

MARINE CORPS AVIATION AROUND THE GLOBE

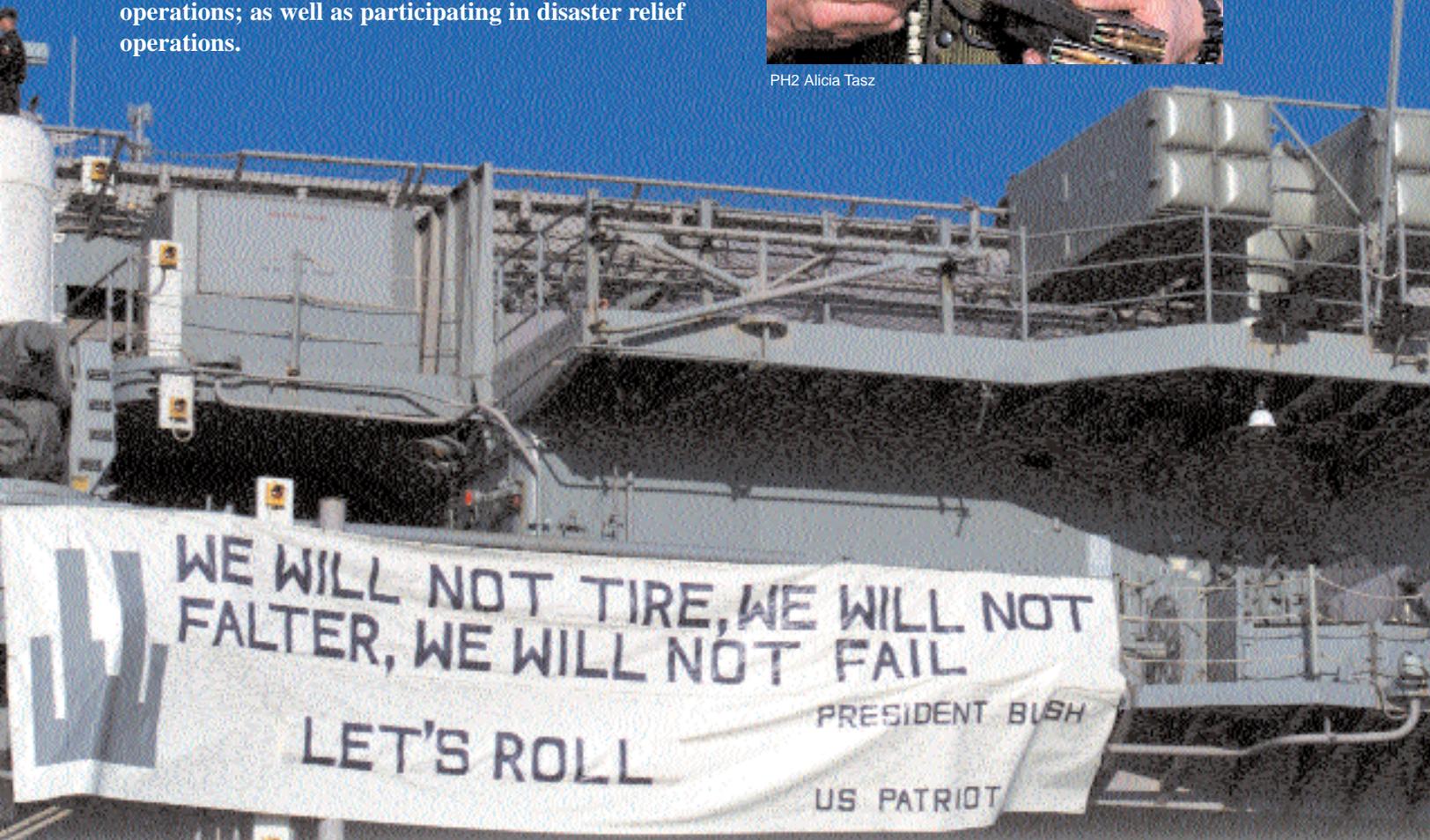
The following overview highlights many of the critical components of Marine Aviation today. It is not intended to be a comprehensive representation.

Marine Corps Aviation was officially born on 22 May 1912, when Lieutenant Alfred A. Cunningham, USMC, reported to the aviation camp at Annapolis, Md., for “duty in connection with aviation.” Today, two factors continue to make Marine Aviation unique: its close relationship with Naval Aviation and its unchanging objective to provide direct support to Marine ground forces in combat.

The tasks of Marine Aviation fall into six functional areas: offensive air support, anti-air warfare, assault support, air reconnaissance, electronic warfare, and control of aircraft and missiles. It is also employed in nontraditional roles, such as providing direct support to the President of the United States, aviation detachments for independent duty and forces for counterdrug operations; as well as participating in disaster relief operations.



PH2 Alicia Tasz





The flexible support provided from both naval sea basing and austere sites ashore and the ability to operate successfully in a joint or combined environment highlight the value of Marine Aviation's expeditionary capabilities. Marine Corps Aviation seeks to provide a responsive, fully integrated, balanced and ready Aviation Combat Element (ACE). Further reorganization and refinement will be implemented as required by future force structure decisions. Weapon system improvements will continue to maximize combat power to the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF), while offsetting the potential for tactical obsolescence. Readiness and training will continue to be emphasized to ensure unity of effort through a consistently capable, high-quality and responsive aviation force.

Facing page, the amphibious assault ship *Iwo Jima* (LHD 7) displays an inspiring banner in March 2003. Facing page inset, a Marine aircrewman loads ammunition into the magazine of his M-16 while aboard *Kearsage* (LHD 3) in February 2003. Above, HMH-462 CH-53Es pass over assault amphibian vehicles during Operation Cobra Gold 2002 in Thailand. Right, Aviation Boatswain's Mate Third Class Jennifer Rohrbaugh signals an AH-1W Super Cobra of MAG-29 embarked aboard *Saipan* (LHA 2) in January 2003.





MARINE HEAVY HELICOPTER SQUADRON (HMH)

Flying the CH-53D Sea Stallion and CH-53E Super Stallion, provides assault helicopter transport of heavy weapons, equipment and supplies during amphibious and subsequent ashore operations.

Left, a CH-53E Super Stallion assigned to the *Heavy Haulers* of HMH-462 takes off to demonstrate an amphibious assault during Operation Cobra Gold 2002. Below, a CH-53E from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit ACE performs deck landing qualifications aboard *Essex* (LHD 2).



PHAN Marvin Thompson

SSgt. Jerry Morrison



Lt. Col. Doug Wadsworth

CH-53D Sea Stallions from the *Ugly Angels* of HMH-362 conduct troop lift operations for Landing Force Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training in Brunei, above, and execute heavy-lift operations in support of Operation Crow Valley in the Philippines, right.



SSgt. Tad Ordoyne



MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON

Flying the AV-8B Harrier II, attacks and destroys surface targets under all-weather conditions, day and night.

Above, an AV-8B Harrier II Plus from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) lands on the flight deck of *Nassau* (LHA 4) after conducting flight operations in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. Right, a Harrier II from VMA-311 dumps fuel while chasing the sun into MCAS Miramar, Calif. Below right, a pair of AV-8Bs from VMA-211 hold over *Bonhomme Richard* (LHD 6)



Capt. John Havener



Capt. Matt Haefner

waiting to recover. Above inset, a VMA-311 Harrier II tanks with a British L-1011 over Afghanistan during a mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom last year.



Capt. Matt Haefner



MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER

Flying the CH-46E Sea Knight, supplies assault transport of combat troops in the initial assault waves and follow-on stages of amphibious and subsequent ashore operations.



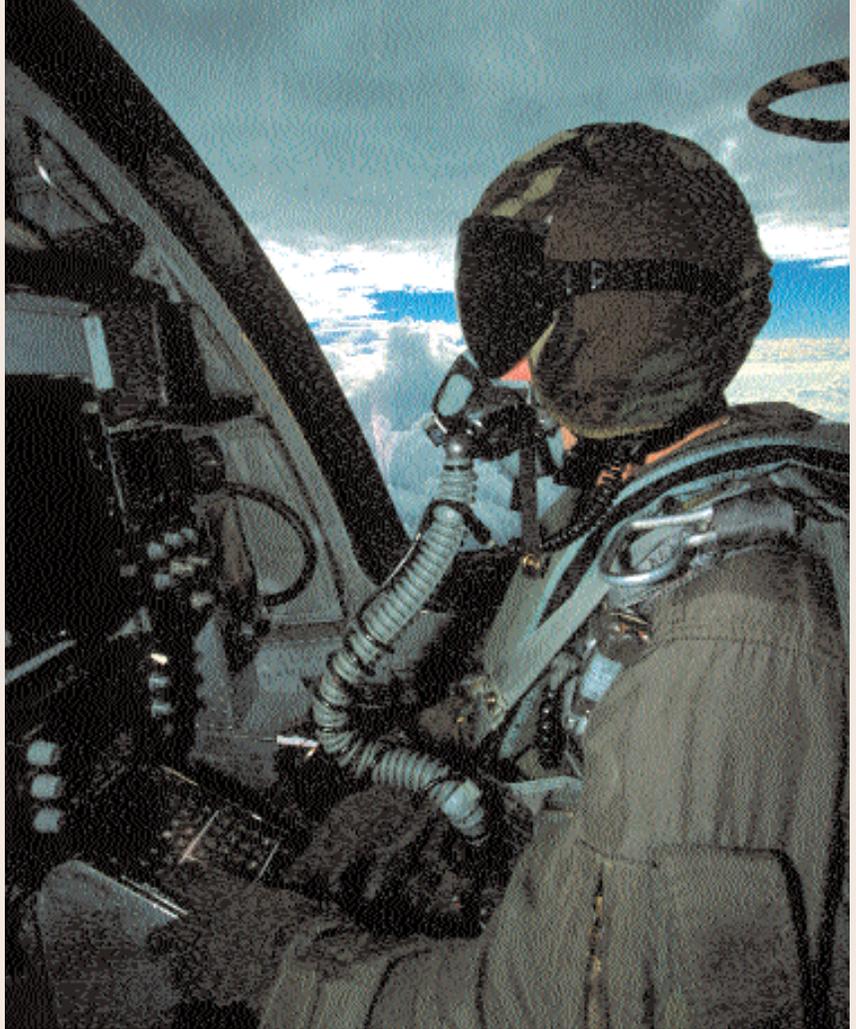
Top, a CH-46 Sea Knight prepares to take off from *Kearsarge* (LHD 3), serving as the flagship for the seven-ship Amphibious Task Force East conducting missions in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in February 2003. Above, Marines from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit fast-rope from a CH-46 Sea Knight during their Training in an Urban Environment Exercise. Left, a Marine aircrewman prepares for flight in a CH-46E Sea Knight out of Kandahar, Afghanistan, during Operation Enduring Freedom.

MARINE TACTICAL ELECTRONIC WARFARE SQUADRON (VMAQ)

Flying the EA-6B Prowler, conducts airborne electronic warfare including electronic attack/protection/support to control the electromagnetic spectrum or to attack the enemy in support of Fleet Marine Force and joint operations.

Right, Capt. Dean Driskill of VMAQ-2 scans his equipment during a training event. Below, VMAQ-2 crew members exit their EA-6B Prowler at U.S. Naval Support Activity Souda Bay, Crete, Greece, in February 2003. The squadron is based at MCAS Cherry Point, NC.

Paul Farley



Mike Wilson



MARINE LIGHT ATTACK HELICOPTER SQUADRON (HMLA)

Flying the UH-1N “Huey” and AH-1W Super Cobra, provides combat utility helicopter support, attack helicopter fire support and fire support coordination during amphibious and subsequent ashore operations.



Above, two AH-1W Super Cobra helicopters from HMLA-167 fly over Spain during a simulated close-air-support mission while participating in Exercise Dynamic Mix 2002.

On board amphibious ships such as *Tarawa* (LHA 1), “skids” are an integral part of the ACE. Left, an AH-1W Super Cobra takes off in the Arabian Gulf. Below, ordnancemen prepare a UH-1N Huey for flight.



Wendy Leland



Wendy Leland



MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK SQUADRON

Flying the F/A-18A/C Hornet, intercepts and destroys enemy aircraft under all-weather conditions, and attacks and destroys surface targets.



PH3 Christopher B. Stoltz

Top, a pair of VMFA-251 F/A-18s drop their hooks for the camera. Above, an F/A-18 Hornet from VMFA-115 traps aboard *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75). Above right, F/A-18 weapon systems operator Capt. Joe E. Maybach of VMFA(AW)-121 hugs his girlfriend before deploying for Operation Enduring Freedom. Below, Capt. Chuck Gant photographed himself and another VMFA(AW)-533 F/A-18D Hornet in formation.



MARINE ALL-WEATHER FIGHTER ATTACK

Flying the F/A-18D Hornet, attacks and destroys surface targets under adverse weather conditions during both day and night missions, conducts multisensor imagery reconnaissance, provides supporting arms coordination, and intercepts and destroys enemy aircraft during all types of weather.





Ted Carlson



Ted Carlson



CWO William D. Crow

MARINE AERIAL REFUELER TRANSPORT

Flying the KC-130 Hercules, provides tactical aerial refueling service to Marine aviation units, maintaining an all-weather capability and operating from a variety of bases. Other tasks include assault air transport, casualty evacuation and ground refueling of air and ground assets.

Top, the excellent visibility from the KC-130 cockpit is evident in this flight station photo showing two VMGR-252 pilots flying their Hercules over California last year. Inset to top, a KC-130F of VMGR-152 refuels two thirsty F/A-18C Hornets. Above, a KC-130 Hercules from VMGR-352 prepares for its next mission at an undisclosed forward operating base, while another Herc assigned to VMGR-252 takes off on a mission to transport Marines, right, from the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit back to Kandahar Airport in Afghanistan.



CWO William D. Crow



MARINE FIGHTER ATTACK TRAINING

Flying the F/A-18A/C/D Hornet and the T-34C Turbo-Mentor, provides the Fleet Marine Force and fleet squadrons with qualified F/A-18 Hornet pilots and weapon

Above, VMFAT-101 F/A-18Ds are used to train pilots and WSOs for duty with VMFA(AW) squadrons. Right, the T-34C is used for spotting during training missions.



Chuck Lloyd

MARINE HELICOPTER

Flying the VH-3D Sea King, VH-60N Blackhawk, CH-46 and CH-53E, provides the President of the United States with helicopter transportation, and tests and evaluates helicopter systems for the Fleet Marine Force.

Left, a VH-60N from HMX-1 sports an immaculate green and white paint job.

MARINE FIGHTER TRAINING SQUADRON

Flying the F-5E and F-5F Tiger II, provides adversary tactics training for Fleet Marine Force and fleet squadrons.

Right, a VMFT-401 F-5E flies wing on a squadron two-seat F-5F.



Rick Linares