

AIRSCOOP

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MH-60R Simulator Ready for Training



Cdr. Ed Balaton of PMA-205 and Cdr. Curtis Shaub, HSM-41 CO, cut the ribbon on TOFT #1 on 1 August.

A 1 August ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Helicopter Maritime Strike 41 training building on NAS North Island, Calif., marked the opening of the first MH-60R Seahawk simulator. MH-60R Tactical Operational Flight Trainer (TOFT) #1 will allow students to practice and polish all facets of the MH-60R, from surface and undersea warfare, to day and night deck landing qualifications and search and rescue. A sophisticated audio-visual system enhances the realism of the training. The first CAT 1 students arrived in September and were expected to begin training early October. Currently in production, TOFT #2—a full motion trainer utilizing an electromagnetic motion system vice the industry standard hydraulic systems—is slated to debut in summer 2007.

Global Hawk Flies in RIMPAC

The RQ-4A Global Hawk maritime demonstrator participated in Rim of the Pacific exercises off Hawaii in July. Operated by VX-20 personnel, augmented by personnel from the Air Force's 452nd Flight Test Squadron, the Global Hawk completed the 2,500-mile flight from Edwards AFB, Calif., to the exercise area. The high-altitude, long-endurance unmanned aircraft logged approximately 100 hours during the exercise, demonstrating its ability to provide maritime situational awareness, track contacts of interest, and provide imagery for amphibious and strike operations. Throughout the exercise data from the Global Hawk was transmitted to NAS Patuxent River, Md., where it was analyzed by a team from VX-20, VX-1, and VC-6 and forwarded to exercise participants in Hawaii.

Facing page, members of EOD Mobile Unit 6 Det 14 are suspended from an HS-11 HH-60H Seahawk during special purpose insertion/extraction training on *Enterprise* (CVN 65) on 23 September. Photo by MC2 Milosz Reterski.

Growler Rolled Out

The first developmental EA-18G Growler was rolled out in a 3 August ceremony at Boeing Co. facilities in St. Louis, Mo. On 22 September, Cdr. Jamie Engdahl and Lt. Matthew Doyle of VX-23 flew EA-1 to NAS Patuxent River, Md., where mission systems flight testing will be conducted. The second developmental test aircraft is slated for delivery in November.

The EA-18G, below, combines the electronic attack suite of the EA-6B—including the ALQ-218(V)2 tactical receiver, ALQ-99 tactical jamming system pods, and the multimission advanced tactical terminal—with additional capabilities from the Super Hornet, such as the communications countermeasures system receiver and interference cancellation technology. Expected to reach initial operating capability in FY 09, the Growler will phase out EA-6B Prowler squadrons from 2009 through 2013.



For the Record

The final ship of the *Wasp* class of amphibious assault ships was christened ***Makin Island*** at a ceremony at Northrop Grumman Ship Systems, Pascagoula, Miss. She is the second ship to be named for a daring raid carried out by Marines on the Japanese-held Makin Island in the Gilbert Islands, 17–18 August 1942.

While deployed on *Enterprise* (CVN 65) in the 5th Fleet area of operations, **Sea Control Squadron 32** tested the capabilities of the Low Altitude Navigation and Targeting and Infrared for Night pod on the S-3 Viking. The pod provides forward-looking infrared, live video feedback to the ship, and video recording capabilities, and will integrate laser designation capabilities at a later date.

Lockheed Martin delivered the first **upgraded KC-130T Hercules** aerial refueling aircraft to the Marine Corps. The upgrade standardizes the defensive systems and night vision lighting in fleet KC-130Ts, making them similar to those of the newer KC-130J. The first upgraded KC-130T will conduct flight testing and then return to Marine Aerial Refueler Squadron 234, NAS JRB Fort Worth, Texas., in early 2007.

Mishap

A CH-53D Super Stallion of HMH-463 suffered Class A damage, but there were no fatalities, following a hard landing during night operations on 7 September.





After a day spent flying humanitarian support missions in and out of the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon, on 17 July, a CH-53E Super Stallion of HMM-365 (Rein), 24th MEU, sits on the flight line at British Royal Air Base, Akrotiri, Cyprus, with a C-130J Hercules of VMGR-252 in the background. The squadron flew 730 civilians and more than 124,000 pounds of supplies in a four-day period using four CH-53Es. Photo by 1st Lt. Sean M. Hennessy.