

USS George Washington Deploys to U.S. Southern Command, Eventually Headed to Japan



NORFOLK (April 25, 2024) The Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73) departs Naval Station Norfolk, April 25, 2024, for a deployment to the U.S. Southern Command area of operations as part of Southern Seas 2024. (U.S. Navy photo by MC3 Maxwell Orlosky)

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – A major homeport shift involving two Nimitz-class aircraft carriers is underway with the April 25, 2024, departure of USS George Washington (CVN 73) from Norfolk, Virginia, to the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility. The voyage will take the carrier to NAS North Island, California, where it will embark Carrier Air Wing Five (CVW-5) from USS Ronald Reagan and replace that carrier as the one forward-deployed to the U.S. Seventh Fleet in Yokosuka, Japan.

Embarked in the George Washington are the Carrier Strike Group 10 staff and aircraft and personnel of Carrier Air Wing Seven (CVW-7).

“USS George Washington (CVN 73), along with USS Porter (DDG 78) and USNS John Lenthall (T-AO 189), are scheduled to conduct passing exercises and operations at sea with partner nation maritime forces as the ships circumnavigate South America,” Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic said in an April 24 Facebook post. “Engagements are planned with Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay, with port visits planned for Brazil, Chile, and Peru.”

The George Washington was the forward-deployed carrier based

in Japan from 2008 until 2015, when it was replaced in Japan by the Ronald Reagan. In 2017, the George Washington entered a Refueling and Complex Overhaul at the Huntington Ingalls Industries' Newport News Shipbuilding yard in Virginia, an evolution that took six years, including the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic. The George Washington's nuclear propulsion plant is fueled to run another 25 years.