

USS Bulkeley Departs Norfolk for Homeport Shift to Rota



Sailors aboard the USS Bulkeley (DDG 84) cast off lines as they depart Naval Station Norfolk Aug. 4 for the ship's scheduled homeport shift to Rota, Spain, as part of the U.S. Navy's long-range plan to gradually rotate the Rota-based destroyers. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Theodore Green*

NAVAL STATION NORFOLK – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Bulkeley (DDG 84) departed Naval Station Norfolk Aug. 4, commencing the ship's scheduled homeport shift to Rota, Spain, as part of the U.S. Navy's long-range plan to gradually rotate the Rota-based destroyers, U.S. Fleet Forces Command said Aug. 4.

Bulkeley will join destroyers USS Arleigh Burke (DDG 51), USS Roosevelt (DDG 80), USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117) and Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 79 as Forward Deployed Naval Force-Europe (FDNF-E) assets stationed in Rota.

“The Bulkeley crew has been working extremely hard the past year to prepare to join our forward deployed forces in Rota and work with our partners and allies in the region,” said Capt. Mac Harkin, commanding officer, USS Bulkeley. “We are excited to join our sister ship and aviation units already at the tip of the spear, to assure our allies, respond to threats as required and ensure support to global operations.”

U.S. Navy ships assigned to FDNF-E demonstrate national resolve, strengthen alliances, dissuade potential adversaries and enhance the ability to respond quickly to contingencies. Rota offers a world-class port facility that provides an excellent location for multi-mission Aegis ships to support NATO and U.S. missions, exercises and engagements.

“Bulkeley is a highly capable, multi-warfare platform that is joining a substantial force of FDNF-E assets already in place,” said Harkin. “When combined with our partners and allies, we are collectively ready to perform a myriad of tasks, including NATO ballistic missile defense, the full spectrum of maritime security operations, bi-lateral and multi-lateral training exercises, and NATO operations and deployments.”

The rotation of the FDNF-E ships serves to keep these multi-mission capable ships forward deployed to better support maritime security operations in the region as well as Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) of U.S. and allied units and personnel.

With Bulkeley’s arrival, along with Paul Ignatius’ arrival earlier this year, USS Ross (DDG 71) and USS Porter (DDG 78) will shift homeports from Rota to Norfolk in the coming months, marking the final scheduled homeport shifts in the long-planned FDNF-E rotation.