

Osprey Nest



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The V-22 *Osprey* tilt-rotor aircraft was developed by the Navy and the tilt-rotor team of Bell Helicopter Textron and Boeing Defense and Space Group. It was introduced in a May 1989 rollout ceremony at Bell's Flight Research Center in Arlington, Texas. Ultimately, the *Osprey* will become the world's first production tilt-rotor aircraft, replacing the aging CH-46 *Sea Knight* and CH-53D *Sea Stallion* as the Marine Corps' medium-lift aircraft and augmenting the U.S. Special Operations Command fleet.

The first of four production V-22s has been flying since March at Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division, Patuxent River, Md. At the end of July, the test program had accumulated 1,250 hours in 1,069 flights. The second *Osprey* arrived in September and will be used for flight-envelope development testing through 1999. It will then be fitted with terrain-following/terrain-avoidance radar and wing fuel tanks to become the first special operations aircraft. All four production aircraft should be aboard by year's end.

Lieutenant General Terrence R. Dake, deputy chief of staff for Marine Corps aviation, made his first flight in the *Osprey* on 29 August at Patuxent River. The senior Marine aviator piloted the aircraft for one hour to gain firsthand knowledge of its performance and capabilities. After his flight, Dake

Photographer Erik Hildebrandt captured the *Osprey* at Patuxent River in August as flight test personnel took the tilt-rotor aircraft through its paces.

V-22 Osprey

Wing span	84'6"
Length	57'3"
Height	20'10" overall
Weight	33,140 lbs., empty
Max cargo weight	10,000 lbs. internal 15,000 lbs. external
Cruise speed	275 knots
Dash speed	300 knots
Power plant	Two T406-AD-400 Allison gas turbine turbo shafts
Troop seats	24
Litters	12
Crew	3

said, "The V-22 is on the cutting edge of aviation technology. It represents an important first step in modernizing Marine Corps aviation for the battlefields of the 21st century." ✈