

US Stealth Jets Become First Fighters to Fly from Japanese Ship Since WWII

By [Zero Hedge](#)

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*In yet another move signaling the deepening US-Japan military relationship, **two US stealth fighters practiced taking off and landing on Japan’s largest warship, the JS Izumo.** The flights happened Sunday, with Japan’s Ministry of Defense releasing photos and video of the event early this week, hyping the major advance in its Maritime Self-Defense Force’s operations.*

Crucially it marked **the first time since World War II that fixed-wing aircraft operated from a Japanese warship.** Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger was earlier [quoted as saying](#), “We’re not going to go on deployment but we’re actually going to fly U.S. Marine Corps F-35s off of a Japanese ship.”

3 OCT, the [#JMSDF](#) conducted verification of takeoff and landing of the USMC F-35B to JS [#IZUMO](#).

The JMSDF continues to steadily carry out the necessary modifications to the IZUMO class to acquire the capability to operate the F-35Bs. pic.twitter.com/0gtPNzrxQC

— Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (@jmsdf_pao_eng) [October 5, 2021](#)

Japan’s military is working on adapting 24,000-ton *Izumo* class helicopter carriers for fixed-wing operations. The pair of US aircraft – Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II Joint Strike Fighters – **conducted successful short takeoff, vertical landings** from the mid-sized carrier’s deck.

The period of joint Japanese and Marine aircraft trials are set to continue aboard the *Izumo* through October 7. One aviation analysis monitoring site hailed in its [headline that](#) “**Japan rejoins aircraft carrier club** with USMC F-35B landing.”

Of course, China is sure to take note given also given no less than five total navies currently engaged in warship exercises off Japan, [including the US and UK](#):

Two U.S. carrier strike groups drilled with the United Kingdom's Carrier Strike Group 21 (CSG21) and a Japanese big-deck warship over the weekend in a major naval exercise in the waters off the southeast of Okinawa, Japan.

The exercise involved six different navies – the U.S Navy, the U.K. Royal Navy, the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, the Royal Netherlands Navy, the Royal Canadian Navy and the Royal New Zealand Navy – **making up a total of 17 surface ships, which included four aircraft carriers.**

The drills come after a tense weekend over contested skies near Taiwan, which saw China PLA jet incursions set multiple records in terms of number of aircraft breaching the self-ruled island's defense identification zone – including **56 jets on Monday alone.**

The Drive, meanwhile, further details Japan's near-term carrier ambitions and cooperation with the US Marines [as follows](#):

After the concept of fixed-wing operations is proven aboard the Izumo, that warship will then **undergo more extensive revisions to better support F-35Bs during routine operations over sustained periods.** So far, the vessel has received a heat-resistant flight deck to cope with the F-35B's scorching exhaust, as well as changes to the lighting and deck markings.

VIDEO: Japan's Largest Warship Launches U.S. Marine F-35s; First Fighters to Fly from Japanese Ship Since WWII – USNI News <https://t.co/zOS6Rc1Wel>
[pic.twitter.com/HHeJ7Mlv7W](https://t.co/zOS6Rc1Wel)

— U.S. Naval Institute (@NavalInstitute) [October 5, 2021](#)

Amid the major joint exercises off Japan, White House spokesperson Jen Psaki said to [reporters on Monday](#), “We urge Beijing to cease its military, diplomatic, and economic pressure and coercion against Taiwan,” and added that the US will “continue to assist Taiwan in maintaining a sufficient self-defense capability.”

Notably, **Japan has lately become more vocally and firmly in Washington's corner of late on the Taiwan issue** – also as Japan is engaged in its own small contested island dispute with China off its south – so Beijing is sure to see the latest warship and carrier exercises as aimed in its direction.

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Featured image: JS Izumo file image via Zero Hedge

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