



By: TA | AP Brief

New US aircraft carrier heads toward Mideast after reports of issues on long-deployed USS Lincoln



The Pacific-based aircraft carrier USS George Washington has begun heading toward the Middle East as reports have emerged of mental health and supply issues aboard the long-deployed **USS Abraham Lincoln**.

The Lincoln has been supporting the U.S. war against Iran, and its deployment has included a record-setting uninterrupted time at sea of more than 240 days.

Several Democratic lawmakers are pressing for accountability from the Pentagon over conditions aboard the carrier, which Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on Thursday said were “completely misrepresented.”

Extended deployments of carriers during the Iran conflict have raised concerns about the impact on service members who are away from home for long periods as well as the increasing strain on the ship and its equipment.

While renewed hostilities between the U.S. and Iran have calmed in recent weeks, the Navy has **reimposed a blockade** on Iranian ports in the crucial Strait of Hormuz, and the Trump administration has offered no clarity on how it intends to **wind down the war**.

Hegseth told reporters that the U.S. can maintain the blockade “indefinitely.”

A new aircraft carrier is heading west from the Asia-Pacific

The USS George Washington left port in Da Nang, Vietnam, last week, a Navy statement said. The carrier, along with a cruiser and a destroyer, have since been spotted crossing the Singapore Strait.

A Navy official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to detail sensitive ship details, confirmed that the Washington was in the Strait of Malacca, which links the Pacific and Indian oceans and puts the carrier on a course to head into the Indian Ocean.

The Wall Street Journal reported earlier that the Washington would replace the Lincoln as one of the two aircraft carriers now stationed in the Middle East.

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The Trump administration sees China, the dominant power in the region, as “**a settled force**” that only needs to be deterred from dominating the U.S. or its allies and not the top global adversary that it was under the Biden administration.

The Lincoln originally deployed Nov. 21 from San Diego, and it arrived in the Middle East in January, ahead of the launch of the Iran war on Feb. 28.

The Navy conceded that the conflict created a “highly contested environment where traditional supply hubs in the Middle East were disrupted by combat actions.”

That, in turn, led to shortages and loss of mail aboard the aircraft carrier, the Navy said in a statement.

“Leadership prioritized mission-critical supplies: first food, then hygiene items, then mail,” the statement said, before assuring that sailors aboard the ship now have access to clean water and “healthy meal options.”