

US Navy transfers 10 TH-57 helicopters to Sri Lanka Air Force



Ten U.S. Navy TH-57 Sea Ranger helicopters, like the ones pictured here, are being donated to Sri Lanka under the U.S. Excess Defense Articles Program, strengthening the defense cooperation between the United States and Sri Lanka.

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NAS Patuxent River, Md. – The United States Navy recently transferred 10 TH-57 Sea Ranger helicopters to the Sri Lanka Air Force, strengthening the defense cooperation between the United States and Sri Lanka.

“The transfer of excess helicopters reflects the United States Navy’s commitment to international partnership,” said Naval Undergraduate Flight Training Systems Program Office (PMA-273) program manager Capt. Duane Whitmer. “By providing platforms

that still have significant operational value, we aim to support the Sri Lanka Air Force's ability to respond to humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and training needs while strengthening the long-standing relationship between our two nations."

The U.S. donated the TH-57s to Sri Lanka in early January at no cost for the aircraft under the U.S. Excess Defense Articles (EDA) Program. The helicopters will be used for Sri Lanka's Air Force pilot training, in its operational fleet, and for disaster response and humanitarian assistance.

"Defense cooperation is an important pillar of international relations and initiatives like the transfer of excess helicopters help build trust, interoperability and mutual understanding between partner nations," said Douglas Mankin, Naval Air Systems Command's Security Cooperation Office foreign military sales lead for the Adversary and Specialized Aircraft Program Office (PMA-226). "The United States values its relationship with Sri Lanka and remains committed to working together to promote regional stability and shared security interests."

The United States Navy used the TH-57 Sea Ranger – a military derivative of the commercial Bell Jet Ranger 206 – for pilot training since it became operational in 1968 and recently replaced the aircraft with the TH-73 Thrasher.

This initiative underscores the United States' continued commitment to supporting Sri Lanka's defense readiness, humanitarian assistance efforts and long-term regional stability. The first batch of aircraft is scheduled to arrive in Sri Lanka as early as February, with additional deliveries to follow.

[PMA-273](#) at Naval Air Station Patuxent River oversees the TH-57 and TH-73 programs. PMA-273 develops and oversees diverse and carrier-capable naval flight training systems where student

pilots and undergraduate military flight officers acquire mission-critical aviation skills necessary to carry out current and future missions of the U.S. Navy.

[PMA-226](#) at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, North Carolina, is responsible for 20 Type/Model/Series aircraft and airworthiness for upwards of 50 contractor aircraft. While the headquarters remains at Cherry Point, there are teams of acquisition professionals across the country managing the diverse portfolios of platforms and services.