NGA Intel Maps 'Key' To Philippine Disaster Response; 4 More Ospreys On Way

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Breaking Defense

The US relief effort, known to the military as Operation Damayan (according to the Marine website it means "help in time of need" in Tagalog), has delivered 129,000 pounds of relief supplies as of today. The George Washington and three other ships — the cruisers USS *Antietam* and *Cowpens* and the oiler USNS *Yukon* — are due to arrive off the coast of the Philippines the evening of Nov. 14 local time. And the Navy has activated the hospital ship USNS *Mercy*, based at San Diego. "If ordered to deploy, Mercy would get underway in the next several days and could arrive in the Philippines sometime in December, joining other U.S. Pacific Fleet units already supporting Operation Damayan," according to an official Navy story just issued.

The food, water and medical supplies have been delivered by KC-130s and the first four V-22s. The aircraft have also ferried 160 people away from the utterly ruined town of Tacloban to Manila and flown in 140 relief workers.

A key enabler of the relief effort has been a rapid response team of 15 workers at the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency (NGA). Formed right after the storm made landfall, the team is "providing damage assessments of key infrastructure, roads and communication networks destroyed in the storm," Don Kerr, NGA spokesman said this evening in an email.

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