

USS Portland Tests High Energy Laser Weapon System in Gulf of Aden



Amphibious transport dock ship USS Portland (LPD 27) conducts a high-energy laser weapon system demonstration on a static surface training target Dec. 14 while sailing in the Gulf of Aden. *U.S. MARINE CORPS / Staff Sgt. Donald Holbert*

MANAMA, Bahrain – Amphibious transport dock ship USS Portland (LPD 27) conducted a high-energy laser weapon system demonstration Dec. 14 while sailing in the Gulf of Aden, U.S. 5th Fleet Public Affairs said Dec. 15.

During the demonstration, the Solid-State Laser – Technology Maturation Laser Weapons System Demonstrator Mark 2 MOD 0 aboard Portland successfully engaged a static surface training target. Portland previously tested the LWSD in May 2020 when it successfully disabled a small unmanned aerial system while operating in the Pacific Ocean.

The Office of Naval Research selected Portland to host the laser weapon technology in 2018. The LWSD is considered a next-generation follow-on to the Laser Weapon System that afloat forward staging base USS Ponce (AFSB(I)-15) tested for three years while operating in the Middle East.

Portland is part of the Essex Amphibious Ready Group that includes amphibious assault ship USS Essex (LHD 2), dock landing ship USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) and embarked Marines from the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit. The units departed San Diego in August and began operating in the U.S. 5th Fleet region in September.

The region's geography, climate, and strategic importance

offer a unique environment for technology innovation. U.S. 5th Fleet's area of operations includes the world's largest standing maritime partnership, Arabian Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman and parts of the Indian Ocean.