

SPECULATIVE US ORDER OF BATTLE

IRAN THEATER OF OPERATIONS

As of ~19 February 2026 | OSINT-Derived | Excluding USS George H.W. Bush CSG

CAVEAT: This document is compiled from open-source flight tracking, satellite imagery, official DOD releases, and credible defense journalism. Submarine positions, exact munitions loadouts, and special operations forces are inherently opaque. Confidence levels are noted where applicable.

I. NAVAL FORCES

Carrier Strike Group 3 — USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN-72)

Location: Arabian Sea, ~150 mi off the coast of Oman (confirmed via Sentinel-2 satellite imagery, 17 Feb)

Surface Combatants

Asset	Type	Notes
USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN-72)	Nimitz-class CVN	~5,680 crew; ~90 aircraft capacity
USS Frank E. Petersen Jr. (DDG-121)	Arleigh Burke-class DDG (Flt IIA)	Tomahawk + BMD capable
USS Michael Murphy (DDG-112)	Arleigh Burke-class DDG (Flt IIA)	Multi-role
USS Spruance (DDG-111)	Arleigh Burke-class DDG (Flt IIA)	Multi-role
USS Mobile Bay (CG-53)	Ticonderoga-class CG	122 VLS cells; likely air warfare commander
1× SSN (unconfirmed)	Virginia / Los Angeles-class	Standard CSG escort; never officially confirmed

Carrier Air Wing 9 (CVW-9)

Squadron	Designation	Aircraft	Role
VMFA-314 "Black Knights"	Marine Fighter Attack	F-35C Lightning II	Stealth strike / air superiority
VFA-14 "Tophatters"	Strike Fighter	F/A-18E Super Hornet	Multi-role strike
VFA-151 "Vigilantes"	Strike Fighter	F/A-18F Super Hornet	Multi-role strike
VAQ-133 "Wizards"	Electronic Attack	EA-18G Growler	SEAD / EW jamming
VAW-117 "Wallbangers"	Airborne Early Warning	E-2D Advanced Hawkeye	AEW&C / battlespace mgmt
HSC-14 "Chargers"	Helo Sea Combat	MH-60S Seahawk	SAR / logistics / VERTREP
HSM-71 "Raptors"	Helo Maritime Strike	MH-60R Seahawk	ASW / ASuW
VRM-30 "Titans"	Fleet Logistics	CMV-22B Osprey	Carrier onboard delivery

Estimated CVW-9 fixed-wing count: ~44 strike/fighter aircraft (~10 F-35C, ~24 F/A-18E/F, ~5 EA-18G, ~5 E-2D)

Carrier Strike Group 12 — USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78)

Status: EN ROUTE. Transiting Atlantic; left SOUTHCOM AOR ~17 Feb. ETA to operational range: ~20–25 Feb.

Asset	Type	Notes
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USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN-78)	Ford-class CVN	World's largest warship; deployed since Jun 2025
Escort DDGs (2–3×)	Arleigh Burke-class DDG	Specific hulls not publicly confirmed
1× SSN (probable)	Virginia / Los Angeles-class	Standard escort

Carrier Air Wing (likely CVW-8 or composite)

Aircraft	Est. Qty	Role
F/A-18E/F Super Hornet	~24	Multi-role strike
EA-18G Growler	~5	Electronic warfare / SEAD
E-2D Advanced Hawkeye	~5	AEW&C
MH-60R/S Seahawk	~8–10	ASW / SAR / logistics
CMV-22B Osprey	2–3	Carrier onboard delivery

Ford's crew has been deployed ~8 months. CNO Adm. Caudle publicly flagged readiness and maintenance concerns. Operational tempo may be reduced.

Independent Surface Combatants — 5th Fleet / CENTCOM AOR

Ship	Type	Location	Role
USS McFaul (DDG-74)	Arleigh Burke DDG	Strait of Hormuz	Escort / strike / BMD
USS Mitscher (DDG-57)	Arleigh Burke DDG	Strait of Hormuz	Escort / strike
USS Delbert D. Black (DDG-119)	Arleigh Burke DDG	Red Sea	BMD / patrol
USS Pinckney (DDG-91)	Arleigh Burke DDG	Indian Ocean	Multi-role
USS Canberra (LCS-30)	Independence-class LCS	Persian Gulf	MCM / patrol
USS Tulsa (LCS-16)	Independence-class LCS	Persian Gulf	MCM / patrol
USS Santa Barbara (LCS-32)	Independence-class LCS	Persian Gulf	MCM / patrol
USS Roosevelt (DDG-80)	Arleigh Burke DDG	Eastern Med	En route support
USS Bulkeley (DDG-84)	Arleigh Burke DDG	Eastern Med	En route support

Total confirmed surface combatants: ~12 (per TWZ), plus Ford CSG escorts en route.

Submarine Forces (HIGHLY SPECULATIVE)

Platform	Type	Capacity	Confidence
1–2× SSGN (Ohio-class)	Guided-missile sub	154 Tomahawks each	Medium — USS Georgia used in Midnight Hammer
2–3× SSN (Virginia/LA-class)	Fast-attack sub	~12 Tomahawks + torpedoes	Medium — standard for 2 CSGs

The submarine force is the single largest variable in any strike calculus. Even one SSGN changes the opening salvo math dramatically.

II. LAND-BASED AIR FORCES

Muwaffaq Salti Air Base, Jordan (PRIMARY STRIKE HUB)

Unit	Aircraft	Qty (est.)	Role
494th EFS "Panthers" (48th FW)	F-15E Strike Eagle	~24	Deep strike / SEAD
Addl F-15E sqn (Mountain Home AFB)	F-15E Strike Eagle	~12	Deep strike (10-month rotation)
158th FW "Green Mountain Boys" (VT ANG)	F-35A Lightning II	~12	Stealth strike / Wild Weasel
48th FW (RAF Lakenheath)	F-35A Lightning II	~18	Stealth strike (departed 16 Feb)
Expeditionary sqn (Moody AFB)	A-10C Thunderbolt II	~12	CAS / anti-ship
Expeditionary det.	EA-18G Growler	~6	Electronic warfare / SEAD
Det.	MQ-9 Reaper	Unknown	ISR / precision strike
SOF det.	MC-130J Commando II	Unknown	Special operations
CSAR det.	HH-60W Jolly Green II	Unknown	Combat search and rescue

Estimated Muwaffaq Salti total: ~84+ combat aircraft

Jordan has publicly stated it will not allow its airspace to be used for strikes on Iran. Enforcement during actual conflict is unclear. The base is within range of Iranian MRBMs.

In Transit / Staging in Europe (as of 17–18 Feb)

Unit	Aircraft	Qty	Location	Status
1st FW (Langley AFB)	F-22A Raptor	12	RAF Lakenheath (arr. 17 Feb)	F-22s staged here before Midnight Hammer
31st FW (Aviano, Italy)	F-16C/D	~12	En route to ME	SEAD / strike
52nd FW (Spangdahlem, Germany)	F-16C/D	~12	En route to ME	SEAD / Wild Weasel
169th FW "Swamp Foxes" (SC ANG)	F-16C/D	~12	Lajes Field, Azores (17 Feb)	SEAD / Wild Weasel
Additional F-16s (unspecified)	F-16C/D	~12	En route	Strike / air defense

Total F-16s in transit: ~48

Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar (CENTCOM Forward HQ)

Asset	Type	Role
KC-135 Stratotanker	Aerial refueling	Tanker surge; 6 KC-135s repositioned in Jan
KC-46A Pegasus	Aerial refueling	Part of 40+ tanker surge
RC-135 Rivet Joint	SIGINT	Relocated to Crete for survivability
E-11A BACN	Airborne comm relay	Bridges F-22/F-35 datalink gap
Command elements	CAOC	Theater air operations coordination

Al Udeid was struck by an Iranian ballistic missile during Midnight Hammer retaliation (June 2025). Partial evacuation ordered 14 Jan 2026. Qatar has opposed strikes from its territory.

Other Regional Bases / Assets

Location	Assets	Notes
RAF Mildenhall, UK	2× E-3G Sentry AWACS (arr. 17 Feb), more en route	AEW&C / battle management
Crete (Souda Bay)	RC-135 Rivet Joint + 2nd en route from FL	SIGINT — moved for survivability
RAF Fairford, UK	U-2S Dragon Lady (departed 17 Feb)	High-alt ISR / F-22–F-35 datalink bridge
Diego Garcia (UNCERTAIN)	Possibly B-2 Spirit / B-52H	6 B-2s were there Mar–May 2025; current status unknown
UAE (likely Al Dhafra)	F-22 Raptors (reported)	Air superiority / escort
Saudi Arabia	F-16s (reported)	Air superiority envelope
Multiple locations	P-8A Poseidon	Maritime patrol; 1 confirmed at Strait of Hormuz 17 Feb

Aerial Refueling / Airlift Surge

Type	Qty (est.)	Notes
KC-135 Stratotanker	20+	Across ME and European staging bases
KC-46A Pegasus	20+	Part of 40+ tanker surge (17–18 Feb)
C-17A Globemaster III	80+ sorties since 16 Jan	Munitions, equipment, sustainment
C-5M Galaxy	Multiple	Heavy airlift

The tanker surge is perhaps the most telling indicator. Sustained operations over Iran require massive aerial refueling capacity. The current posture far exceeds routine operations.

III. MISSILE DEFENSE

System	Role	Location
THAAD	Exo/endo-atmospheric BMD	Gulf states (specific locations classified)
Patriot PAC-3	Medium-range BMD / air defense	Multiple Gulf bases; mobile launchers confirmed by satellite
Aegis BMD (DDGs/CG)	Sea-based ballistic missile defense	Arabian Sea / Persian Gulf / Strait of Hormuz

IV. ALLIED CONTRIBUTIONS (Confirmed / Reported)

Nation	Asset	Location
United Kingdom	Eurofighter Typhoons	Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar
Israel	F-35I Adir fleet on high readiness	Domestic bases (not alongside US)

V. AGGREGATE ESTIMATES

Combat Aircraft (All Sources)

Type	Qty (est.)	Notes
F-35A Lightning II (land)	~30	Jordan
F-35C Lightning II (carrier)	~10	USS Lincoln
F/A-18E/F Super Hornet	~48	Both carriers
EA-18G Growler	~16	Carriers + Jordan
F-15E Strike Eagle	~36	3 squadrons in Jordan
F-22A Raptor	~12+	Staging Lakenheath / UAE
F-16C/D Fighting Falcon	~48	In transit / staging
A-10C Thunderbolt II	~12	Jordan
TOTAL TACTICAL	~210+	Excluding bombers and ISR

Estimated Tomahawk Inventory (Naval)

Platform	Qty	Est. Tomahawks
~12–15 destroyers	90–96 VLS each	~400–500 (mixed loadout)
1× cruiser (Mobile Bay)	122 VLS	~50–70
1–2× SSGN	154 each	154–308
2–3× SSN	~12 each	~24–36
TOTAL		~630–910

Support / Enabler Aircraft

Type	Qty (est.)
E-2D Advanced Hawkeye	~10 (both carriers)

E-3G Sentry AWACS	6+
E-11A BACN	2+
RC-135 Rivet Joint	2+
U-2S Dragon Lady	1+
P-8A Poseidon	Multiple
KC-135/KC-46 tankers	40+
MQ-9 Reaper	Unknown

VI. KEY UNKNOWNNS / INTELLIGENCE GAPS

Unknown	Significance
B-2 Spirit bombers at Diego Garcia	Required for GBU-57 MOP delivery against hardened underground nuclear facilities. USAF restocking MOP inventory per 11 Feb documents.
B-52H with JASSM/JASSM-ER	Standoff cruise missile delivery from outside Iranian air defense envelope.
SSGN exact locations and count	Potentially the difference between a ~600 and 900+ Tomahawk opening salvo.
THAAD/Patriot battery count and positions	Critical for defense of Gulf bases against Iranian ballistic missile retaliation.
Special operations forces	MC-130 and HH-60W in Jordan suggest CSAR and SOF pre-positioning.
Cyber and space warfare posture	Entirely opaque but presumably active.

SOURCES

The War Zone, Air & Space Forces Magazine, Army Recognition, BBC Verify, USNI News, Middle East Forum, Defence Security Asia, Sentinel-2 satellite imagery, ADS-B flight tracking data, OSINT community analysis. All figures are estimates based on open-source intelligence and standard force composition assumptions.