

## **Lockheed Martin P-3 Orion Worldwide News Section**

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### **United States**

As reported before, VP-47 (RD) has replaced VP-4 at NAS Sigonella and at Djibouti., while Comalapa in El Salvador was also added to this deployment. The following ten Orions have been seen during the deployment of VP-4: 157331, 158224, 158563, 157567, 159322, 159329, 160287, 161767, 162314, 162778. While so far the following VP-47 Orions have been noted: 157319, 158563, 158567, 158919, 159323, 159326, 159507, 161594, 161767 and 163002. Mid July VP-47 participated in exercise Sea Breeze 2013 over the Black Sea, operating out of Bulgaria. P-3C 159323 was seen at Odessa, Ukraine on July 19th.

The Orions of VP-47, which took part in Exercise Cable Car in June 2013 at RAF Leuchars, were providing extra support for the G8 Summit which was taking place in Northern Ireland.

The P-3 Detachment at NS Rota relocated to Moron in Spain on May 16<sup>th</sup>, with P-3Cs 157331 and 159322 arriving there as Sword 92 and Sword 91, and VQ-1 EP-3E 161410 arriving as ZE08. This was only temporary while the runway at Rota was being resurfaced and on July 9<sup>th</sup> the two P-3C 157329 and 158563 of VP-47 returned to Sigonella, while the EP-3E departed to the USA.

Late August the runway at MCB Kaneohe Bay, HI was also closed for resurfacing, forcing most of the based Orions to move to Hickham AFB for some months.

With US budget sequestration measures into effect from 1 April 2013, the US counterdrug operations at FOL Hato have dwindled down, since these are no longer seen as a top-priority by US military budget planners. During the last week of March the VQ-1 EP-3E left for home ending the end of the operations for at least a few months. However early June 2013 the US Customs took over. During this month three different P-3AEW&C's: N144CS, N145CS and N146CS were seen on deployment at Hato.

The upgrade of 14 P-3 Orions for the US Customs and Border Protection continues at the Lockheed Martin facility in Greenville, SC. The sixth upgraded Orion was N148CS which was delivered on 9 November 2012. The seventh upgraded P-3, N145CS, was delivered on 7 March 2013. On July 18 2013 Lockheed Martin achieved an unprecedented milestone by delivering P-3 Orion N146CS in 10 months and 78 days, more than fifty days ahead of schedule. The P-3 Mid-Life Upgrade, or MLU program, primarily consists of replacement wings, removes current aircraft flight restrictions, and extends the structural service life of the P-3 up to 15,000 hours, adding more than twenty years of operational service. Also included in the MLU program are 'new' P-3B's 154580 and 154603, both of which departed AMARG recently.

During their six-month deployment to the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility, VP-26 also participated in the U.S. Navy and Indonesia Military inaugural Sea Surveillance Exercise. This bilateral exercise took place at Juanda Naval Air Station June 24-28 and focused on improving airborne maritime reconnaissance interoperability between the two allied nations. P-3C 163291 of VP-69 was flown to Indonesia.

VP-26 also participated in the Thailand phase of Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training exercise 2013. The exercise brings together U.S.-Thai naval forces to conduct a series of training events designed to develop relationships, enhance interoperability and address shared interests. The focus was on combined operations at sea, amphibious landing events and humanitarian assistance and disaster response scenarios. The exercise was held early July and VP-26 participated with P-3C 159885/LK. P-3C 163291 of VP-69 was also detached to Malaysia where VP-26 participated in the local exercise CARAT in July 2013. VP-26 deployed to Australia and New Zealand in July 2013, using P-3C 161763 with VP-69 markings. This was the first time a US P-3C has been in New Zealand since 1984. Another deployment took place late August when P-3C 163293/LK of VP-26 visited RAAF base Pearce.

The following P-3C Orions have been seen with the VP-26 (LK) deployment at Kadena and Misawa: 158564, 158573, 159885/LK, 160610, 161132/LK, 161411/LK, 161415, 161763, 161765/LT, 163289/LK, 163291, 163293/LK. The two BMUP Orions have both been operating with the SLRS pod, while 411 is the first BMUP+ to be equipped with the INMARSAT dome. It has been announced that in December 2013 the deployment at Kadena will be taken over by P-8A Poseidons from VP-16 (LF).

The P-3C history of VP-5 (LA) came to an end December 4, 2012 as VP-5 CO CDR Erin Osborne landed the squadron's final Orion flight at NAS Jacksonville after a successful 7th Fleet deployment. The Mad Foxes received their first P-3A on July 1, 1966.

The final flight of an Orion by VP-45 (LN) took place on June 8, 2013, when P-3C 160283 returned at NAS Jacksonville after a six-month deployment to Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan. The Pelicans first started to fly P-3A Orions in September 1963.

On May 29, P-3C AIP+ 161011 of VP-1 diverted to Bermudas airport while en route from Jacksonville to Lajes. The crew had declared an emergency because they had a power loss to number 4 engine. After a visit by P-3C 158917 and an engine change the Orion departed again mid-June. In the Middle East VP-1 (YB) has passed the mid deployment term and it has become known that they will be released by VP-8 (LC) in November next. Their new CO Orion is 158215, which was fully painted up with Tiger markings in August 2013.

Also working towards their upcoming deployment is VP-46 (RC). In preparation for the deployment they had P-3C Orion 163294 detached to NAS North Island for seven days in July 2013.

NASA P-3B Orion N426NA made its return flight from Thule in Greenland to NASA's Wallops Flight Facility in Virginia on May 2. The Orion had been flying survey missions for several weeks over the Arctic region under the programme called Ice Bridge. This fall the program continues from Antarctica. In late October 2013, Ice Bridge will start survey flights with the P-3B out of National Science Foundation's McMurdo Station, a change from the mission's previous four campaigns that were based in Punta Arenas, Chile.

## Australia

Royal Australian Air Force AP-3C Orions of both 10 and 11 Squadron have conducted around the clock maritime patrols in support of Exercise Talisman Saber 2013 which took place from 15 July to 5 August 2013. Talisman Saber is a biennial combined Australian and United States training activity, designed to train the respective military forces in planning and conducting Combined Task Force operations to improve the combat readiness and interoperability between both forces. The exercise is held in the Coral Sea and in military training area's in central and northern Queensland. VP-26 participated with two AIP+ Orions (161763 and 163293), while AP-3C's seen on July 15 were A9-751 and A9-758, all operating out of RAAF base Townsville.

## Brazil

The seventh P-3AM for Brazil (FAB7208 c/n 5147, ex 152167), was first seen on April 26 at the Airbus Military facility at Seville-San Pablo Airport, Spain. It had recently arrived from the Getafe plant near Madrid, where it has been upgraded. Mid June 2013 FAB7208 was photographed at Seville during a test flight. Late July FAB7205 was photographed while test flying at Alverca in Portugal, which leaves FAB7206 so far unaccounted for.

## Chile

The Chilean navy has dropped plans to replace their three P-3A Orions with the C.295 Persuader of EADS and instead will upgrade them. The upgrade will include engine overhauls, new wings and the capability to launch Harpoon anti-ship missiles. The navy hopes upgrades will enable the P-3 Orions to continue flying until 2030. Chile acquired the Orions from U.S. stockpiles and three remain in active patrol service: 404 (ex 152165), 407 (ex 161384) and 408 (ex 152141).

## Germany

Mfg.3 Orions were present at several air shows during the summer season:

Celle	60+03	3 June
Wittmund	60+05	28/29 June
Zeltweg	60+01	28/29 June
Fairford	60+01	21/22 July

P-3C 60+07 was noted over the United Kingdom on July 25<sup>th</sup> operating over the Plymouth danger areas. It had taken off from Manching and returned to Nordholz. On July 29<sup>th</sup> the same Orion was visiting the UK again. 60+07 visited Geilekirchen airbase on June 4<sup>th</sup> using an OSY11F call sign. This would suggest the Orion was used for an Open Skies mission. During the airday at Nordholz on August 18<sup>th</sup>, celebrating 100 years of naval aviation, Orions 60+01 and 60+05 were on static display, while 60+04 did a flying display in the afternoon. From August 31<sup>st</sup> to September 2<sup>nd</sup> 60+01 was a long way from its homebase as it was noted at CFB Comox.

## Japan

During the second week of June, NAS Whidbey Island hosted three Japanese P-3C Orions, 5093, 5094, 5098. The detachment was named VPdet48 and the aircraft of 2 Kokutai were hosted by VP-46. Early July the three Orions were visiting Kaneohe Bay on their way back to Japan.

## New Zealand

5 Squadron P-3K2 NZ4205 visited NAF Atsugi and NAF Kadena in Japan between June 29th and July 1st 2013. This deployment was aimed at testing the new capabilities of their recently upgraded P-3K2. At Kadena the squadron was hosted by VP-26.

## Norway

The serial presentation on the Norwegian P-3C Orions has been changed in 2013. So far numbers 3296, 3297 and 3298 have all been seen with much larger serials on the tail.

## Pakistan

Passing through Lajes on July 27th was Pakistan Navy P-3C Orion number 85. This was the second Orion returning to Pakistan after the modification to P-3C PUP+ by LM at Greenville SC under the contract which was signed in December 2011. As reported earlier P-3C PUP+ 86 passed through Lajes on January 24, 2013. Since we have not received any positive sightings of P-3C 81, which was heavily damaged during the terrorist attack on 22 May 2011, we expect this aircraft to be withdrawn from use as well. The present situation of the 7 Pakistani Orions of 28 Squadron at PNS Mehran should as follows:

80	159890	P-3C PUP
82	164468	P-3C-II <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
85	159505	P-3C PUP+
86	159511	P-3C PUP+
87	159510	P-3C PUP
88	159508	P-3C PUP
89	160289	P-3C PUP

## Portugal

The fifth and final P-3C CUP+ was delivered to Esq.601 on 10 October 2012

## Republic of China

The Ministry of National Defense released a statement on July 2nd 2013 to announce the establishment of an Air Force anti-submarine group. The Air Force took possession of 11 S-2T Turbo Trackers from the Navy during a commissioning ceremony at their homebase Pingtung AB in southern Taiwan. The new group will also receive the 12 P-3C Orions. At the moment it is not sure which squadrons will operate the Orions. Most likely not the ones which were mentioned earlier. The first RoCAF P-3C (3301) was delivered to NAS Patuxent River in August 2012 and is still being tested by VX-20. The second Orion (serial 3302) was first seen during July 2013, while flying training missions with VP-30 out of NAS Jacksonville.

## South Korea

Next to the purchase of 20 extra MPA aircraft, the Korean military have also decided to upgrade the existing Orion fleet. The Republic of Korea selected a Korean Air/L-3 team as the winning bidder to perform this P-3 upgrade program and L-3 Mission Integration has signed a contract with Korean Air to upgrade the eight P-3C III+ Orions of the RoK Navy. After the upgrade these eight Orions, which were delivered in 1995, will be completely compatible to the eight P-3CK's, which were delivered in 2010. Under the

deal L-3 MI will design and develop the upgrades, while Korean Air will be responsible for installation in South Korea. The upgrades as well as the purchase of 20 extra MPA's should be completed by 2018. WARNING: for anyone using our ALHR as a reference database: The tie-up of the eight P-3CK serials mentioned In our ALHR desperately needs confirmation !

## Spain

On Friday 19 July 2013 at 15:05 local time, the Spanish Maritime Air 'P-3 Orion' Detachment, operating as part of the European Union's counter piracy Operation Atalanta, reached its 5,000 flying hours milestone. The Spanish Air Force Detachment, based in Djibouti, has completed 676 flying missions to date. P-3M Orion P.3M-12 is the second Orion which has been repainted in the light grey colour scheme with tail markings. It was first seen as such at Moron late May 2013.

Changes to the ALHR since the previous reports

FAB7205	test flying Alverca	jul13
N148CS	MLU mod	09nov12
N146CS	MLU mod	18jul13
N145CS	MLU mod	07mar13
154580	dep AMARG	jul13
154603	dep AMARG	aug13
NZ4205	P-3K2 mod	mar13
158215	VP-8 LC-215	aug13
3302	VP-30 trg for RoCAF	jul13
158567	VP-9	jul13
158912	VXS-1	aug13
158919	VP-47 919	jun13
159326	VP-47 326	aug13
85	PUP+ mod	jul13
159507	VP-47 507	jun13
161011	AIP+ mod	may13
161405	VP-8 405	aug13
161411	VP-26 LK-411	aug13
162316	AIP+ mod	jul13
162771	VP-8 771	aug13
162777	VP-46 777	aug13
162778	VP-4 778	jan13
162999	AIP+ mod VP-62 999	jul13
163289	VP-26 LK-289	jul13
140107	407 (LRMP) Sq	jun13
5028	2 Kok	aug13
5056	5 Kok	jul13
5060	1 Kok	jun13
5076	2 Kok	jul13