



*CH-47F Rollout Commemorative Painting
by Joe Naujokas*

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CHINOOK NEWS 2007

A NEW ERA BEGINS

CHINOOK NEWS

07

A NEW ERA BEGINS



In this issue

CH-47F Carries Tradition

GUNS-A-GO-GO is back

One Aircraft, Many Missions

International Missions

News of Note

Operations of Note

A Final Word



MISSION STATEMENT

AN INTEGRATED TEAM BRINGING
TOGETHER THE BEST OF BOEING
TO PROVIDE SYSTEMS AND
SOLUTIONS THAT EMPOWER THE
SOLDIERS OF TODAY AND
TOMORROW.





MESSAGE FROM JACK DOUGHERTY

WELCOME TO *CHINOOK NEWS*. IT HAS BEEN AN AMAZING YEAR FOR THE PROGRAM, THE AIRCRAFT, AND THE *CHINOOK NEWS*.



PHOTO: FRED TROILO

This new magazine format will enable us to keep pace with the growing interest and the great response to the publication and will provide expanded coverage of Chinook deployments, news, events and missions.

We are extremely proud of the program performance, and one of the highlights this year was the unveiling of the new CH-47F, which is featured in this issue. This event recognized the efforts of those who made this new aircraft a reality.

Today we can say that the CH-47F is being built with pride and will be flown with confidence.

Over the past year, the Chinook has gained visibility from its use in air assaults, its life-saving deployment in humanitarian missions throughout Pakistan and its recent deployment to evacuate people in Lebanon. Interest is growing worldwide for the Chinook, and growth is expected in all areas of the program.

Many combat and humanitarian missions are featured in this issue, in addition to stories of the service Chinooks have performed in communities.

Also included in this issue are comments from pilots on various missions.

Lastly, this issue marks the conclusion of COL Tim Crosby's tenure as the leader of the Cargo Helicopter Program. He made an indelible mark on the program and his dedication and service earned him our lasting gratitude and respect. Simultaneously we welcome COL Newman Shufflebarger back to the Chinook family, replacing COL Crosby as PM CH.

Keep submitting your Chinook stories, and we will share your experience with the world.

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CH-47F ROLLOUT

Welcoming the
Chinook CH-47F

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A NEW ERA BEGINS

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WELCOMING

THE NEW CHINOOK

By Tom Marinucci

CH-47F

Boeing unveiled the new CH-47F Chinook to the cheers of employees, dignitaries, politicians, the Army customer and scores of media representatives in attendance at the Ridley Park, Pa., facility on June 15. The aircraft is the first of 452 new CH-47F heavy-transport helicopters included in the U.S. Army Cargo Helicopter modernization program.

Opening the ceremony, Mike Tkach, vice president and general manager of Boeing's Rotorcraft Systems said, "The rollout of the new aircraft signifies the beginning of another generation of service in the U.S. Army for the CH-47."

"This September marks the 44th anniversary of the first CH-47A delivery to our Army customer," stated Jack Dougherty, director of Chinook Programs. "For nearly half a century, Chinooks have been a vital contributor not only to the U.S. Army's and our allies' military capability, but also to humanitarian relief missions that have saved literally tens of thousands of victims of natural disasters around the world. One indication of the Chinook's great value is that it is the longest running continuous production program in the history of The Boeing Company, outstripping every commercial jetliner and military aircraft the company has ever built."

The rollout included a flight demonstration by the Maryland National Guard, who ceremoniously flew in a CH-47D Chinook with a HMMWV slung beneath the aircraft. This D model will be turned in to the Boeing facility and eventually remanufactured into a CH-47F.



PHOTO: FRED TROILO

LOAD TO BEAR — An Army aviation unit with the Maryland National Guard demonstrates the CH-47D Chinook helicopter lifting a HMMWV as part of the CH-47F ceremony at Boeing.



Charged with creating a lasting image of the CH-47F celebration, artist Joe Naujokas, Creative Services in Philadelphia, Pa., captured the evolution of the aircraft. "Knowing this aircraft as I do, it seemed natural to depict its history of service as a path to the future," said Naujokas.

The canvas painting was presented to the Cargo Helicopter Program office, and poster-size replicas were handed out to Rotorcraft employees as part of the rollout event.



PHOTOS: FRED TROILO

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Keynote speaker, COL Warren E. Phipps Jr., Commander of the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) said, "We look forward as we return from Iraq and become the Army's first unit to receive and train with this exceptional aircraft. The 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) has had rich history and strong appreciation of the CH-47 since it first saw service some 40 years ago."

The Colonel stated that the CH-47 is the workhorse of the Screaming Eagles and of the Task Force Band of Brothers in Iraq. Although the CH-47s are small in number, their contributions have been significant to the efforts in Iraq. In the past nine months, the CH-47s in the 101st have efficiently moved 40,000 soldiers and delivered more than 4,000 tons of critical supplies across Iraq. In addition to providing critical combat service support, the CH-47 has helped both American and Iraqi soldiers remain on the offensive.

The Colonel predicted that the CH-47F will provide his unit with an enhanced capability to conduct air assaults and deliver critical supplies to soldiers.

The aircraft features a newly designed, modernized airframe and a Rockwell Collins Common Avionics Architecture System advanced digital cockpit to meet the needs of current and future warfighters.

The new airframe uses modern manufacturing techniques that replace multiple-piece sheet metal structures with single-piece machined components. The new components will reduce operating and support costs, improve the aircraft's structural integrity and extend the Chinook's service life.

The helicopter's advanced avionics provide improved situational awareness for flight crews, with an advanced digital map display and a data transfer system that allows storing of preflight and mission data. Additionally, the BAE Digital Advanced Flight Control



Delivering the keynote remarks, COL Warren E. Phipps Jr., Commander of the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade.

System replaces a legacy analog system. Improved survivability features include Common Missile Warning and improved Countermeasure Dispenser Systems.

Powered by two 4,868-horsepower Honeywell engines, the new CH-47F can reach speeds greater than 175 mph and transport payloads weighing more than 21,000 pounds. The CH-47F, with the Robertson Aviation Extended Range Fuel System, has a mission radius greater than 400 miles.

The first fielding of the aircraft will be with the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault). ■

The Chinook had carried the humvee from its base in Edgewood, Md., that morning, suspended externally by its three powerful cargo hooks underneath the belly of the aircraft. After shutdown, the helicopter was moved to its display position, beside its future replacement, the CH-47F model.

The CH-47F model rollout ceremony marked the upgrade of the Army's premier heavy-lift helicopter, the CH-47 Chinook. The Chinook is the fastest helicopter in the Army's inventory and can carry loads equal to its own empty weight, both internally and externally. The F model, features better avionics, moving map navigational technology, and a stronger airframe that's easier to maintain than its older D model counterpart. With its vast capability — first realized over 40 years ago with the first A model during the Vietnam era — and its historic track record, the Army has decided to extend the life of the Chinook program well into the 21st century with its newest upgrade — the F model. For the next 20 to 30 years, F model Chinooks will dominate the skies of the future battlefield as they have since the early 1960s.

"It's about protecting human life," said U.S. Congressman Curt Weldon (R-PA), "that our soldiers have the very best equipment that our nation can provide them, and you great Americans here at Boeing have done just that today!"

The juxtaposition could not have been more striking, seeing the two behemoth aircrafts side by side — the F model, scheduled for fielding this summer to the Army's 101st Airborne Division, next to the D model from Maryland's National Guard. But it was Maryland's Chinook that stole the show, having performed masterfully earlier that morning. Following the ceremony, crowds gathered at each aircraft and were treated to a thorough walk-through by the expert crewmembers on board. It was an important milestone in Army aviation and a job well done by all involved. ■

Maryland National Guard participates in rollout of the CH-47F

By MAJ Michael G. Krause, S3, 1-224th Security and Support Battalion



PHOTO: FRED TROILO

The wind wasn't the only thing blowing hard at the Boeing plant. On a sunny, but blustery day in Philadelphia, Pa, a CH-47D Chinook helicopter and its crew from the Maryland Army National Guard took center stage. The aircraft, crewed by CW4 Sam Thomas, CPT David Magness, SSG Jeffery Potter and SSG Gene Dalporto, made a full traffic pattern over a crowd of nearly 1,000 soldiers, guests and Boeing employees before executing a perfect landing to a hover and dropping off its humvee cargo on the intended target.

Modern helicopter carries tradition

By Kim Henry, staff writer,
Redstone Arsenal, Alabama



PHOTOS: FRED TROILO

RIDLEY PARK, Pa. — The unveiling of the first production CH-47F Chinook took place in a ceremony at Boeing Rotorcraft in Ridley Park. The event marks the delivery of the first of 452 new CH-47F heavy-transport helicopters in production as a part of the Army Cargo Helicopter Modernization Program.

“This is truly a great day for the Army, aviation and most of all, our soldiers,” COL Tim Crosby, project manager for cargo helicopters, said. “This aircraft, delivered on cost and on schedule marks the beginning of a long production run that is a keystone in Army Aviation’s transformation. Our special thanks to all of our industry partners for their dedication to this program and to our soldiers.”

The Chinook, a twin-turbine, heavy-lift transport helicopter, entered Army service in the early 1960s with CH-47A, B and C model designations. From 1980 through 1993, the early-model aircraft were remanufactured to the current CH-47D configuration. Today, 46 percent of the Army’s CH-47D fleet was originally manufactured prior to 1966.

“The airframe and all its dynamics will be pretty much the same as the CH-47D, because it is built on the legacy of the same model that was built in the ‘60s,” LTC Tony Pelczynski, CH-47F improved cargo helicopter product manager, said. “The materials will be new, but the actual construction and aerodynamics of the airframe are the same.”

As the Army's only heavy-lift helicopter, the CH-47 transports troops, including air assault, supplies, weapons and other cargo in combat, combat support and service support operations.

"One indication of Chinook's great value is that it is now the longest running continuous production program in the history of The Boeing Company, outstripping every commercial jetliner and military aircraft the company has ever built," said Jack Dougherty, Boeing director for Chinook programs. "Chinooks are recognized around the world for their unique design, but more importantly for their capability to carry people and supplies into areas unreachable by other means."

Members of the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division attended the ceremony to accept the keys of first CH-47F production model because they will be the first unit equipped with the aircraft. "The CH-47F will give us an enhanced capability to conduct air assaults and deliver critical supplies to our soldiers as we prosecute this war on terrorism and remain on the offensive," COL Warren Phipps, 101st CAB commander, said.

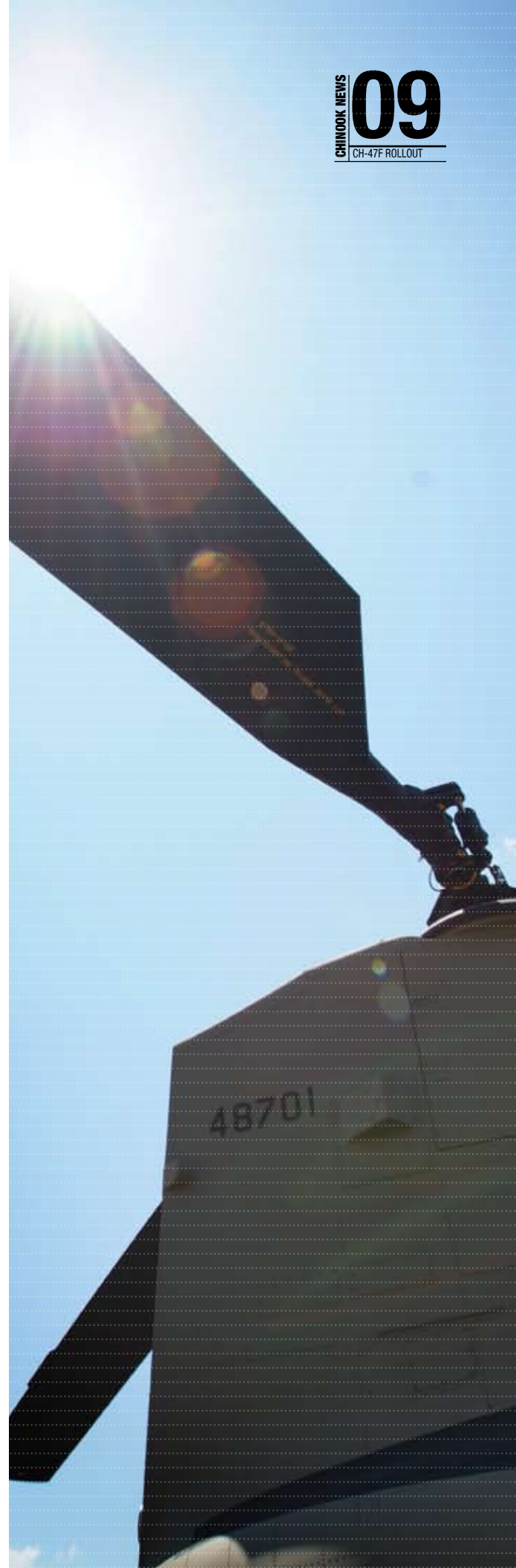
The new aircraft features a newly designed, modernized airframe and the Common Avionics Architecture System advanced digital cockpit. The airframe will feature modern manufacturing techniques, where single-piece, machined components replace built-up sheet metal structures. The new components reduce operating and support costs while improving the structural integrity of the aircraft, extending the overall useful life of the Chinook.

The new model Chinook should benefit soldiers in the battlefield. "Primarily it is going to provide increased situational awareness both from mission planning and mission execution capabilities. We're bringing in a new avionics system, a new cockpit and a whole host of new product improvements, including new ASE [Aircraft Survivability Equipment] suites," Pelczynski said.

The advanced avionics in the CH-47F provide improved situational awareness for flight crews with an advanced digital map display and a data transfer system, storing preflight and mission data. Additionally, the Digital Advanced Flight Control system replaces the legacy analog system. Improved survivability features include Common Missile Warning and Improved Countermeasure Dispenser Systems.

"We're continuing the progression of the product improvements for the CH-47D, including 714 engines for higher and hot environments and new machine frames so the entire airframe is going to be brand new, which is significant in terms of configuration management," Pelczynski said.

Powered by T55-GA-714A engines, the new CH-47F is capable of speeds in excess of 175 mph making it among the fastest rotorcraft, while providing the capability to transport up to 21,016 pounds. "It is built for speed, it is built to carry the load," Pelczynski said. The CH-47F, with the Extended Range Fuel System, is capable of a mission radius greater than 400 miles. ■





FROM THE **FIELD**

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CHINOOK NEWS



PHOTOS: JASON BARRAS

I've been flying Chinooks for 16 years in Korea, Hawaii, Afghanistan and Iraq. Recently, we deployed to Pakistan on humanitarian relief missions. I was amazed at the amount of devastation we encountered. Pakistan was mountainous; it was on a par with Afghanistan as we worked at elevations of 12,200 feet to cross the mountains.

Our initial loads were internal as we worked more in the mountains, operating in tight valleys. While approaching landing zones we had to contend with a lot of debris from the destruction that was in our landing zones. Wind was also a big factor in our operations — even with the aircraft's power it was a job, but the Chinook gave us a margin.

Among the missions I've flown, the one in Afghanistan stands out. We had a report of a missing aircraft. A C-130 reported it had eyes on it and confirmed it was found. Marine 53s initially headed up the recovery mission, but could not get into the mountains because of the weather and the aircraft's power requirements. Chinooks took the lead. We set up three CH-47s. One was a "fat cow," a fuel carrier. We did this because it was an extreme distance from our base. The other bird held recovery personnel and

rescue equipment. Our aircraft was the lead bird. We were operating at 14,000 feet, at about minus 14 degrees, we were on oxygen. We went in and did a recovery in about an hour. It all worked together. But it was a difficult mission as far as restricted space, altitude and overall environment we also had to contend with updrafts and downdrafts. The power and agility of the Chinook was a big factor.

Confidence in the aircraft is a big factor in your ability to perform missions. We have a lot of confidence in our maintenance personnel and, of course, in the aircraft. The addition of the new 714 engine gave even more confidence in the aircraft with the additional power margin we have. This has a big impact on the out-of-ground effect we have at altitude. Without that, we would not attempt the high-altitude missions.

This is a great aircraft, and I'm proud to fly it.

CW4 Eugene A. Santos,
instructor pilot





I've been flying Chinooks for seven years; most recently I served two tours in Afghanistan and conducted a wide range of operations from general support to combat operations.

Part of my last tour was presidential support for interim President Hamid Karzai. We had an Operation Readiness rate that was always up. In fact I can't remember a time when we ever dropped a mission, so I know the day-to-day reliability of this aircraft is top of the line as far as I'm concerned.

Flying in Afghanistan, you have a lot to contend with — not just the rugged terrain, but the weather during the summer months. In the desert there are heat and dust conditions, and in the winter, you contend with snow, wind, sleet and heavy-duty winds. Basically, any weather that can cause problems with an aircraft, Afghanistan has.

The Chinook has the ability to perform any mission, and the agility to maneuver as well as the ability to conduct medical evacuations or search and rescue at high altitudes and in dusty environments, including operating in water.

**CW3 Robert Vanover,
instructor pilot**



PHOTOS: JASON BARRAS

I have been flying Chinooks for 10 years, including tours in Afghanistan. My tour in Afghanistan was a great experience, where I flew a lot of missions I didn't think I would have the opportunity to perform anywhere else. The Chinook definitely proved itself in harsh environments. I can tell you the guys on the ground love to hear us coming.

My confidence in the Chinook was instrumental in performing 34 missions in country. We never took off late or cancelled a mission because of maintenance.

With the max gross weight of the Chinook, we simply had no issues flying in the mountains of Afghanistan. The Chinook was by far the most versatile aircraft in the fleet; it is the most reliable and the most fun to fly. The reality is, with this aircraft's sheer power, we can take everything we need with us to perform our mission.

**CW3 Michelle Bartling,
instructor pilot**



PHOTO: JASON BARRAS

The 159th is a heavy helicopter battalion composed of two Chinook companies. I've been flying for about 20 years and in Chinooks for the past three years. Most recently our unit was deployed in support of relief operations for Hurricane Katrina, and the battalion also has been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Members of the battalion had been involved in the search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and they were able to use those lessons learned in the load out and the actual operation when Katrina hit the Gulf Coast.

The same force and maintenance package used in the desert was transferred readily to the humanitarian operations for the hurricane and allowed us within 72 hours to have a force of five aircraft and 40 people on the ground in New Orleans ready to start rescue operations.

During Katrina we had a force of about 20 maintainers, and they maintained about a 94 percent operational readiness for us so effectively that a force of four to five aircraft were flying six to eight hours a day, being serviced overnight. In a period of 38 days the unit flew 663 hours.

What was unique during the operations was that the crew did not leave the aircraft — we just hot gassed them, and they would take off loaded with supplies and follow a call to perform a rescue mission. In one case we landed on a bridge to pick up people who had been stranded by rising water. They had been out of their homes for about a week without any food or water. Upon completion of that mission we were diverted to broken levees to deliver external cargo of sandbags, and then we were sent to recover an urban search and rescue team. This was the only aircraft out there that could handle their equipment of rubber boats with external engines used in their operations. So in a given day, the crews handled every type of mission — internal cargo, external cargo and personnel recovery. In that 38 days deployment they moved over 10 million pounds of cargo externally, two million pounds internally and over 2,000 passengers.

When the call came about a breach in the New London Street levee, fortunately we had experienced flight engineers on board who are the key to an operation like that. They were able to reconfigure the aircraft in-flight for external load ops, so we could land to pick up the sandbags. What was unique about the New London Street area was that on approach to the levee there were power wires at both ends of the street, and the canal was in the center.

We approached along the river and slid into the middle of the street and set the sandbags into the breach site. It took about three days working continuously to bring the sand level up to the point where it secured the breach. Initially, using other aircraft, the sandbags were only 3,000 pounds.

When the Chinooks arrived the bags were expanded to 7,000 pounds each, and depending on fuel status of the aircraft, we were able to put multiple bags of that weight to secure the levee.

Both the maneuverability of the aircraft and the ability of the aircrew made it possible to land in those tight situations, in some cases right next to the sandbag site, and pick up additional crewmembers to pick up the load and then to maneuver between the wires and around other aircraft in the area.

Flexibility and safety are two standouts in that we were able to conduct missions with very little notice and to safely fly that amount of time in airspace that dense. Maintaining the aircraft made our flights possible. The maintenance at night made the days possible and it was a morale booster for the men. All the focus was on the mission, not the aircraft. That focus on the mission means safe operation.

Lesson learned: Rapid deployability of the aircraft so that we are ready to go when we need to go and the force life to sustain us on extended missions. We deployed in 72 hours and were in the field for over 30 days and performed all the missions on our commander's task list. We will use the lessons learned here as a basis of training for our next combat deployment. Our units have performed high mountain rescues on Mt. Rainier, and that experience will serve when performing missions in Afghan mountains knowing that they have worked at the same altitudes before and done it safely, knowing the aircraft can do it.

**LTC Vince Mercadante,
Commander 5th Battalion,
159th Aviation Regiment**



PHOTO: JASON BARRAS

I have flown Chinooks for six years, both in Afghanistan and Iraq. This is probably the safest aircraft in the inventory, and its capability makes it a one-of-a-kind aircraft.

One of the things that makes the Chinook so unique is the capability of the aircraft. It has the ability to operate in so many different environments, like hot, dusty desert, high mountain snowy conditions — and it remains a versatile platform that gives us the capability to perform any mission, like carrying personnel or wounded, being able to sling-load or perform panicle landings pretty much anywhere we need to do it.

We have flown rescue missions after an earthquake in Afghanistan, where the mission was flown at high altitude in very cold temperatures. On another occasion in Afghanistan we were called into a rescue mission in the mountains where a soldier had fallen into a ravine. This was high altitude, about 8,000 or 9,000 feet. We experienced high winds as well. Other aircraft were unable to get into the area where the man had fallen. We were able to back into the narrow crevice in high winds and perform a one-wheel pinnacle landing to rescue the man.

**CW3 Robert Vanover,
instructor pilot**



PHOTO: FIRST CAV

One of my more memorable experiences in Afghanistan was a one-wheel panicle troop insertion, high on a ledge in the mountains. This was by far the most difficult mission I performed with my copilot Captain Burgert, a very good pilot in his own right.

The Afghanistan terrain is worse than you can imagine. Dust is everywhere. There are sandstorms, and you operate in small landing areas. I have more than 4,000 hours flying Chinooks, and believe me, these missions are a challenge. Without the crewmembers none of the landings would be possible.

The agility and maneuverability of the Chinook are far better than most realize; this aircraft can maneuver into very tight spots. Also, the Chinook is probably one of the best instrument platforms out there with its AFCS system. Its power margin is important as well. I encountered a dust storm in a mountain area, and the power of this aircraft enabled us to get over the mountains and out of danger.

**CW4 Ahmad Upshaw,
instructor pilot**



PHOTO: JASON BARRAS

I've been flying Chinooks for about 16 years. This aircraft can perform any mission assigned — humanitarian, combat assault or serve as a weapons platform. It has the size, the power and the capability to execute the missions.

The desert is pretty flat, so all aircraft perform pretty much the same, but in Afghanistan we were operating at very high altitudes, and the higher you go, the thinner the air. This platform is so strong that we were able to execute missions that no one else could perform — working between 8,000 and 11,000 feet — moving fully equipped soldiers and putting them on the side of a mountain with only a two-wheel pinnacle or on 15- to 20-degree slopes. It is a very stable platform and a great warfighter.

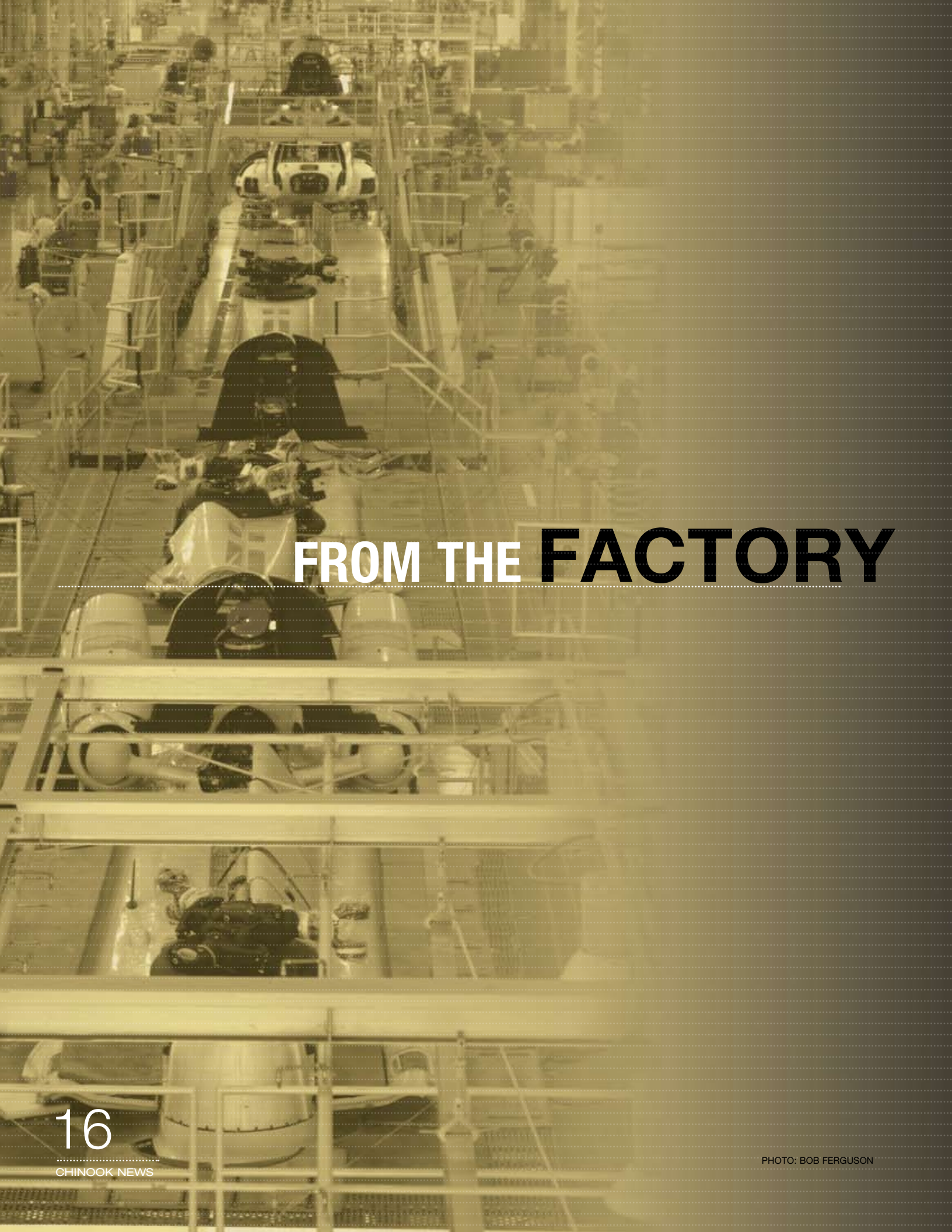
I've done several tours in South and Central America. There, we self-deployed to perform humanitarian relief after earthquakes and hurricanes. In one instance an earthquake had caused a roadway to shear off from the side of a mountain, isolating people in the area. Other aircraft attempted to land in a soccer field to do rescues, but because of the dust conditions they

were browning out. We were trained to operate in those conditions, and in a one-day period we landed there more than 40 times, moving personnel and medical teams, food and water and removing the injured. We shocked the people watching us land in a tight area having only a few feet in front and on the sides, between trees and power lines.

In Afghanistan we operated in extreme temperature ranges. There was a temperature gauge on the windscreen. I have seen it pegged in the negative and maxed out in the positive, because temperatures are below freezing in the mountains and in a few hours you are in desert conditions where the temperature is 130 or 140 degrees, and the aircraft always performed.

Once you're a soldier and you're willing to serve your country, being a Chinook pilot, you're at the top of the frame. In no other airframe can you sling-load another aircraft and it's great to fly, its fun and it just looks good!

**CW4 Richard Krell,
standardization
instructor pilot**



FROM THE **FACTORY**

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CHINOOK NEWS

PHOTO: BOB FERGUSON



“It makes me proud when I hear about you flying our aircraft and that the Chinook is exceeding expectations. We think about you when we make our decisions on usability, functionality and repairs. Stay safe.”

Don Haskins,
factory support engineer



“I’m a Vietnam veteran, so I can appreciate all you’re doing for us. Thanks for what you do!”

Gene May,
sheet metal assembler A



“I’ve been here 20 years and I’m a Vietnam veteran. I’m proud to be associated with building the Chinook, and I’m proud to have served my country and proud of the service you are performing.”

Doug Miller,
sheet metal assembler A



“It’s a privilege to work on the Chinook and to know we are building a great aircraft for you. I wish you all the luck in the world.... Thank you and stay safe.”

Bob Howat,
aircraft painter



“I have a great sense of pride knowing I build the best aircraft in the world for you.... I love to see these Chinooks fly out of here.”

Les Albert, Jr.,
aircraft assembler



“You all are doing an excellent job protecting us. Keep up the good work.”

Andrew Gallo,
sheet metal lead, MOD Center

Often when individuals retire they later go back to work. It is uncommon, however, to go back to work after more than 40 years of retirement.

On May 6 members of the Vietnam era combat unit, the 53rd Aviation Detachment, also known as the Guns-A-Go-Go unit, held their annual reunion in Huntsville, Ala. Though it was a time for friends and family members of the veterans to get back together and rehash old war stories, it was also a time for ceremony.

In a “Motto, Lineage, Colors Handover Ceremony” members from the original unit passed the torch to the new 21st century Guns-A-Go-Go, the Alpha Company, 4th Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment.

came across a Web site about the Guns-A-Go-Go. He sent an e-mail to the Web master and requested to modify the patch for Alpha Company.

After reaching a consensus among the group, the original Commander of the 53rd Aviation Detachment, Bill Tedesco, asked if Alpha Company would like to also take over their unit name.

“It was very humbling to take on their name,” CPT Jeff Siino, Alpha Company commander, said. “We have the deepest heartfelt gratitude to accept their lineage.”

To give Alpha Company the full appreciation of the name, Siino called a formation where he gave crew members the



NEW UNIT goes with historic name

By Kim Henry, staff writer,
Redstone Arsenal, Alabama

Handing over the name was bittersweet for many veterans. “I have mixed emotions. I have a very proprietary feeling about our unit and what we did. I’m very proud,” Ralph “Doc” Holloway, former *Easy Money* pilot, said. “By the same token, I am really proud these guys think enough of us to carry it on. They’re going to carry on our history and traditions.”

Guns-A-Go-Go was the only attack Cargo Helicopter unit, which was deactivated after three of the four armed Chinook helicopters were destroyed in Vietnam.

When the Alpha Company, a heavy assault Chinook unit, was formed in December 2005, they started looking for a unit name and patch. One of the pilots, CWO Mike Rutledge,

Guns-A-Go-Go history. “I literally had goose bumps when briefing the guys on this,” Siino said.

He also took an informal vote on adopting the new name. “You want the majority of the people to be on board with the name because it will last a lifetime with the unit,” Siino said. “The name and motto, they are the cornerstone of the unit. They build esprit de corps, loyalty and camaraderie in that organization.”

To accept the new name, 23 Alpha Company crewmembers came to Redstone, some flying in their aircraft — the MH-47G Chinook, all wearing the Guns-A-Go-Go patch.

“When I saw these guys with the badge on their shoulder I got a lump in my throat,” said David Knight, a former Guns-A-Go-Go gunner. “I am glad to see it on them. I’d rather see it on them than in my drawer.”

Knight flew every mission on *Co\$t of Living* except the last one. “I lost all of my friends in one fateful swoop,” he said about the ACH-47’s crash.

The history of Guns-A-Go-Go is a unique one that can be traced back to one lone Armed/Armored Cargo Helicopter, named *Easy Money* that overlooks today’s Program Executive Office for Aviation.

During the Vietnam War three test ACH-47 Chinooks, nicknamed *Easy Money*, *Stump Jumper* and *Birth Control* were deployed for six months temporary duty in Vietnam. A fourth ACH-47A, called *Co\$t of Living*, was the prototype and therefore stayed in the United States for flight testing.

Though these armed birds had a successful evaluation period — each destroyed every assigned target they engaged — three succumbed to fate. In August 1966, *Stump Jumper* was destroyed by a freak ground-taxi accident with another Chinook at the Vung Tau Airfield. After this misfortune, *Co\$t of Living* stopped testing and joined the two other aircraft in theater.

In May 1967, *Co\$t of Living*’s M24-A 20 mm cannon vibrated loose causing the weapon to rotate upward and fire into the forward rotor system. The blades separated and the aircraft tumbled to the ground killing all eight crewmembers on board.

Then in February 1968, *Birth Control* suffered the destiny of her sisters. *Birth Control* received some bad hits from a gun run and had to auto-rotate into dry rice paddies. *Easy Money* flew in and positioned herself between the enemy and *Birth Control* while rescuing the downed crewmembers.

Due to the extra weight, *Easy Money* fought to stay airborne, and though she received numerous hits, which wounded some crewmembers, she made it safely to Camp Evans. Before a recovery team could rescue *Birth Control*, she was destroyed by mortar fire from the North Vietnamese army. Having only one Armed Chinook left, coupled with the fact that lift helicopters were badly needed in the field, the Guns-A-Go-Go unit

was demobilized. *Easy Money* went to South Vietnam where she served as a maintenance trainer for the allied Vietnamese.

On remembering this event, Holloway said all the Guns-A-Go-Go members were reassigned to different units. “Most people were unhappy. It was sad,” he said.

At the end of the hostilities in Vietnam, *Easy Money* returned to the United States, where the aircraft at some point served as a sheet metal trainer at Fort Eustis, Va. It wasn’t until the late 1990s that *Easy Money* was recognized, restored and later moved to Redstone Arsenal.

When *Easy Money* came to rest at Redstone in 2000, the Guns-A-Go-Go veterans reunited for the first time and have held a reunion every two years since. Their most recent reunion was an emotional one because it marked the 39th anniversary of the *Co\$t of Living* going down as well as the Handover Ceremony to Alpha Company.

Crewmembers from Alpha Company found the event emotional as well. “Doc said to me, ‘Captain you’ve got big shoes to fill,’” Siino said. “Our regiment’s motto is, ‘Nightstalkers don’t quit.’ So during my remarks that night I told the group, ‘I can promise you this: We will not quit trying to fill those big shoes.’” ■



Army Special Operations Aviation Regiment establishes 4th Battalion

By Kimberly Laudano, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment
Public Affairs Office

A fourth U.S. Army special operations aviation battalion was provisionally established at Fort Lewis, Wash., effective July 16. The new battalion is part of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment's (Airborne) overall reorganization to support growing special operations training and mission requirements well into the future.

The new organizational structure has the regimental headquarters collocated with the 1st and 2nd Battalions at Fort Campbell, Ky., the 3rd Battalion located at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., and the 4th Battalion (Provisional) located at Fort Lewis. As part of the transformation, Company E, a MH-47 Chinook helicopter company previously located in Korea, was relocated back to Fort Campbell. Two new companies, F and G, are located at Fort Lewis.

"This transformation is a historic turning point for the special operations aviation community," said COL Kevin W. Mangum, commander, 160th SOAR (A). "The 160th remains actively engaged in two fronts of the Global War on Terrorism, currently supporting operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, while simultaneously conducting critical training for Night Stalkers and their special operations forces customers to maintain the highest levels of combat readiness. "Our new force size and structure will allow the 160th to support more special operations forces more often."

The transformation is a combination of growth and internal re-organization with an end state of a strategically located and structured force. There is an overall increase of about

700 personnel and about 20 aircraft for the regiment. Upon completion, which will take place over the next several years, 1st Bn will have one AH-6 Little Bird helicopter company, one MH-6 Little Bird helicopter company and two companies of MH-60 Black Hawk helicopters. 2nd Bn will have two MH-47 Chinook companies and one MH-60 Black Hawk company. 3rd and 4th Bns will be identical, both with two MH-47 Chinook companies and one MH-60 Black Hawk company. Each battalion also has a Headquarters and Headquarters Company and a maintenance company.

"The continuously growing demand for special operations aviation support in combat and training signaled the need for growth and change in the 160th," said LTC Albert Parmentier, SOAR(A) transformation officer. "Over the past few years, experienced soldiers from across this and other commands took a hard look at all the current and anticipated requirements of the special operations community and developed a plan that postures us to support combat and training missions while maximizing our people, aircraft, flying hours, equipment and budget."

Having 160th soldiers permanently stationed at Fort Lewis allows increased training opportunities with special operations forces on the West Coast. The Fort Lewis area also offers numerous training environments that are necessary for the soldiers of the 160th to maintain the highest level of combat readiness, including mountain, urban, desert and water training. The close proximity to McChord Air Force Base, Wash., supports the regiment's global mission requirements.



“It is an exciting and demanding time for the soldiers and families of 4th Battalion,” said LTC James C. Dugan, commander, 4th Bn (P), SOAR(A). “Our advance team hit the ground running in July 2005, and our momentum continues to grow. We look forward to working with the entire Fort Lewis community in the years to come.”

The 160th Special Operations Aviation R organizes, equips, trains, resources and employs Army Special Operations aviation forces worldwide in support of contingency missions and war-fighting commanders. The SOAR has been actively engaged in the Global War on Terrorism since 2001. ■

IOWA HEAVY HAULERS

By Tom Marinucci

Historical preservation projects are successfully being performed across the country through community involvement. When citizens of Hale, Iowa, took on the task of restoring and moving a vintage 1879 wrought iron train bridge, a Chinook unit from the Iowa National Guard stepped in to help with the burden.

The wrought iron bowstring Hale Bridge, completed in 1879, replaced a flood-prone wooden structure erected earlier. The 300-foot-long bridge provided year-round access across the Wapsipinicon River between northern and southern Hale Township in Anamosa, Iowa, and spurred economic development in the area by providing safe and reliable access to the rail line and depot at Hale Village.

Bowstring bridges like this one, with their distinctive arched or curved trusses, largely replaced wooden bridges over major streams and crossings in Iowa in the 1870s and 1880s. Although there were literally hundreds of bowstring arch bridges in Iowa by the end of the 19th century, only 21 now remain, scattered across the state in Allamakee, Bremer, Crawford, Dubuque, Johnson, Jones, Montgomery, Poweshiek and Winnishiek counties.

The bridge became eligible for the National Register in 1992, but it suffered damage in the 1993 floods. After it was repaired in a historically appropriate manner, it was listed on the National Register in 1998. At the time, the three-span bridge was the longest standing bowstring bridge in Iowa. A year earlier, however, Jones County officials closed the bridge to traffic because of deterioration and structural deficiencies.

In 2003, the bridge was dismantled, and its three spans were moved into storage for refurbishment and restoration and to allow construction of the new Hale Bridge.

Meanwhile, the Jones County Historic Preservation Commission took the lead locally in terms of garnering support for the bridge project through fundraising and volunteer efforts. In addition to considerable financial support from individuals and groups in and outside Jones County, the commission received \$445,000 in grants from the State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa Department of Transportation, Iowa Department of Economic Development, Regional East Central Iowa Council of Government, REAP, RACI and Silos and Smokestacks, and a donation from King Iron Bridge, the original manufacturer of the Hale Bridge.

The commission understood that the move would require military precision to execute, so it turned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 211th Aviation, Iowa Army National Guard. This Guard unit has more than 10,000 hours of flight time in Chinooks to its credit, including tours in Iraq and Afghanistan, supporting presidential visits, conducting Coast Guard operations, providing fire and flood support and conducting airborne operations for the Black Daggers (Special Operations parachute team), Golden Knights (U.S. Army parachute team), and the 194th Infantry Long Range Surveillance Detachment.



Flight engineering teams planned the bridge move with mission precision in about three days. Considerations included planning the move, which involved site visits and several flights for an aerial perspective. “We had to convince the engineer that we could lift from four upper points of the bridge sections as opposed to lifting from the four footpads,” said COL Randy Warm. “Lifting from the footpads would have required extremely long sling legs and made the bridge susceptible to tipping while in flight. We have moved this type of bridge before and used video and pictures to convince the engineer that the structure was capable of being lifted from the upper points.”

The flight team from the 211th Aviation walked each site and made several flights over the pickup and landing zones to cover approach and takeoff avenues under different prevailing wind scenarios. The selected flight path to the new site was at an altitude of 1,500 to 2,000 feet, to avoid built-up areas and houses in case of an emergency.

While the unit’s CH-47Ds could more than handle the weight of the three bridge sections, teams worked to ensure that the bridge sections were carefully rigged to be lifted and carried 15 miles to their new home on the Wapsipinicon River.

The day of the lift was foggy and hazy from melting snow. Initially, the Guard thought to postpone the move, but it finally got minimum visual flight rule weather to start. “We used the Iowa Highway Patrol plane to circle above to keep air traffic and news choppers away from the area,” said Warm. “We also used them to coordinate road closings as we flew with the bridges.”

This lift would be a heavy haul for the Guard; the 100-foot-long section weighed 19,600 pounds, and the two 80-foot-long sections weighed 15,500 pounds a piece. “We used one Chinook to do the 100-foot span and another to move the other two sections,” explained COL Warm. “The first 80-foot section was set on a jetty in the river next to the piers. This would be placed by a crane after the two end pieces were set. The next section was the 100-foot section, which we set on the shore abutment and a pier. It took about 10 minutes to set the section, as numerous trees and the shoreline fed our rotor wash back up into the aircraft. The last 80-foot section was set on the opposite abutment and pier, taking about 10 minutes.”

The commander credits the flight engineers for their planning and demeanor while calling the bridges into place. “That made our job a lot easier and less stressful,” said Warm. “Our crews worked as a team, and the pilots provided valuable advice through their expertise.”

COL Warm concluded, “In the end I was never happier to see two master caution lights come on (dual hook lights) in my flying career.” Mission accomplished. ■





PHOTO: TIM LEEDY, READING EAGLE

Pennsylvania National Guard conducts rescue missions in support of flood relief

By Pennsylvania National Guard News Service

Over 700 Pennsylvania National Guard members are performing around the clock operations for flood victims in the state. Evacuation and search and rescue missions have air lifted nearly 1,000 citizens with aviators continuing operations during the night during the June flooding.

“Our pilots continued operations throughout the evening utilizing their night vision capabilities to aid in spotting those who may need rescued,” said MG Jessica Wright, state Adjutant General. “We are continuing operations both on the ground and in the air.”

As the Guards’ CH-47 Chinook helicopters landed in New Milford, Pa., to evacuate citizens, whole families, including infants and the elderly, boarded the helicopters that would ferry them to safety.

“We had some individuals that were handicapped as well as families that brought their pets,” said SPC Joanne Michael with the 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment. “One lady even came on board with a basket full of puppies.”

The Guard has a total of fifteen helicopters participating in the missions with eleven flying during the day and four at night.

“There are many stories of our National Guard soldiers support in these missions directly affecting, and saving, Pennsylvanians,” said COL Steven Mahoney. “We have logged over 50 flight-hours and owe all our success to the efforts of the pilots and crewmembers along with our ground personnel who are working hard to keep our birds in the air.”

Thirteen of those rescued were extracted by hoist on CH-47s. The hoist system operates on a winch connected to a three-pronged hook that a crewmember is lowered on to stranded citizens. The crewmember then straps the victim in with himself on the hook, and they are winched together to the aircraft.

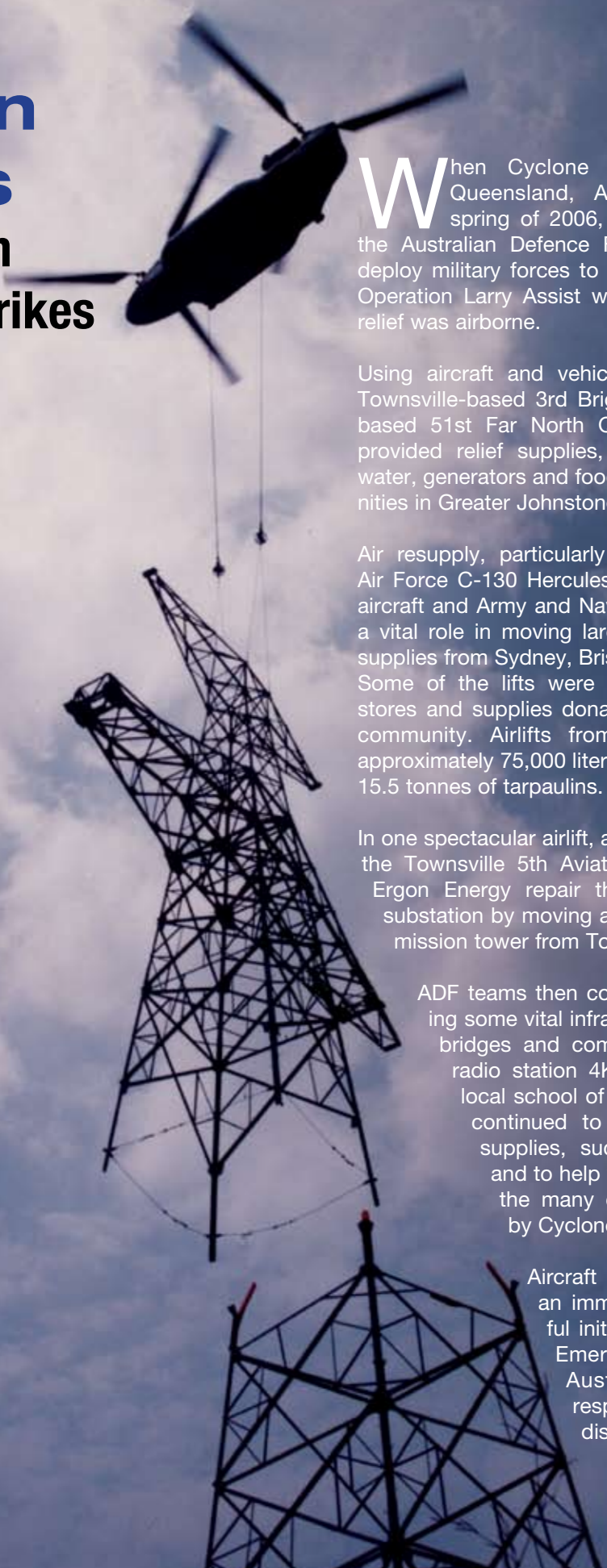
“This is my first rescue,” said CWO Angie Harris, a pilot with Co. G 104th Aviation, stationed at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa. “I flew missions for Katrina but I was delivering supplies. Here I was able to do something that had a direct effect. It feels good.”

Missions have been conducted in

- Schuylkill, Susquehanna, Luzerne, Wyoming, Bucks, Monroe, Pike Columbia and Berks counties.
- Search and rescue, security, evacuation and the transporting of potable water are among the ongoing operations with the anticipation of points of distribution in the future. ■

Australian Chinooks lift support when Cyclone Larry strikes Queensland

By Kent Quigley



When Cyclone Larry struck North Queensland, Australia, during the spring of 2006, the first response of the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) was to deploy military forces to aid the stricken area. Operation Larry Assist was implemented, and relief was airborne.

Using aircraft and vehicles, troops from the Townsville-based 3rd Brigade and the Cairns-based 51st Far North Queensland Regiment provided relief supplies, including tarpaulins, water, generators and food, to outlying communities in Greater Johnstone Shire.

Air resupply, particularly by Royal Australian Air Force C-130 Hercules and DH-C4 Caribou aircraft and Army and Navy helicopters, played a vital role in moving large quantities of relief supplies from Sydney, Brisbane and Townsville. Some of the lifts were dedicated to moving stores and supplies donated by the Australian community. Airlifts from Townsville carried approximately 75,000 liters of bottled water and 15.5 tonnes of tarpaulins.

In one spectacular airlift, a CH-47 Chinook from the Townsville 5th Aviation Regiment helped Ergon Energy repair the Innisfail electricity substation by moving a 32-meter-high transmission tower from Townsville.

ADF teams then concentrated on repairing some vital infrastructure — including bridges and communications to local radio station 4KZ — and clearing a local school of debris. The ADF also continued to move much-needed supplies, such as bottled water, and to help with debris removal in the many communities affected by Cyclone Larry.

Aircraft from the ADF made an immediate and meaningful initial contribution to the Emergency Management Australia-led national response to this natural disaster. ■

RAF Chinooks return to Afghanistan

By Patrick Allen



PHOTO: PATRICK ALLEN

Four years after Operation Jacana, Three Royal Air Force Boeing Chinook HC2s returned to Afghanistan to once again form 1310 Flight and conduct preliminary operations ahead of Operation Herrick. Operating from Kandahar Air Base in Afghanistan they were originally tasked in support of the vanguard of 850 UK personnel from 39 Regiment, Royal Engineers and 42 Commando, Royal Marines, whilst they constructed Camp Bastion in Southern Helmand Province.

Three further Chinooks arrived in April along with the first of eight Army Air Corps Apaches and four Lynx to bring the UK's Joint Helicopter Force (Afghanistan) up to full complement.

At that time Camp Bastion was being prepared for the arrival of the UK-led Helmand Task Force (HTF) comprising over 3300 troops who arrived in late May. The UK-led HTF is based around 16 Air Assault Brigade Headquarters, 3rd Battalion, the Parachute Regiment and Royal Artillery air defence personnel from 21 Battery who formed part of the Helmand Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT). The HQ and the PRT

element are based at Lashkar Gar, the provincial capital, with 3 Para based at Camp Bastion (15 km northwest of Lashkar Gar) along with a small detachment of troops at Geresk, all located in the heartland of Helmand Province along the Helmand River valley. This region is the largest poppy growing and heroin producing region within Afghanistan.

Joint Helicopter Force (Afghanistan)

The UK's Joint Helicopter Command element is based around the six RAF Boeing Chinook HC2s from 1310 Flight, plus eight 9 Regiment, Army Air Corps Apache AH1s and four Lynx AH7s. The six RAF Chinook HC2s were transported into theatre by RAF 99 Squadron C-17 aircraft and set up their operational base at Kandahar airfield working alongside other multi-national helicopters operating at Kandahar on Operation Enduring Freedom. This included U.S. Army (TF Knight Hawk), Chinook CH-47Ds, Australian Chinook CH-47Ds, and Dutch Air Force (RNLAf) Chinook CH-47Ds from Task Force Orange.

By February 3, the first three RAF Chinooks had begun preliminary operations. By February 17, they were under-

taking full time tasking in support of UK troops building Camp Bastion along with tasking in support of the Canadian led multi-national brigade. This multi-national tasking included day and night tasking in support of multi-national forces throughout the Helmand Province. This involved troop moves and re-supply missions, including re-supplying French units at Kajaki Lake and Spin Boldar down on the Pakistan Border.

Once the 3 Para Battle Group was fully established at Camp Bastion, 1310 Flight forward based two Chinooks there, with one aircraft dedicated to the Immediate Response Team role to provide 24 hour medical evacuation and emergency response. This aircraft operates with medics and doctors from the local Field Hospital at Camp Bastion. The other aircraft is also available for local area tasking. The remain-


ing four aircraft operate from Kandahar with two available for tasking and two as operational reserves.

The Helmand region is a hostile place in terms of both environment and enemy. The Taliban and local poppy producers have already stated their intent to take down a helicopter, and intelligence has confirmed that they have the capability. Helmand is a powerbase for supporters of the deposed Taliban regime with well-established insurgent groups.

RAF Chinooks operate a mutual support regime when undertaking missions with two aircraft protecting one another. RAF Chinooks have one of the best aircraft protection systems available to counter most man-portable air defence threats with full armoured plating and are armed with both M60D and M134 Miniguns. 1310 Flight have

many years of experience in operating in these types of hostile regions, and they pride themselves on using intelligence, initiative and tactical skills to minimise any perceived threats.

Group Captain Sean Reynolds, the Chinook Station Commander at RAF Odiham, stated "Prelim Operations have gone very well and have set the conditions for the main force to hit the ground running. The Chinook crews are very familiar with this theatre of operations and are well prepared for the demanding challenge it presents." 2 Flights from 18 Sqn and 3 Flights from 27 Sqn will roulement under the banner of 1310 Flight for what is expected to be a 3-year enduring operation. ■



An RAF Chinook is seen delivering urgently needed supplies to French Special Forces troops at Kajaki Lake in the mountains northwest of Kandahar.



Blue Berets in Afghanistan

By COL Massimo Giraudo, Public Information Officer
1st Antares Regiment

PHOTO: 1ST ANTARES REGIMENT

The CH-47 “Chinook” helicopters of the “Eracle” task force have been operating under difficult conditions in Afghanistan since August 24, 2005.

The three CH-47s come from the 1st “Antares” Regiment, based in Viterbo near Rome, and are essential for the maneuverability of the Kabul Multi-National Brigade (KMNB VIII) — under Italian command since July 20 (BG Claudio Graziano). Within the framework of the NATO ISAF mission (International Security Assistance Force), the brigade’s aim is to support the process of consolidating Afghan institutions.

For previous operations abroad, the Chinooks always reached their destination either on board ships or under their own power (e.g., flying from Italy to Kosovo or Albania). This time, for Afghanistan, there was a whole new set of problems, so it was decided to fly the Chinooks there using the vast cargo space of the Antonov A127 transport plane. This was the first time that the Chinooks had reached their operational area transported inside a cargo plane — a task which required dismantling the rotors and tail assemblies.

The “Eracle” task force was initially deployed at the Forward Support Base in Herat, for a period of time around 18 September 2005 (when parliamentary elections were held in Italy). Immediately afterwards, they were redeployed to Kabul international airport to support the Kabul Multi-national Brigade (KMNB) under ISAF.

The task force personnel all come from the only Italian unit equipped with Chinooks — the 1st Regiment AVES “Antares” based in Viterbo. Thanks to these helicopters, this regiment has gained considerable experience in operating abroad, including Somalia, Mozambique, Kurdistan, Namibia, Albania, Kosovo, followed by Iraq (where they stayed until they moved to Afghanistan last year).

Choosing Chinooks for operations in a hostile, mountainous area like Afghanistan is linked to the fact that their high-altitude performance ensures safe conduct of all missions with a sufficient margin of safety. The rarefied mountain air, the low temperature and the task of carrying heavy payloads, make the Chinooks the ideal means of transport for this part of the world, thanks to their reserve of power and their high level of safety.

Beneath the snow-clad heights of the Hindu Kush, narrow valleys lead to the ancient Jam minarets. The men of the task force have been operating here since late October in the area of KMNB's responsibility, in a state of permanent readiness for the following types of missions:

- Quick reaction force;
- Quick reaction alert;
- Mass casualty evacuation;
- Transport of troops and materials;
- Transport with payloads inside or suspended;
- Transport and evacuation of non-Afghan personnel.

The presence of the Italian Chinooks was especially important during a rescue operation for a Dutch helicopter which had made a forced landing for technical reasons in a mountainous area at an altitude of well over 4,000 meters.

In recent months, the Italian helicopters have taken part in many operational activities, carrying out more than 200 missions with more than 220 flying hours. Overall, they have transported more than 3,200 members of ISAF as well as 800 troops who have had the chance to practice operational procedures for helicopter boarding and de-boarding. At the same time, they have carried almost 100 tons of materials.

Last month, the "Eracle" task force was involved in joint training activities with several other countries from the multinational group operating as "quick reaction forces."

The aim of this specific training program was to improve interoperability of units and reduce reaction times. It culminated in flight operations involving several platoons, together with their tactical vehicles loaded in the hold or suspended.

The versatility of the Chinook is such that it can transport 33 fully equipped troops, or it can load two vehicles in the hold, or external payloads suspended from three hooks, for a total of over 9 tons.

The CH-47 Chinook helicopter came into service with the US armed forces in 1962. This year, the manufacturer, Boeing, rolled out the first example of the new version, the CH-47F. After 43 years, this splendid helicopter still leads the field in the heavy category and is not only going strong but also entering a new phase in life.

The Italian Army first used the CH-47C in the Turkey-Iraq area (Kurdistan) in 1991 for the "Airone" mission, followed by Somalia in 1993, then Mozambique, Albania, Kosovo, Iraq and now Afghanistan.

Currently, Chinooks are used by the armed forces of the United States, Italy, UK, Spain, Japan, Australia, South Korea and Holland, to name just the main users. The helicopters are the D version (which the USA will replace with the F version). By 2022, Boeing plans to produce 513 F and G versions, including new and reconfigured models of existing versions.

The frequent missions that the CH 47s and the crews of the "Eracle" task force are making testify to their unrivaled contribution in achieving the aims of their demanding task.

The ongoing and unstinting efforts of the crews in all their activities, both for training and operational purposes, clearly show the exceptional human and professional qualities that distinguish these "blue berets." ■



Dutch SFIR mission owes success to Chinook CH-47D

By Harald Boersma, Publicis Consultants Van Sluis



Chinook - the only certainty in desert conflict.

During a 12-month mission in the desert of the southern Iraqi province of Al Muthana, Chinook CH-47D helicopters once again proved to be of immeasurable value to the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAF). As part of the Stabilization Force Iraq (SFIR), three Chinooks of the 298 Squadron were deployed for Medical Evacuation (MedEvac) and logistical missions. Looking back, the Chinook crews underline how smoothly the operations proceeded. They do however vividly remember how a number of emergencies demanded a maximum effort of them as well as the helicopters.

The 298 Squadron of the RNLAF is stationed at the Soesterberg Air Base in the Netherlands. Its 11 Chinook CH-47D helicopters have been deployed in conflict zones across the globe, including Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Bosnia, Iraq and Afghanistan. The squadron's main tasks involve the transport of troops and cargo as well as MedEvacs and combat support. The Dutch Chinooks are all equipped with the state-of-the-art Glass Cockpit, consisting of a fully digitalized instrument panel. Looking back at the SFIR mission, which took place between July 2003 and July 2004, commander of the 298 Squadron LTC Bart Hoitink, loadmaster SGM Fons Meijers and pilot CPT Michiel Dekkers can't imagine how any mission could be successful without "their" helicopter.

"Our mission in Iraq started right after the war was officially declared 'over' in July 2003" says Dekkers. "While the ultimate goal was to help stabilize the province of Al Muthana in order to eventually rebuild it, our main focus was on transporting Dutch troops needing medical attention. The extreme weather conditions and many unexpected events made our daily operations extraordinarily challenging."

Doing what's best, not just what's expected

While the Chinooks were being shipped from the Netherlands to Kuwait for assembly, Dekkers and Meijers set out to prepare the Tallil Air Base in Al Muthanna, Iraq, for the arrival of the helicopters and the rest of the 100 RNLAF troops. Meijers: "It took us three weeks to build up our Operations Area at Tallil, a base that we shared with the Italians and the Americans. Once the infrastructure was ready, we went to Kuwait to pick up the Chinooks." The following two weeks were set aside for test flights and exploration of the surroundings. Sooner than expected, however, more serious business emerged. Only four days after arrival of the Chinooks, the first night flight turned out to be a MedEvac flight. Dekkers: "A 14-year-old Iraqi girl with severe second and third degree burns was brought into a field hospital of Dutch marines in As Samawah.

In order to give her a better chance of survival we were asked to take her to a better equipped hospital. In situations like that improvising and being flexible can make the difference between life and death. Even though it didn't fall within our responsibilities, we decided to do everything humanly possible to save her. In this case, this meant taking her to an Intensive Care unit in Tallil. Sadly, she died three days after we brought her in. It turned out that not even in a specialized Western hospital would she have had a chance of survival. Naturally the news came as a shock to us, but we also felt proud to have been involved in an attempt to really make a difference: trying to save an innocent girl's life!

Flying with brains

Three months later, the 298 Squadron was called upon by the British division commander, after the head office of the Italian military police was hit by a truck bomb attack in nearby Nasiriya, killing 14 Italians and 8 Iraqis. Meijers remembers how panic and chaos dominated the scene: "The blast was of such magnitude, that we could physically feel it at our base. When we arrived at the scene, we were asked to prepare our MedEvac Chinook for transporting no fewer than eight severely wounded. Once we got to work, the number of victims we were to transport dropped to two, and finally to one Italian. During transport to a British hospital in Basra, we had to be extremely careful. Flying too high and too fast could have caused additional injuries to the victim. Flying too low might have endangered the entire crew as well as the victim by bringing us all in reach of potentially hostile troops on the ground.

As a loadmaster, I had to constantly communicate with the onboard physician and with the captain to determine how fast and how high we should fly. The only thing we were sure about was the reliability of the Chinook.

Other than that, our job was all about human decisions about the lives of people. We got the injured Italian to the hospital in Basra, from which he was later flown home to Italy, where he died weeks later in the company of his relatives."

Indispensable tool

Commander Bart Hoitink reflects: "Experiences like these make a lasting impression on the crewmembers. They have had to deal with situations that are difficult to train for. Nonetheless, we all believe our mission in Iraq has been relatively safe and very successful. The Chinook helicopters once again played a major part in that success. In crisis situations the reliability of these helicopters, combined with their adaptability to various climate and altitudinal conditions, makes an enormous difference. The Chinook's specific qualifications make it an indispensable support tool in modern warfare."

Too successful?

The intensive deployment of its 11 Chinook CH-47D helicopters over the past 10 years, has provided the 298 Squadron of the RNLAf with an unusual problem. The popularity of the helicopters in international crisis and relief missions has put such a strain on the squadron's staff, that a substantial number of new recruits and new Chinooks are needed to maintain the squadron's high level of service. Before 2010, the RNLAf aims to increase the 298 Squadron fleet from 11 to 17, and maybe 20 Chinooks and from 100 to 175 personnel. ■



RECOVERY

Cav aircraft recovery team helps certify Chinook recovery system

Soldiers from the 1st Air Cavalry Brigade's 615th Aviation Support Battalion have been working with the Army's Aviation Systems Project, the Cargo Project Office and the Aviation Ground Support Equipment Product Management Office to test and certify a system that will allow a CH-47 Chinook to carry other Chinooks.

The Unit Maintenance Aerial Recovery Kit provides aviation maintenance units the ability to quickly rig battle-damaged, non-flyable, crash damaged, or aircraft undergoing maintenance for airlift evacuation. The system is currently certified for AH-64 Apaches, UH-60 Blackhawks, UH-1 Iroquois, OH-58 Kiowa Warriors and AH-1 Cobras.

"The UMARK provides Army units the tools and procedures to quickly rig an aircraft, in less than 30 minutes, for aerial recovery, thereby limiting the soldier's exposure to unnecessary danger by spending time to provide security, conduct damage assessment and performing maintenance," said MAJ Matt Hannah, assistant product manager for the Aviation Ground Support Equipment Product Management Office.

In January, six troopers from the 1st Cavalry Division's 615th ASB Downed Aircraft Aircrew Recovery Team prepared for the test by conducting rigging check-out procedures at Fort Eustis, Va.

The DAART has two options when rigging a Chinook, a two-point or a four-point configuration, Hannah said. Both methods use a dual hook configuration on the lifting CH-47. The decision on which method to use is based on the integrity of the Chinook's two pylons and transmissions, Hannah said.

While at Eustis, the Cav soldiers practiced rigging a Chinook in day, night, chemical and cold weather conditions using both the two-point and four-point methods with an average time of 11 minutes in each set of conditions.

The 615th ASB later participated in the CH-47 aerial recovery certification test March 27-31, in San Angelo, Texas along with more than a dozen other organizations. The test evaluated the flightworthiness of the UMARK to safely conduct an aerial recovery of a CH-47D using both the two-point and four-point rigging methods.

"Although the UMARK components have been in use by operational units for three years, this was the first time the UMARK CH-47 configuration was used," Hannah said. "All previous CH-47 efforts with the UMARK were limited to analysis, studies and modeling and simulation."

Hannah said the 1st Cav DAART held steady through the strong rotor wash and blowing dirt to make the hook-up.

"The results for both tests provided excellent data," said Hannah. "The team will spend the next few weeks analyzing the data to determine the safe parameters, but initial indications suggest that the Army will certify the UMARK to aerial recover a CH-47 by July 1." ■

A CH-47 Chinook carries another Chinook using a two point recovery system during testing of the Unit Maintenance Aerial Recovery Kit.

4th Infantry Division News

CAB CHINOOKS SUSTAIN THE FORCE

By Sgt. 1st Class Reginald Rogers, CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

For soldiers on the front lines in Iraq, the need for supplies and materiel is critical for sustaining a force deployed over 17,000 square miles.

The 4th Infantry Division's Combat Aviation Brigade CH-47 Chinook helicopters have become a major factor in ensuring repair parts, mail and other much-needed materiel reach its intended destinations.

To date, CAB aircraft have delivered more than 7.7 million pounds of cargo and more than 60,800 passengers to locations throughout Iraq since taking over Multi-National Division — Baghdad's aviation mission four months ago. Of these passengers, more than 40,000 have traveled aboard the brigade's CH-47 Chinooks.

The Chinooks are assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, and have been solely responsible for bringing a heavy-lift capability to the fight. Because the Chinook pilots have flown more than 2,000 hours and delivered more than 3,800 tons of materiel, Coalition Forces have been able to keep more than 1,400 trucks off the roadways.

"I'm really proud because of the number of people we keep off the road. It's as important as any other mission," explained CW2 Brent Byington, pilot, 2-4 Avn. Regt. "We know we're keeping those people off the roads."

Byington said he realizes the importance of their mission, but added loading the pallets, which can weigh as much as 7,000 pounds, is a difficult aspect of his job.

According to SGT Marc Lamontagne, crew chief, 2-4 Avn. Regt., the various missions include different types of supplies and, on many occasions, travel to various forward operating bases throughout Iraq.

Byington said flying has its advantages — but like most deployed soldiers, he said he misses one aspect about not being on the ground.

"When I fly, there are some neat things out here in Baghdad," he said. "I miss that I'm not actually getting to see (the culture) of Iraq." ■



CAMP TAJI, Iraq - CW2 Brent Byington, CH-47 Chinook helicopter pilot assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, runs through pre-flight procedures before taking off on a mission here April 17.

For 6th Battalion pilots, crew chief, nothing beats an air assault

Story and photos by SGT Ryan Matson, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade

The six 350-pound rotor blades sliced through the Iraqi winter air, producing the distinctive thunderous thud of the CH-47D Chinook cargo helicopter. The helicopter slowly touched down, back wheels first and then the nose, before coming to a rest on its section of the flight line on Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq. For the crew of five soldiers from 6th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, it is the end of a 12-plus hour workday, and another successful Air Assault mission Feb. 17.

In the wee hours of the morning, the soldiers, flying in one of the Chinooks on the mission, had inserted teams of American soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team and Iraqi Army to capture a suspected insurgent financier in the Samarra area. Several hours later, in the daylight, after the area was secure, the Chinooks swept back down and picked up the soldiers, who were not able to capture the suspected financier on this mission, but returned with some valuable information for future missions. The 101st Airborne Division, which 6th Battalion, 101st CAB is a part of, is the only Air Assault division in the Army, and the Air Assault is the division's signature mission.

For the crew of Aviation soldiers from Company B, 6th Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade on board the Chinook, flying an Air Assault mission is often the highpoint of flying in Iraq.

Hackney is a crew chief on the Chinook. He works together with a second crew chief, a flight engineer, co-pilot and a pilot to make the missions happen. While the pilots flew the troops in, the two crew chiefs and flight engineer acted as the eyes and ears of the aircraft, scanning the areas the pilots can't see out of the cockpit windshield, and protecting the Chinook and its passengers with M240 H machine guns mounted on the side doors and rear ramp of the helicopter. Hackney said he typically mans the rear gun, where he can view the Iraqi countryside for miles around from a couple hundred feet in the air. He scans for enemy activity on the ground, for aircraft in the sky entering the immediate airspace, and any other

things that could interfere with the flight of the massive helicopter, which weighs more than 30,000 pounds with fuel and a crew. When he isn't flying in the Chinook, Hackney, the other crew chief and flight engineer, are out maintaining it, or conducting pre or post flight inspections. This often means long days, day in and day out for the crew, but Hackney said that doesn't bother him at all.

"This is my aircraft — I keep it up, keep it flying, keep it clean, as much as I can. That aircraft reflects who I am," Hackney said. "The helicopter itself just has me, the crew chief and a flight engineer — we're pretty much the maintainers of it. The pilots rotate in and out."

One of these pilots is CW2 Bobby Sattazahn, who served as the co-pilot on the Air Assault. As with Hackney, he said it is his favorite type of mission to fly.

"I love the look on the soldiers faces when they're all excited on an Air Assault mission," Sattazahn said. "The adrenaline rush is there. Just being able to contribute and be a combat multiplier is what it's all about."

Sattazahn, who is from Manheim, Pa., has been a Chinook pilot since May 2004, but has been in the Army since 1990, having worked in the psychological operations branch prior to that. Like most Chinook pilots, he said he is in love with the aircraft he flies. The Chinook is an older aircraft, having been in use since the Vietnam era, but Sattazahn said it still holds up against any of the more modern models.

"I think the Chinook is very important to the mission, because we are a key ingredient to our maneuverability, not just on Air Assaults but in the overall mission," he said. "The capabilities of our aircraft are tremendous, whether it's sling-loading HMMWVs, or it might be carrying rockets (conducting resupply) to help re-arm the Kiowas and Apache helicopters — we can put almost anything inside this thing. We can even put a HMMWV on the inside and carry one underneath."

While both soldiers agreed that the Air Assault missions are a favorite to fly, Sattazahn said that the unit's primary mission is battlefield circulation, meaning transporting soldiers from one place to another throughout Iraq. The Chinooks fly a mission known as the Eagle Express, where they take people to the various U.S. military locations in the country. For this, the Chinook, which is designed to transport up to 44 troops, is the ideal aircraft for the mission. In fact, Sattazahn said the spaciousness of the aircraft is another thing he enjoys about Chinooks.

"When it's time to deploy with your aircraft the amount of space inside enables us to bring everything we could possibly need," Sattazahn said. "The other airframes have to use Conexes (metal container) to haul all their equipment. When we go to the field, there's that old joke that if you smell a barbecue in the field, it's probably the Chinook unit, because we have room for the grill!!!"

Our motto is, there's always room for one more. When we fly around at night, we pick up a lot of passengers who are space available."

Both soldiers said they miss their families and are eager to return home. Sattazahn and his wife have six children, four boys and two girls. While they are here, though, the soldiers are getting an aerial view of a changing Iraq.

"It's great, we fly at day fly at night — we get to see the people on the ground and everybody's waving, all that kind of stuff," Hackney said.

Flying the Iraqi Army on missions is also a good experience, he added. "It's just great to see that the Iraqis out there helping us and being a part of it all," he said. "I know there are some bad ones out there, but there are probably twice as many good ones." ■





Operation Iron Triangle

shuts down insurgent training camp

By Patrick Allen

Iraqi army and U.S. soldiers raided a suspected insurgent training camp during Operation Iron Triangle near Lake Thar Thar, southwest of Tikrit May 9.

Nearly 200 soldiers from 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, and approximately 230 soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division's 3rd Brigade Combat Team air assaulted from CH-47 Chinook and UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters into the suspected camp after intelligence sources pin-pointed the location as being the Muthana Chemical Complex.

The 150-square kilometer complex was a chemical production facility that was closed by the United Nations after the fall of the former regime.

"Insurgents were coming here to train, conduct link-up operations, and moving out to attack coalition

forces," said CPT Andrew Graham, assistant plans and operations officer, 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment.

The combined three-day operation netted more than 200 suspected insurgents.

"We have been finding evidence that this place has been used to train insurgents," Graham said. "We conducted a detailed search, detained suspicious individuals, and [used] the intelligence that we got from them, which resulted in follow-on operations on day two."

Searches yielded propaganda materials, rifles and videos.

Iraqi soldiers also gathered names of potential threats from the detainees nabbed during the operation.

"We have found some smaller caches and have captured more than 10 men who we found to be part of Tahiwed and Jihad [insurgent groups]," said LTC Musab Josif, 1st Bn., 1st Bde., 4th IA Div. "The best thing we had during the mission is good cooperation between the Iraqi and American soldiers. They worked together as one team."

The partnership between Iraqi Army and coalition forces was one of the many successes of the mission.

"The Iraqi Army is becoming more and more competent in the planning and execution of missions," Graham said. "In regards to that, they are very capable of doing their own tactical operations and reacting to intelligence." ■

TIKRIT, Iraq (Army News Service, May 15, 2006)
A Chinook flies in a vehicle in support of Operation Iron Triangle.
Approximately 80 vehicles were used during the mission.

Afghan Army, coalition celebrate bridge opening

Story and photos by SGT Cain S. Claxton, USAF,

The provincial governor and the commander of the coalition's military task force joined local citizens here May 29 in celebrating the opening of a new bridge across the Helmand River.

About 250 Afghans from nearby villages were in attendance as provincial Gov. Abdul Hakim Monib and Army MG Benjamin Freakley, commander of Combined Joint Task Force 76, officially opened the 120-foot steel bridge. GEN Rahmutullah Raufi, commander of the Afghan National Army 205th Corps, and other Afghan national security force officials also attended.

The Helmand River has been a natural barrier cutting off much of northern and western Uruzgan from Kandahar and other avenues of regional commerce and development. Before the bridge was completed May 26, transit across the river was limited mostly to a few ferry services. Future road improvements and possible other bridge projects will make travel into and throughout the Afghanistan interior more manageable for Afghans.

Construction of the actual bridge took only two days, but it took nearly 200 villagers more than a month to build a pair of 30-foot abutments from the river's edge so the bridge could span the swollen river.

The bridge construction presented a challenge to logistics planners, according to a coalition engineer. "We had no real road access here, no equipment," said the coalition engineer.

"We had to hire 212 Afghan workers and four tractors to comb the countryside for rocks, cart them here and unload them."

Once the abutments were finished, Afghan soldiers and coalition engineers quickly built the bridge, joining together hundreds of heavy steel parts.

The coalition trained the Afghan army engineers how to build the bridge in Tarin Khowt, Uruzgan's capital, in late April and early May. From there, CH-47 Chinook helicopters lifted the bridge pieces over steep mountain passes to the construction site. It took 25 trips over 10 days to transport all the bridge components.

"The training was phenomenal," the coalition engineer said about preparations with the 205th Corps, which has its headquarters in Kandahar. "[ANA engineers] pick up things so fast. They are good workers. I am really pleased with their performance."

The ANA engineers have built the Tarin Khowt-Kandahar highway, several schools, mosques and health facilities as well as mosques in Kandahar and other southern Afghan provinces.

"For 30 years there was fighting in Afghanistan," said Amirullah, the ANA engineer company commander. "There remained no schools, no hospitals. Now we are doing great things for my country. I feel very good about what my men are doing."

Monib promised more improvements to infrastructure in the region here, but asked in return for the village elders to promote peaceful cooperation with the coalition and Afghan government.

The region here has historical ties to the Taliban and has served as a sanctuary for Taliban hardliners for years. On May 19, Taliban extremists attacked a joint Afghan and American military convoy just four kilometers from the bridge site.

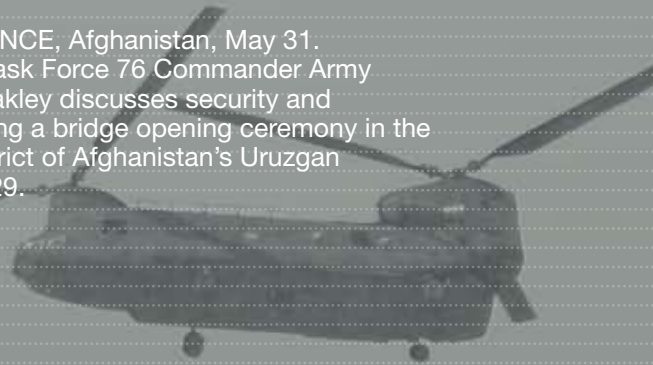
"Because of the building of this bridge, hopefully the people of Cahar Chineh will help bring peace to Uruzgan," Monib said. "I invite the Taliban to come and join us for the peace process ... for a better Afghanistan. Fighting is not the way to make Afghanistan better."

"We hope that you will take the words of the governor to heart and that you will all work together for peace and security in Uruzgan province," Freakley said. "We look forward to working more road projects and other necessities — clinics and police stations ... whatever the governor wants, as we have security in this area."

(Army SGT Cain S. Claxton is assigned to Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force Afghanistan.) ■



URUZGAN PROVINCE, Afghanistan, May 31. Combined Joint Task Force 76 Commander Army MG Benjamin Freakley discusses security and infrastructure during a bridge opening ceremony in the Cahar Chineh district of Afghanistan's Uruzgan province on May 29.



CAB Chinooks

keep trucks, personnel off

Crews “preserve democracy one pallet at a time”

By SPC Creighton Holub, CAB PAO, 4th Inf. Div.

Although the Combat Aviation Brigade’s Chinook helicopters fly every night, perhaps one of the key benefits of their mission is fewer convoys rolling off the forward operating bases throughout Multi-National Division — Baghdad’s area of operation.

The nightly flights have kept an estimated 3,000 trucks and more than 7,000 soldiers off the roads of Baghdad.

“We’re preserving democracy one pallet at a time,” said CW2 Phillip Lopez, a Chinook pilot from Patterson, La., assigned to Company B, 2nd Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, MND-B. “Once we started doing this mission, they started seeing the numbers of folks on the road dwindle. As a unit, we can move them faster than they can on the ground — and it saves lives without having civilians and military folks on the ground. In a night, we can move several trucks-worth of pallets back and forth.”

The Chinooks move an average of 40 pallets every night around the MND-B area. The brigade has transported more than 7,679 tons of equipment.

The Chinook crews work closely with soldiers from the division’s Sustainment Brigade in getting equipment and supplies to where they are needed within the MND-B area of operations. soldiers who would normally drive trucks to deliver the valued equipment said they are pleased with the efforts of the Chinook crews.

“I feel a whole lot safer,” said SGT Marcus Hargrave, a motor transport operator who is on his second deployment to Iraq and is assigned to the 155th Cargo Transport Company. Instead of driving humvees and “deuce-and-halves” on convoy missions, Hargrave said his job now consists of driving forklifts and humvees on Camp Taji. “I don’t have to worry about improvised-explosive devices or anything like that. As long as we’re not on the road we’re good. I think there’s a lot less people getting injured and killed.”

Although the helicopters are immune to the dangers of roadside bombs, they battle a different type of threat in the air.

“There is still risk involved,” Lopez added. “The advantage of flying is that we’re not out there on the road and not seeing the implanted IEDs. We have more maneuverability; we’re not fixed on a road; we can alter our path to whatever you need to do in the air. It makes us a lot harder target than a convoy.”

Not only does the Iron Eagle Brigade keep fewer convoys from having to roll, it also moves the equipment and personnel faster and safer due to the Chinook’s speed, aerial abilities and countermeasures emplaced to protect the crews and passengers. ■

perilous roads



CAB Chinooks



A crew chief assigned to the Company B, 2nd Battalion, 4th Aviation Regiment, Combat Aviation Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, guides a Sustainment Brigade forklift operator toward a Chinook during pallet loading operations here July 14. The missions flown by the Chinook teams help lower the number of convoys needed to move equipment and personnel in and around the Baghdad area.



A Chinook crew chief gives visual directions to a forklift operator while loading the helicopter with pallets using a new roller tines system. The roller tines system makes the pallets roll into the aircraft easier and keeps the tail ramp from being damaged during load operations, whereas in the past, it would have made contact with the ground.



Photo: Dan Peck

Chinook Program Managers Honored with Order of St. Michael

By Donna McGinley

Jack Dougherty, director of Chinook programs, and Ken Eland, Chinook program manager, were inducted into the Honorable Order of St. Michael and presented with Bronze medals, at a CH-47F rollout dinner in June. The medals, presented by COL Tim Crosby, U.S. Army Cargo Helicopters program manager, are given to individuals who embody qualities of courage, justice and gallantry and who represent excellence in aviation.

“Jack was instrumental in development and production of the Army’s newest heavy-lift cargo helicopter ... the CH-47 Improved Cargo Helicopter. As a result of his efforts, the CH-47F/ICH has become the ‘aircraft of choice in the war on terrorism.’

His dedication and professionalism have significantly enhanced the U.S. Army Aviation abilities and left a lasting impact on aviation transformation and support,” said COL Crosby.

As a key player in the development, production and delivery of the U.S. Army’s CH-47F Tandem Rotor Helicopter programs, Ken Eland was responsible for the aircraft’s configuration, schedule and funding requirements. His leadership was critical to the formation of teams that accomplished the incorporation of a newly designed machined airframe structure, a full glass cockpit and a new Digital Automatic Flight Control System for the CH-47F Chinook, which led to the most sophisticated capability for the U.S. Army today. ■



1st Aviation Regiment, Antares, celebrates anniversary

The 1st Aviation Regiment, Antares, the Special Italian Army Corps that operates the Chinooks, celebrated its 30th anniversary recently in Viterbo, Italy. ■

The RAF Chinook — 25 years of Chinook Operations

Story and photos by
Patrick Allen



On 27 July 2006, the Royal Air Force (RAF) celebrated twenty-five years of Chinook operations flying in excess of 252,500 fleet hours. In June 2006, Wing Commander Steve Shell RAF, OC No 27 Squadron flew the 250,000 hour. During this period, the RAF Chinook has been involved in almost every British military operation, both conventional and non-conventional, starting with the Falklands War in April 1982, and is operational today in Afghanistan.

The first of an initial five RAF Chinook HC Mk1s arrived in the UK on 31 October 1980. Chinook ZA670 was shipped to A&AEE Boscombe Down (now QinetiQ) for system trials and certificate of airworthiness release trials before being handed over to the RAF. On 22 November 1980, RAF Chinook HC Mk 1 (ZA671) arrived at RAF Odiham flown by Squadron Leader Dickey Forsyth and Boeing Chief Test Pilot Ron Mecklin. These initial four aircraft were used by No 240 Operational Conversion Unit to conduct pilot conversion training at RAF Odiham and on 4 August 1981 No 18(B) Squadron was reformed as the first operational RAF Chinook Squadron, followed by No 7 Squadron in 1982. Chinooks ZA670 and ZA671 are still operational today, having been updated to the RAF Chinook HC Mk 2 in 1994.

The most famous RAF Chinook, serial number, ZA718, known by its original 18 Squadron code as *Bravo November*, began the RAF Chinooks enviable combat reputation during the Falklands War. This aircraft has seen action in every major operation the

RAF has been involved in throughout the helicopter's 25-year service life. During the last 25 years the RAF has expanded the operational roles and capabilities of this already extremely capable aircraft, and they remain the highest military rate user of the Chinook world-wide, beating the U.S. Army, which is the largest fleet operator of the Chinook.

The RAF Chinook Wing, now part of the UK's Joint Helicopter Command is home based at RAF Odiham, Hampshire, and today operates a fleet of 40 aircraft. These are split into three operational Squadrons.

No 7 Squadron part of the UK's Special Forces Air Wing, and Nos 18 and 27 Squadrons who undertake the heavy-lift and battlefield support helicopter role for the UK military, including supporting the Royal Navy and Royal Marines as part of their embarked Tailored Air Groups operating from various Royal Navy ships including HMS *Ocean*.

Initially operating a fleet of 41 Chinook HC Mk1s (Boeing CH-47C) variants (33 Chinooks were ordered in 1978 with delivery starting in 1980 (ZA670-ZA721) plus a further eight ordered in 1984 (ZD574-ZD576 and ZD980-ZD984) as attrition replacements for those lost on the MV *Atlantic Conveyor* during the Falklands War). By 1990 the RAF Chinook fleet had flown over 60,000 hours.

In 1992 the entire RAF Chinook fleet began a mid-life update to the HC Mk2 standard (CH-47D) with the first RAF Chinook HC Mk2 (ZA681)

returning to RAF Odiham on 10 September 1993. In March 1995, the UK Ministry of Defence ordered additional Chinooks, eight of which were the Chinook HC3, plus three HC Mk2s and six HC Mk2As.

Afghanistan 2006

Having operated in all the UK's major military operations, including both Gulf wars, Kurdistan 1991, Balkans, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc., an initial six RAF Chinooks from No1310 Flight arrived back in Afghanistan in late February 2006 in support of Operation Herrick: the British-led International Security Assistance Force operating in Helmand Province, Southern Afghanistan.

As with other theatres of operations, the Chinook has proved to be indispensable to military operations in the region. An under estimate in the tempo of operations in the area has seen the Chinooks operating almost constantly, undertaking a variety of roles from urgent re-supplies to deploying Quick Reaction Forces throughout the area of operations. The ability of the Chinook to operate in high temperatures, their speed, and lift capability has already being exploited by ground commanders in the region. Over the past 25 years this has been a common theme whenever and wherever the Chinook has been involved in any UK military operations.

The aircraft's formidable operational capabilities combined with the RAF aircrews and engineers who keep them operational, whatever the environment, will make the RAF Chinook Wing busy for the next 25 years. ■



PHOTO: JASON BARRAS

Discovery Military Channel features Chinook helicopter

By Donna McGinley

The Chinook production line at Rotorcraft Systems in Philadelphia was featured in a broadcast of the Discovery Military Channel titled, *GI Factory*. In the Chinook segment, show host Kelly Perdew, 2004 winner of NBC's *The Apprentice*, conducted a video tour of the Chinook factory. The Discovery Channel crew gathered shop floor footage and included interviews with program managers and employees working on the production line of the new CH-47F. Also included was recent film of the Chinook's mission performance in Pakistan and Iraq.

The program is a new series that examines how various military technologies, such as gears, aircraft and weapons are manufactured for the needs of America's fighting forces. Interviews with the designers who create the product, engineers who test it before it goes into battle, and hardworking folks on the factory floor who craft, shape, weld and hammer raw materials into battle-ready systems give credit to those who are involved in the process from start to finish. "It was awesome to see the pride and professionalism displayed here," said Perdew, a former U.S. Army military intelligence officer who completed Airborne and Ranger training. "I was impressed with the size, the activity and the history of the site." ■

Boeing offers lifetime support for UK CH-47s

By Brad Mudd

Boeing is working to increase the availability and lifespan of the United Kingdom's fleet of CH-47 Chinook helicopters through a new, long-term partnership with the Ministry of Defence.

The Through Life Customer Support program for the UK fleet of 40 MK2/MK2a Chinook heavy transport helicopters began on May 22. During the next 34 years, Boeing will be responsible for performing most maintenance on the helicopters away from the field. Boeing also will provide technical support and field and engineering services for the fleet. The program is expected to save the United Kingdom at least \$295 million. The first five years of the program are worth \$360 million to Boeing.

Boeing's responsibility is to ensure that an agreed number of aircraft are available for operations at all times. UK employees will staff about two-thirds of the program, and most suppliers will be from the United Kingdom. Boeing engineers who have experience with the helicopter will be located with the fleet and linked up with the Philadelphia-based Chinook program.

This performance-based logistics contract is one of a new generation of MOD contracts that combines support efforts into one partnership with industry. "In the past, several small contracts covered the wide range of support for a single UK weapons platform," said Group CPT Mark Sibley, Chinook Integrated Product Team leader with the Defence Logistics Organisation.

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COL Newman Shufflebarger new Project Manager, Cargo Helicopter

By Kim Henry

Redstone Arsenal, Ala. — COL Newman Shufflebarger is the new project manager for Cargo Helicopter within the Program Executive Office, Aviation. Shufflebarger assumed the project manager's position from COL Tim Crosby in a ceremony at Redstone Arsenal on August 24.

The Cargo Helicopter Project Office provides life cycle management of the CH-47D and the new CH-47F Chinook helicopters.

Shufflebarger was previously assigned as Military Assistant to the Under Secretary of Defense Acquisition, Technology, & Logistics, for both Michael Wynne and Kenneth Krieg at the Pentagon.

Crosby will continue to work for the Program Executive Office, Aviation. ■



LTC Thomas Todd new Product Manager, CH-47F Improved Cargo Helicopter

By Kim Henry

Redstone Arsenal, Ala.— Lt. Col. Thomas Todd is the new product manager for CH-47F Improved Cargo Helicopter within the Program Executive Office, Aviation. Todd assumed the product manager's position from LTC Anthony Pelczynski in a ceremony at Redstone Arsenal on June 20.

The Improved Cargo Helicopter product office will provide life cycle management of the new CH-47F Chinook helicopter.

Todd was previously assigned as assistant product manager for Air Warrior where he developed, integrated, tested, deployed and fielded numerous soldier systems to U.S. Army aircrews in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Pelczynski will work for the U.S. Army International Technology Center in Bonn, Germany. ■

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“Trying to coordinate those contracts was difficult, but most importantly, it was not providing the most efficient support to our frontline troops,” Sibley said. “With [the new contract] we have built a support regime that focuses on reducing throughlife costs while improving, or at least maintaining, our operational capability.”

UK military personnel will still perform first-line maintenance in the field, but Boeing people will oversee all other, more intensive work. The partnership does not include engine maintenance, work on U.K. common avionics or training, but those may be added in the future.

The program has the short-term goal of keeping UK Chinooks available for operations. Long term, the partnership aims to extend the life of the fleet to 2040.

“With TLCS we have a long-term partnership and we both have the same goals,” Sibley said. “We will work together to see how we can reduce the cost of support and increase the operational effectiveness of this aircraft.

Every aspect of the operation and support of the aircraft is fair game to be challenged to identify improvements and efficiencies. There are no sacred cows.”

James O’Loughlin, director for the UK TLCS program for Boeing, said much of the early work has focused on ensuring that warfighters in the field did not see a drop in availability when the program started on May 22. “They have Chinooks deployed right now to Afghanistan and Iraq, so it has been important that we perform well to keep those helicopters supported in the field,” he said.

The UK TLCS program demonstrates the ability of Support Systems, an IDS business center, to work with an existing platform, maintain availability, lower cost and extend the life of equipment. “I believe our work on the TLCS program will be of great interest to other countries flying the Chinook helicopter, helping us grow in this market,” said Peri Widener, Army Integrated Logistics Support Programs executive for Boeing. ■

CHINOOK OPERATIONS of NOTE



Photo: Jeremy L. Wood

Paratroopers from 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, and Iraqi troops from the 4th Iraqi Division board a CH-47 Chinook helicopter after participating in Operation Vegas, in the Samarra area.



Photo: PO3 Timothy Bensken

An MH-47 Chinook helicopter from the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment approaches the amphibious assault ship USS *Wasp* off the coast of Virginia during deck-landing qualifications.



Photo: U.S. Army Special Operations Command

A Ranger team moves toward an objective after charging off an MH-47 Chinook helicopter during a capabilities exercise at Fort Bragg, N.C.



DOD photo: MSgt. Lance Cheung, U.S. Air Force.

A U.S. Army CH-47 Chinook helicopter takes off from Ellington Field, Texas, to deliver food and water to Texas Gulf Coast residents affected by Hurricane Rita on Sept. 25, 2005. Department of Defense units are mobilized as part of Joint Task Force Rita to support the Federal Emergency Management Agency's disaster-relief efforts in the Gulf Coast areas devastated by Hurricane Rita.



Photo: PO3 Shawn Hussong

Soldiers from the 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division await air transport back to base after a successful operation in Remagen, Iraq.



Photo: PO3 Shawn Hussong

Soldiers from Company C, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division and Iraqi troops from the 4th Iraqi Army Division exit a CH-47 Chinook helicopter during Operation Swarmer, near Samarra, Iraq. The operation is the largest air assault since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

A FINAL WORD

By Tom Marinucci

As the head of the U.S. Army Cargo Helicopter Program, COL Tim Crosby wrestled with many challenges during his tenure. Program demands — balancing requirements with other Army activities; working with primary contractor, Boeing, and a vast array of suppliers and sub-contractors to orchestrate the Modernization Program; and managing change throughout the process — were complex. Nevertheless, Crosby oversaw production and delivery of the new CH-47F Chinook, and another 30-plus years of this helicopter's Army service, by insisting on one fundamental guideline — focus on the needs of the soldier.

Crosby's previous experience as CH-47F project manager gave him a unique understanding of the entire cargo helicopter program. His expertise facilitated program expansion from upgrading about two-thirds of Army Chinooks to upgrading the entire fleet, all of which will incorporate new-build fuselages instead of repaired structures.

Crosby emphasized teaming throughout the program. "No one person gets the job done," he stated flatly. He believes a leader's responsibility is to create a vision that provides direction based on many viewpoints. "It's not done in a vacuum," he said. The team partners identified requirements, goals and the paths to meet targets. "That in place, my job was to fight for the resources we needed to meet those goals. The result was a new airframe at the same cost as a remanufactured one, so the taxpayer is getting a great benefit: a new system that will let us reduce the maintenance burden on the soldiers and enhance their ability to perform their missions."

Crosby also had a reputation for accessibility. "My job was to work those great ideas brought to me by team members. If you're not accessible, you don't have exposure to what I call the 'good idea fairy.' Good ideas come from many areas, and if you are not listening to the people involved, how are you going to address the issues that come up?"

Crosby traveled perpetually, visiting Army units, vendors and suppliers. "I wanted to let the vendors know the importance of what they were doing, and a way to do that was through visits." Those visits gave Crosby instant access to issues that affected the program. "I also looked for opportunities and events to speak to the families of the folks who worked so hard for the program. I wanted those families to know what their family member was doing to contribute to our nation's freedom and that they were an integral part of that effort. The parts these people build enable this aircraft to perform important missions that save lives. The soldiers out there don't know the people who are building these components, but they know there's a great American somewhere whose contributions give them the confidence to do what needs to be done with an aircraft that performs reliably."

The colonel recently participated in a delivery ceremony at Boeing Rotorcraft Systems in suburban Philadelphia for the first production CH-47F. "The aircraft that just rolled out was the first all-machined airframe ever and the first new-build in a very long time," said Crosby. "That is attributable to the people who were involved — Boeing, the subcontractors who delivered the parts on time and everyone who was a part of the effort. It is no one person that makes it happen. It's a team."

"Not many program managers get to do what we did. We got to produce something; we got to deliver something. I've been fortunate to be in this job for five years, and I loved it." Crosby added. "I loved coming to work every single day, and I loved the people I worked with. I saw the final result, and I wanted to share that with everyone at the rollout. Everyone who contributed got to see that Cadillac of aviation sitting on the ramp and know that they were a part of it. I think it was great."

"I ask that you continue to support my replacement, COL Newman Shufflebarger," he concluded. "He's a great American, and a great soldier. Give him the same dedication you provided me, because it's ultimately for the soldiers. Let's get that first unit equipped!" ■