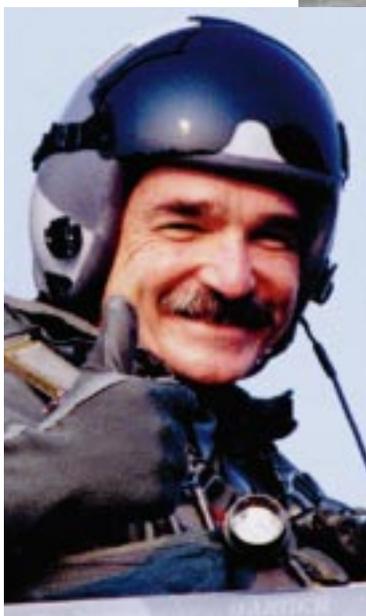


## CVX: The Transition to the Future

By RAdm. Dennis V. McGinn,  
Director, Air Warfare

In today's turbulent and uncertain world, America's forward-deployed carriers have been busier than ever answering the call by the CINCs (Commanders in Chief) and National Command Authority around the globe. From Bosnia, to the Arabian Gulf, to the Pacific, our carriers and air wings—coordinating with battle group helicopter and forward-deployed patrol squadrons—have proven themselves to be the clear force of choice.

Our big-deck carriers—four and one-half acres of sovereign American territory—embody the nation's commitment to protecting U.S. interests. When *Independence*, the last of the *Forrestal* class, decommissions in September, our carrier fleet will consist mostly of ships of the *Nimitz* and *Kitty Hawk* classes. These ships have given us the maximum return on our investment, serving superbly for decades, but the time for a new carrier is upon us. As we look from the present, in which budgetary constraints limit the purchase of new ships and aircraft, to the future, in which we will not have the resources to maintain older, more expensive ships, it becomes increasingly important to develop a more affordable carrier in the near-term. The ongoing initiative to build the carrier of the future—CVX—will fill this need.



class carrier incorporating innovations to increase warfighting capability while reducing life-cycle costs. For example, her island will have a distinctive shape and may incorporate a multifunctional array for increased radar performance and battle space awareness, and maintenance-intensive, water-cooled jet blast deflectors may be replaced with ceramic tiles that require less external cooling. When possible these and other technologies will be backfitted into *Nimitz*-class ships.

CVX 1 will incorporate all of CVN 77's technology plus a more efficient and cost-effective power plant and electrical distribution system. More reliable technologies will reduce life-cycle costs, and automated technolo-



Photo by PH1 James M. Williams

The Navy's newest carrier, *John C. Stennis* (CVN 74), foreground, sails alongside the oldest carrier, *Independence* (CV 62), in the Arabian Gulf during Operation Southern Watch.

Contrary to rumors you may have heard, the Navy's commitment to CVX remains unchanged. Balancing technological advances with measured fiscal investment dictates that we develop CVX by accelerating the right technologies into CVN 77, the transition carrier. CVN 77 will be a unique *Nimitz*-

gies will provide significant manpower savings. The development of more modern, capable and affordable carriers will ensure that in the future forward-deployed sea-based air power continues to be our most credible, visible and flexible instrument of national military power.

On a personal note, this will be my last "Flightline" as Director, Air Warfare. I've been deeply privileged to serve our Navy and Naval Aviation here in the Pentagon and would like to thank all those on the magnificent team who are working hard at keeping Naval Aviation the force of choice. My highly talented and motivated replacement, RAdm. John "Black" Nathman, just arrived from the fleet as commander of the *Nimitz* battle group. "Black" brings with him a wealth of fleet knowledge and experience, and he will carry Naval Aviation forward into a very promising 21st century.

To all you wonderful professionals in the Naval Aviation team, thanks a lot! I'll see you in the fleet.

FLY SAFE! BE THE BEST!

*RAdm. McGinn: The NANews staff bids you a fond farewell and wishes you continued success in your future assignments. Under your leadership, the magazine evolved into a full-color format—tangible proof of your dynamic support. We are forever grateful.*