



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



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Carrier Seapower – In Action Everyday, Around the World

“Make no mistake; the work aboard this ship will be routinely difficult and sometimes dangerous. But the freedom we seek and the peace we desire can only be found in the countless sacrifices you will make in everyday tasks you will perform.”

– **Former President George H.W. Bush, to the crew of USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), Jan. 10, 2009**

For decades, naval air power has been a fundamental element of our national security. Today, while aircraft carriers remain the centerpiece of the nation’s maritime ability to deter, fight and win major wars, carriers are also a key element of building partnerships, preventing crises and confronting low-intensity, unconventional threats.

Presence and flexibility

- Under the Fleet Response Plan, the Navy is able to provide Combatant Commanders with six Carrier Strike Groups (CSG) deployed or ready to deploy within 30 days and one additional CSG capable of surging in response to commanders’ requirements within 90 days. This posture provides presence and surge capabilities required to shape the strategic landscape, deter crisis, respond to disasters and promote regional partnerships.

Credible combat power

- USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) has been on station in the North Arabian Sea in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) since October 2008. Roosevelt’s Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8 has been flying missions in direct support of coalition troops in Afghanistan.
- CVW-8’s squadrons are the latest in a long line of Navy tactical aviation squadrons that have flown combat missions over Iraq or Afghanistan for more than seven years straight. They target and strike enemy positions, provide reconnaissance, and integrate with ground forces from a variety of nations.

A force for good

- Carriers provide our nation the ability to project power as well as the ability to project the compassion of our nation to those who need help – many times in locations that no one else can reach as quickly. In the last few years, carriers have conducted humanitarian assistance and disaster response operations, such as those following the 2008 typhoon in the Western Pacific.
 - During its most recent deployment, USS Ronald Reagan’s (CVN 76) and embarked aircraft of CVW-14 not only flew more than 1,000 combat sorties in support of OEF, they also helped typhoon victims in the Philippines.
- Carriers play an important role in building partnerships and establishing trust before crises occur.
 - From bilateral exercises such as those USS George Washington (CVN 73) conducted in South America during 2008 Partnership of the Americas, to USS Kitty Hawk’s (CV 63) participation in the 2008 Rim of the Pacific multinational exercise, to individual exchanges, such as French E-2C and Rafale pilots carrier qualifying during USS Theodore Roosevelt CSG's Joint Task Force Exercise, carriers build trust in our forces among the international community, and crucial training in interoperability and information sharing.

Key Messages

- Carrier aviation provides a critical ability to meet the needs of the nation across all six of the core capabilities of the Maritime Strategy.
- Carriers serve as deliberate reminders of our nation’s resolve to friends and potential adversaries.
- The versatility inherent to aircraft carriers and carrier air wings allows for flexible, mission-tailored forces while ensuring the nation is prepared for the inevitable crises that require the supremacy of an aircraft carrier.

Facts & Figures

- USS Ronald Reagan was on station off Iloilo, Philippines within 36 hours of tasking. During eight days of continuous flying, they delivered 519,000 lbs of supplies, such as rice and water.
- In the past three months, CVW-8 has flown 1,821 sorties, for 10,370 flight hours. They have conducted 40 Shows of Presence, 172 Shows of Force, collected 1,391 reconnaissance images and dropped 23,000 pounds of ordnance supporting OEF troops in Afghanistan.