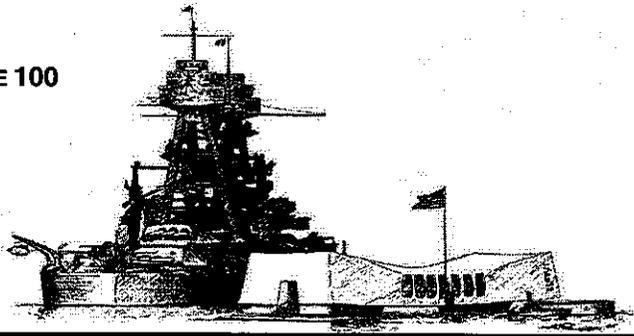


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USS Tarawa Amphibious Ready Group Makes port visit in Pearl Harbor

USS Tarawa (LHA 1) Amphibious Ready Group (ARG) will stop in Pearl Harbor this evening for a port visit before heading home to San Diego, after a six-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. USS Duluth (LPD 6) and USS Rushmore (LSD 47) are part of the ARG and are expected to arrive Pearl Harbor tomorrow.

The Tarawa ARG includes approximately 2,000 Sailors on three ships under the command of Capt. Ron Thomas, Commander, Amphibious Squadron Seven. The ARG also carries approximately 2,200 Marines from the Camp Pendleton-based 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable).

The primary mission of the Tarawa ARG is to land and sustain U.S. Marines on any shore during hostilities. USS Tarawa embarks the Marine Corps' AV-8B Harrier attack jets, CH-53E Super Stallion heavy lift helicopters, CH-46 Sea Knight medium lift helicopters, AH-1W Cobra attack helicopters and UH-1N Huey multi-purpose helicopters. In addition, Tarawa can embark landing craft air cushion (LCAC) surface assault boats and landing craft utility (LCU) boats.

Media are invited to cover the Tarawa's arrival and should call Navy Region Hawaii Public Affairs to arrange an escort. Media will be met at the Nimitz Gate Visitor Pass Office parking lot at 7:30 p.m.

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