

Cleaned After COVID-19 Detection, Amphib Carter Hall Awaits Crew's Return



The amphibious dock landing ship USS Carter Hall, sailing in formation with ships from partner nations during Unitas LX last August, has become the latest Navy ship to experience a COVID-19 outbreak. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Kody A. Phillips

ARLINGTON, Va. – The most recent U.S. Navy warship to detect COVID-19 among crew members, the amphibious dock landing ship USS Carter Hall has been cleaned and sanitized and awaits a decision to move the crew back on board, according to a Navy spokesperson.

Several crew members tested positive for the novel coronavirus on May 23, at Carter Hall's homeport, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, Virginia, as the ship prepared for duty as a standby surge force for this year's Atlantic Coast hurricane season. Under Defense Department policy, the Navy does not report the number of COVID-19 cases detected on specific ships and other units.

Most of the approximately 400 Sailors and Marines assigned to the ship were moved ashore to barracks or hotel rooms at Navy installations in the Norfolk, Virginia, area, according to Lt. Commander Amelia Umayam, a U.S. Fleet Forces Command spokesperson. A portion of the crew remained on board to perform cleaning, maintenance and in-port watchstanding duties.

"The crew has been monitored by medical personnel and are receiving care as necessary. No Carter Hall crewmembers have been admitted to the hospital," Umayam said in an emailed statement June 9.

She declined to discuss a specific timeline for restoring the Carter Hall to duty but noted “the ship has been thoroughly cleaned and sanitized, and we plan to move the crew back aboard the ship as soon as possible.”

While ashore, crew members are being checked daily by their leadership and receiving deliveries of food and essential items. The entire crew, as well as the Marines assigned to the 609-foot, 16,700-ton Carter Hall, have been tested for COVID-19, she said. In addition to crew members, the Carter Hall can carry a complement of 400 Marines and two air cushion landing craft.