

U.S. and Australia Lead Major Indo-Pacific War Games

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The United States has bolstered its strategic military presence in the Indo-Pacific through Exercise Talisman Sabre 2025, a massive, U.S.-led warfighting drill that wrapped up on August 4 after nearly a month of high-intensity operations across air, land, sea, and cyber domains.

The multinational military training event, which ran from July 13 to August 4, involved more than 40,000 personnel from 19 countries and is considered the region's largest and most complex warfighting exercise.

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) played a central role in facilitating and executing joint operations across various locations, including Queensland, Western Australia, the Northern Territory, New South Wales, and, marking a first, Papua New Guinea. Vice Admiral Justin Jones, Chief of Joint Operations, noted the exercise as a vital opportunity to enhance coordination across land, air, sea, and cyber domains with key allies.

Papua New Guinea's inclusion in this year's exercise was particularly significant, coinciding with the country's 50th year of independence. Joint training in the region featured personnel recovery operations, highlighting increased cooperation between the Papua New Guinea Defence Force, Australia, and the United States. Rear Admiral Philip Polewara welcomed the engagement, calling it a strong show of sovereign defence readiness and partnership.

Among the most notable demonstrations was the first live firing of Australia's HIMARS precision missile system, alongside a U.S. Navy Standard Missile-6 (SM-6) launch in a land-to-sea strike scenario. Amphibious landing operations were also carried out in coordination with forces from the United Kingdom, Japan, France, and South Korea. For the first time, the UK's Carrier Strike Group deployed a non-U.S. aircraft carrier in support of the exercise, expanding the scale of maritime collaboration.

Defence officials say the exercise reflects the growing importance of readiness for large-scale, multi-domain operations in the Indo-Pacific. As

regional dynamics evolve, Australia's leadership and operational reliability continue to position it as a crucial player in allied efforts to maintain peace, stability, and deterrence across the region.