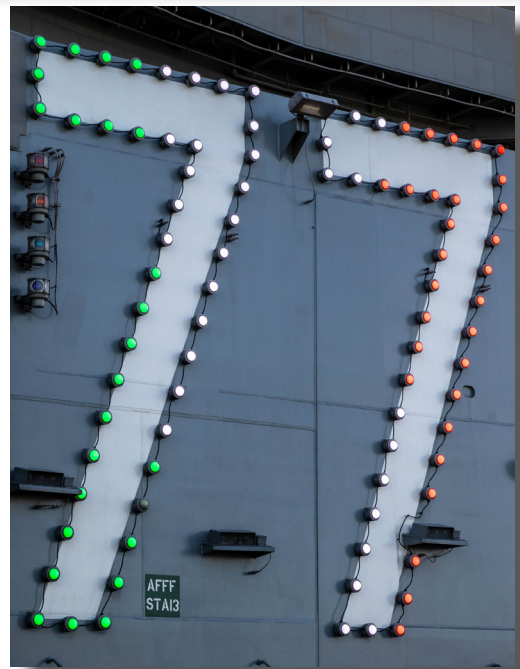
leaders for a reception to honor the U.S.-Italian relationship. Additionally, Sailors from the ship will take much deserved time off to experience the city of Napoli and the Amalfi Coast.

“I am excited to be back in Italy to share it with the nearly 5,000 Sailors aboard the ship, including many who have never been here,” said Capt. Dave Pollard, commanding officer of George H.W. Bush. “Not only is the Italian Navy a great partner, but the Italian people have been incredible partners and friends since I was here last as the commanding officer of USS Mount Whitney. I know the Avenger team will represent their families, cities, states, and nation with professionalism and dignity as we enjoy the opportunity to explore and experience all Italy has to offer.”

The ship’s Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) team arranged a variety of tours for Sailors to experience the area including a historical tour of Napoli, Hiking Mt. Vesuvius, visiting Pompeii Ruins, and additional tours throughout the region.

Sailors will also have the opportunity to participate in a Thousand Points of Light community relations events organized with and through local officials to play a basketball game with second-generation migrants in the area. The ship’s Thousand Points of Light events are a nod to President George H.W. Bush’s inaugural address and the service-oriented organization that exists still today.

CSG-10, George H.W. Bush CSG, is on a scheduled deployment in the U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa area of operations, employed by U.S. Sixth Fleet to defend U.S., allied and partner interests.





Photos of the Year



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