

# U.S. 7th Fleet Holds Change of Command, Welcomes New Commander



YOKOSUKA, Japan (Nov. 13, 2025) – Vice Adm. Patrick Hannifin, left, salutes Adm. Steve Koehler, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, as he assumes command of Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet from Vice Adm. Fred Kacher, right, during the U.S. 7th Fleet Change of Command ceremony on board Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Nov. 13. Vice Adm. Hannifin assumed command as the 55th commander of U.S. 7th Fleet. (U.S. Navy photo by MC1 Charles Oki)

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YOKOSUKA, Japan – U.S. 7th Fleet held a change of command ceremony Nov. 13 at the Fleet Theater on board Commander, Fleet Activities Yokosuka.

Vice Adm. Patrick J. Hannifin relieved Vice Adm. Fred W.

Kacher, becoming the 55th commander of the world's largest forward-deployed naval force, U.S. 7th Fleet.

"I'm deeply proud of our U.S. 7th Fleet ships, aircraft, and Sailors who operate forward to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific," said Kacher. "Our goal at U.S. 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet is that this One Team is so prepared, so ready, that every day our potential adversaries look out at what we do and how we do it and conclude, 'today is not the day'."

Under Kacher's leadership, U.S. 7th Fleet executed more than 460 operations and exercises to maintain maritime security and deter adversary aggression in the region.

Prior to commanding U.S. 7th Fleet, Kacher served as the 64th Superintendent of the U.S. Naval Academy. A career surface warfare officer, he served primarily on cruisers and destroyers, deploying multiple times as part of both the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. At sea, he most recently served as commander of Expeditionary Strike Group 7 forward deployed to the Western Pacific. Kacher's follow-on assignment will be Director, Joint Staff.

Hannifin began his career as an F/A-18C Hornet aviator with Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 27. He served as executive officer of Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75), and commanding officer of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 81, San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock USS Arlington (LPD 24) and Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76). As a flag officer, he served as deputy director for Political-Military Affairs – Asia, Joint Staff, J5, Washington, D.C.; commander, Carrier Strike Group 5 embarked onboard Ronald Reagan; and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command director for operations, J3, Camp H.M. Smith.

"It is a privilege to assume command of U.S. 7th Fleet—a force unmatched in power, partnership and purpose," said Hannifin. "To the men and women of U.S. 7th Fleet, thank you for your

service, toughness, and professionalism. You hold the line. It is an honor of a lifetime to serve with you once again.”

Adm. Steve “Web” Koehler, commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, served as guest speaker at the ceremony.

“For more than 80 years, U.S. 7th Fleet has safeguarded freedom, security and prosperity. U.S. 7th Fleet’s peerless capabilities are essential in the Indo-Pacific, where we have many threats and challenges,” said Koehler. “Deterrence requires a strong, combat credible force that maintains peace through strength, and is constantly ready to take the fight forward and win. U.S. 7th Fleet is that force.”

U.S. 7th Fleet, the U.S. Navy’s largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

For more news from Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet, visit <https://www.c7f.navy.mil/>.