



AIRSCOOP

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PH1 Felix Garza Jr.

Above, a UH-3H Sea King of HC-2 Det 2 flies over the Arabian Gulf with an MH-60S Seahawk of HSC-26 on 2 September, symbolizing the end of the Desert Ducks' detachment in Bahrain and its upcoming transition to the H-60. Facing page, HSL-43 personnel perform a preflight inspection of their SH-60F Seahawk on board *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) on 8 September, during operations following Hurricane Katrina.

Desert Ducks Depart Bahrain

The Desert Ducks of Helicopter Combat Support Squadron 2 Det 2 passed the mission of combat logistics in the Naval Forces Central Command area of responsibility to the Desert Hawks of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 26 on 14 September. Concluding 27 years as a permanent detachment in Bahrain, the Desert Ducks will be retiring the H-3 Sea King and transitioning to the MH-60S Seahawk.

EA-18G Update

Two F/A-18F Super Hornets are being converted into developmental test aircraft for the EA-18G. Fitted with the electronic attack equipment of the EA-6B Prowler—including the ALQ-218(v)2 tactical receiver, communications countermeasures set, interference cancellation, ALQ-99 tactical jamming system pods, and the multimission advanced tactical terminal—the test platforms are scheduled to begin flight testing in September and November 2006.

Air Traffic Control Upgrade

The DoD National Airspace System Modernization Program entered full-rate production. The program will upgrade all U.S. federal terminal radar approach control facilities to common digital systems, including new radar, processor, and display and communications equipment. Now installed at MCAS Beaufort, S.C., NS Rota, Spain, and NAS Patuxent River, Md., the system will ultimately be installed on board all Navy and Marine Corps airfields.

Sea Stallions Returned to Service

Three H-53 Sea Stallions were retrieved from the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center, Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., and brought to NADEP Cherry Point, N.C., in August. Upgraded to current configurations and put back into active service, these aircraft will augment the H-53 fleet, the numbers of which have dwindled due to the difficult environmental conditions in which many of them operate in the global war on terrorism.

Right, an Air Force KC-135 is reflected in the visor of an EA-6B Prowler pilot of VAQ-134 as he refuels over Afghanistan on 26 September. Facing page, a CH-53E of Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 464 approaches *Harry S. Truman* for a landing on 4 September as a Navy MH-53 Sea Dragon turns on deck. Navy and Marine Corps helicopter squadrons operating from the carrier assisted with relief efforts in the New Orleans, La., area following Hurricane Katrina. Photo by PH3 Kristopher Wilson.



For the Record

Halsey (DDG 97) was commissioned on 30 July at NB Coronado, Calif. The second ship to bear the name, she honors Fleet Admiral William F. Halsey, Jr. (1882–1959). Awarded the Navy Cross during WW I for his actions on Atlantic convoy duty, he became a

Naval Aviator in 1935 at age 52. Early in WW II he led a task force built around *Enterprise (CV 6)* during raids against the Japanese, then commanded the forces in the South Pacific. Halsey also led the Third Fleet during the Leyte Gulf and Okinawa campaigns, 1944–1945.



A 29 September ceremony at NAS Jacksonville, Fla., remembers fallen VS-32 aviators LCdr. Thomas Blake and LCdr. Scott Bracher.

George Washington (CVN 73) departed drydock and relocated to a pierside berth at the Northrop Grumman Newport News, Va., shipyard on 30 August, as the carrier approached the end of her planned incremental availability.

Live-fire test and evaluation of the **P-8A Multimission Maritime Aircraft** began in April, and is expected to conclude in 2012 prior to the aircraft entering full-rate production.

Mishaps

Two aviators were killed when their S-3B Viking of VS-32 crashed short of the runway at NAS Jacksonville, Fla., on 21 September.

On 12 August, an airman was injured after falling from the cockpit of a VFA-122 F/A-18F at NAS Fallon, Nev.

