

Lockheed Delivers First Block 8.1 Upgrade HC-130J to Coast Guard



A Coast Guard Hercules takes off from Air Station Barbers Point, Hawaii. U.S. Coast Guard/Petty Officer 3rd Class Matthew West

ELIZABETH CITY, N.C. – Lockheed Martin representatives joined U.S. Coast Guard leaders and crew members for a ceremony on Jan. 31 at the Coast Guard Aviation Logistics Center in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, to mark the completion of operational testing of the first Coast Guard HC-130J extended-range transport outfitted with the Block 8.1 upgrade, the company said.

This upgrade was installed on a previously delivered HC-130J at Lockheed's facility in Greenville, South Carolina. The aircraft recently completed initial operational testing and will be placed into service. Lockheed is contracted to deliver a minimum of six Block 8.1 upgrade kits to the Coast Guard.

The upgrade adds new and advanced capabilities:

- A new flight-management system that complies with CNS/ATM mandates and includes vertical navigation with coupled auto throttle
- Civil GPS
- Ground power modes
- Updated Identification Friend or Foe
- CNS/ATM Data Link
- Enhanced intercommunication system
- Enhanced approach and landing systems
- Expanded diagnostics
- Improved PA system
- Additional covert lighting

- IAMSAR compliant search pattern programming

“The U.S. Coast Guard has relied on its Hercules fleet for more than 60 years to support complicated missions that ensure our nation’s safety and security,” said Peter London, director of tactical airlift programs for Lockheed’s air mobility and maritime missions business line.

“The advanced features and purpose-built design enhancements found in the Block 8.1 upgrade ensure that Coast Guard crews will rely on the HC-130J for mission support for many more decades to come.”

In addition to the Block 8.1 upgrade, the Coast Guard is also integrating Minotaur mission system architecture into its fixed-wing aircraft. Missionization includes post-production modification of new C-130J aircraft to incorporate the specialized equipment necessary to carry out Coast Guard missions.

The Coast Guard’s HC-130J Super Hercules long-range surveillance aircraft provides heavy air transport and long-range maritime patrol capability. Each aircraft can serve as an on-scene command-and-control platform or as a surveillance platform with the means to detect, classify and identify objects and share that information with operational forces.

The Coast Guard is acquiring a fleet of 22 new, fully missionized HC-130J aircraft to replace its older HC-130Hs.