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C2F 11-57PR

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Aug. 24, 2011

## **Second Fleet Sets Sortie Condition Alpha in Preparation for Hurricane Irene**

NORFOLK, Va. – Commander, U.S. Second Fleet today ordered all U.S. Navy ships in the Hampton Roads, Va., area to set Sortie Condition Alpha.

Ships will make final preparations overnight in anticipation of getting underway early tomorrow.

The setting of Sortie Condition Alpha does not mean the actual sortie is inevitable. Should overnight weather forecasts indicate a decrease in the strength or change in the track of the storm, the sortie condition may be downgraded.

Vice Adm. Daniel Holloway, Commander, U.S. Second Fleet, said that the decision to sortie the ships from Hampton Roads is based on Hurricane Irene's current track that indicates the storm will produce at least 50 knots of wind and a five to seven foot storm surge, which meets the criteria for getting the fleet underway to avoid storm damage.

“Our ships can better weather storms of this magnitude when they are underway,” said Holloway. “The forecasted destructive winds and tidal surge is too great to keep the ships in port. There is a much greater potential of not only the ships being damaged, but also the pier infrastructure. Having the ships underway also makes them ready and available to respond to any national tasking, including any needed disaster response efforts in the local area after the storm has passed.”

Foul weather preparations start with Sortie Condition C, with ships prepared to get underway in 48 hours. At Sortie Condition B, ships must be prepared to get underway within 24

hours. Sortie Condition A indicates the execution of the sortie.

A variety of information is available in support of family readiness during hurricane season including:

- Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS) (<http://go.usa.gov/kQ4>) provides a standardized method for the Navy to account, manage, and monitor the recovery process for personnel and their families affected and/or scattered by a wide-spread catastrophic event.
- State of Virginia Emergency Management (<http://www.vaemergency.gov/readyvirginia>) has many resources for planning and preparing emergency kits, developing evacuation plans and addressing specific special needs for children, the elderly and others.
- Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Hurricane Evacuation Guide at [http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/hurricane\\_defauLT.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/travel/hurricane_defauLT.asp) provides more detailed information for preparing for a hurricane, hurricane evacuation and public shelters in Virginia.
- Red Cross Hurricane Preparedness Guide at <http://www.preparehr.org/documents/RedCrossReadyHurricaneGuide2pg.pdf> provides general overview of tips and guidelines for hurricane preparedness.
- Prepare Hampton Roads website at <http://www.preparehr.org> provides valuable tips for preparing for high winds, evacuation.