

New CH-53K Simulator Ready for Training



Marine pilot Lt. Col. Lucas “Amber” Frank takes the CH-53K simulator, the Containerized Flight Training Device (CFTD), for a test drive. The Marine Corps took delivery of the CFTD in April. Naval Air Systems Command

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The H-53 heavy-lift helicopter program office has taken delivery of the first training device for the CH-53K King Stallion helicopter, according to a Naval Air Systems Command release.

Delivered April 14, the Containerized Flight Training Device (CFTD) is housed at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) New River in Jacksonville, North Carolina.

The CFTD, built by Lockheed Martin in partnership with Veraxx, provides realistic in-cockpit system displays (visual resolution, tactile, spatial, audio and functionality) and can simulate weather and tactical environments. The CFTD also can connect with other simulators for enhanced attitude control and other aircraft training scenarios.

“The CFTD is an amazingly capable training device,” said Col. Jack Perrin, CH-53 program manager. “It is a much less expensive practice than using operational equipment and provides near-aircraft fidelity into a state-of-the-art training simulator for the fleet.”

The CFTD is the first in a series of new training devices being developed for the CH-53K. All trainers will eventually be located at the Center for Naval Aviation Technology Training at MCAS New River, where all the aircraft’s aircrew and maintenance maintainers will be trained. Delivery of two other CH-53K training devices – the

Helicopter Emulation Maintenance Trainer and the Composite Maintenance Trainer – also are expected this year.

The CH-53K is completing development tests, leading to initial operational test and evaluation in 2021. First fleet deployment will be in 2023 or 2024. The simulation software continuously updates. As the program team makes necessary modifications to the CH-53K into the future, the CFTD also will change.