



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Advisory 77-12
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Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group Returns from Deployment

NORFOLK, Va. - Nearly 2,000 Sailors aboard the ships of the Iwo Jima Amphibious Ready Group (IWO ARG) are scheduled to return to their homeports Dec. 18th and 20th following a regularly scheduled deployment to the U.S. 5th and 6th Fleets areas of responsibility.

The dock landing ship USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44) will return to Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story Dec. 18. USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7), the IWO ARG flagship, commanded by Capt. Grady Banister, and USS New York (LPD 21) will return to Naval Station Norfolk Dec. 20.

This marks the completion of the first deployment for USS New York.

Sailors and Marines assigned to the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), commanded by Col. Frank Donovan, will offload in Morehead City, N.C., prior to the ships arriving in Norfolk.

“The hard work and dedication demonstrated by the IWO ARG’s Sailors and Marines exceeded expectations,” said Capt. Arturo Garcia, IWO ARG commander. “The flexibility of the crews’ response to national tasking in the U.S. 5th and 6th Fleet areas of responsibility in support of maritime security operations and theater security cooperation efforts is a testament to the capability and flexibility of amphibious forces. I also want to recognize and thank our families for their dedication and sacrifice on the home front. It is their support that sustains us during deployments and allows us to respond to our nation’s tasking.”

For news regarding IWO ARG's deployment, log onto <http://www.cpr8.navy.mil/> or <http://www.iwo-jima.navy.mil/>.

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NOTES: The homecoming of USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7) will be streamed live on-line. Media wishing to link to the live stream can do so at <http://www.livestream.com/usnavy>. Advance notification is required for access to the Naval Stations to cover these events.

Media wishing to attend the homecoming of USS Iwo Jima (LHD 7) Dec. 20 should contact the USFF Public Affairs Office at (757) 836-8390 no later than Wednesday, Dec. 19 at 3 p.m.

Media wishing to attend USS Gunston Hall (LSD 44) homecoming Dec. 18 should contact ESG 2 Public Affairs Office at (757) 462-1282 no later than Monday, Dec. 17 at 3 p.m. To attend the USS New York (LPD 21) homecoming on Dec. 20, contact SURFLANT Public Affairs at 836-3140 no later than Wednesday, Dec. 19 at 3 p.m.