



# PRESS RELEASE



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## Jacksonville Sortie Area Ships/Aircraft Ahead of Hurricane Ian

**JACKSONVILLE, Fla.** – U.S. 4th Fleet has ordered all ships and aircraft to make preparations for Hurricane Ian’s expected arrival.

Ships began departures from Naval Station Mayport today and will complete heavy weather mooring if required to stay in port. Aircraft will initiate evacuations from area airfields or be secured in hangars rated to withstand hurricane force winds. Four ships and multiple rotary and fixed-wing aircraft are expected to relocate and remain out of the local area until it is determined safe to return.

“Hurricane preparations began months ago through a Navy-wide exercise ahead of the hurricane season,” said Rear Adm. Jim Aiken, Commander U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet. “Our Sailors will now focus on the safe execution of those planning efforts to enable sustained fleet operations.”

The littoral combat ship, USS Minneapolis-Saint Paul (LCS 21) was the first ship to depart from Naval Station Mayport today. The three remaining ships will depart this afternoon. Sailors and port personnel will heavy weather moor the six remaining ships at the Naval Station. All aircraft not departing will remain hangered between NAS Jacksonville and Naval Station Mayport.

Rear Adm. Wes McCall, Navy Region Southeast, instructed all Navy installations in the Jacksonville area to set Hurricane Condition of Readiness Three in preparation for the storm. All bases are currently open.

Following the direction of civilian authorities, McCall, has authorized the evacuation of non-essential active duty military, civilian employees, drilling reservists, and authorized dependents residing in the Florida counties of Charlotte, Citrus, Hernando, Hillsborough, Lee, Levy, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas and Sarasota. The designated safe haven is within 100 miles of Melbourne, Fla.

“Given the storm’s unpredictability and the forecasted winds and storm surge, civilian authorities along the west coast have issued mandatory evacuations,” said McCall, “since these evacuations will affect our military personnel and their families I have authorized the evacuations of those personnel located in the mandatory evacuation zones in Florida.”

All personnel and their families should review their Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS) account (<https://navyfamily.navy.mil>) and review hurricane checklists in the event an evacuation is deemed necessary.

Navy personnel and their families should visit the Ready Navy website at <https://ready.navy.mil> and follow Twitter (@ReadyNavy). Ready Navy provides information, tools and resources that empower the Navy family to more aptly prepare for, react and recover when faced with any emergency.