



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



January 9, 2009

The Future USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77)

“One key way this ship will be no different than the one I served on in World War II is the pride and the patriotism and the commitment to duty and honor of the men and women serving aboard it. Heroes don't only live in the past or just in the history books. They are all around us. They're shipbuilders. They're naval personnel.”

– Former President George H. W. Bush, Jan. 25, 2008, Newport News, Va.

The future USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77), which will be commissioned January 10 in its initial homeport of Norfolk, Va., is the tenth and final Nimitz-class aircraft carrier. The carrier, named in honor of former President George H. W. Bush, a naval aviator during World War II, is the second United States aircraft carrier to be named after a naval aviator (USS Forrestal was the first). The ship's motto, “Freedom at Work” is adapted from President Bush's inaugural speech, during which he said, “We know what works: Freedom works. We know what's right: Freedom is right.”

Technologically Superior

- George H. W. Bush, like USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76), has a modernized island including a new composite mast, a three-wire aircraft arresting gear system and a bulbous bow to improve stability in high sea states. Technological advances on George H. W. Bush also include longer-lasting paint and environmental upgrades to the waste system, all designed to improve combat efficiency and environmental stewardship.

Commissioning Day

- The Navy will commission George H. W. Bush prior to officially accepting the ship from Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding Inc. The Navy has commissioned a ship prior to delivery on at least 25 occasions. The most recent ship commissioned prior to delivery was USS Chicago (SSN 721) in September 1986.
- Following commissioning, USS George H. W. Bush will be “In Commission, Special.” After acceptance and delivery to the Navy, status shifts to “In Commission, Full.” USS George H. W. Bush will be one of the 11 carriers required to be maintained by law when the ship is delivered. The Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), the lead in a new class of aircraft carriers, is scheduled for delivery in 2015.

From Commissioning to Deployment

- The Navy will accept George H. W. Bush after the satisfactory completion of builders' trials and acceptance trials which are scheduled for early 2009.
 - Builder's trials ascertain performance of the propulsion plant, steering gear, anchoring equipment, and other available ships systems and equipment in preparation for acceptance trials.
 - Acceptance trials demonstrate to the Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey (INSURV) the ship's overall compliance with contractual requirements.
- Following acceptance, the ship and crew will work through numerous required qualifications prior to the first scheduled deployment in late 2010.

Key Messages

- Aircraft carriers like the future USS George H. W. Bush enable execution of all six core capabilities of the Maritime Strategy.
- The future USS George H. W. Bush will defend our nation for the next fifty years.
- Aircraft carriers can respond to global crises in ways ranging from peacetime presence to full-scale war.

Facts & Figures

- Nimitz-class aircraft carriers are the largest in the world, displacing 97,000 tons, with a 4.5 acre flight deck and four bronze propellers, each 21 feet across.
- CVN 77 has nearly 30,000 light fixtures and 1,600 miles of cable and wiring, 1,400 telephones, 14,000 pillowcases and 28,000 sheets.
- The commissioning ceremony will stream live on www.navy.mil beginning at 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 10.