



Division of Materiel The Voice of Sustainment

Employee Newsletter August 8, 2011

Volume 1, Issue 4

North Fort Hood Strat Air

By Calvin Johnson

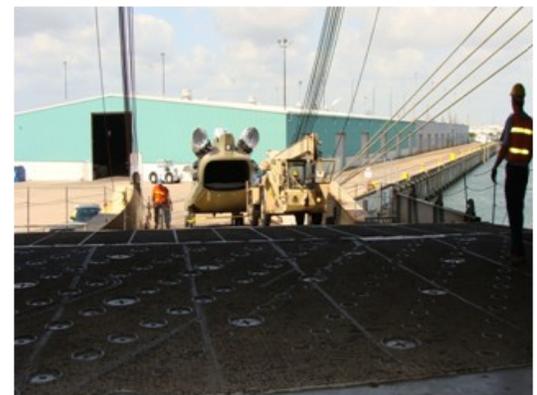
Long and Short Horn located at North Fort Hood, once considered small landing strips used for local aviation field training exercises, have now become a training center hub for the mobilization of the National Guard and Reserves. They have the capability to accommodate over 100 helicopters. The deploying units are assembled from across the United States to undergo different levels of combat readiness training in support of Overseas Contingency Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. This has significantly increased the volume of helicopters being transported via Strategic Airlift (STRATAIR). At the end of each mobilization training cycle, the aircraft are disassembled and prepared for shipment, then airlifted via C-5's, C-17's or Russian AN-124's. The STRATAIR mission is a monthly rotation with continuous around the clock operations from start to finish and usually consists of a team of twelve mechanics. Safety is always of the essence due to the close proximity of helicopters being loaded on to the aircraft.



Port Operations

By Larry Jacobs

The 1st ACB deployment of 34 UH-60L Blackhawks, 24 AH-64D Apaches and 6 CH-47F Chinook helicopters from the Port of Corpus Christi, Texas went off without a hitch with the helping hands of DOL Aviation Maintenance and Defense Support Services (DS2) contractor. The team of 16 aircraft mechanics had their work cut out for them. Not only did they have to prepare the helicopters for shipment by vessel but after the airframes arrive in Rota, Spain, they will be transported to their final destination via C-17 or C-5. This requires further disassembly of the helicopters. The UH-60L Blackhawks have their blades folded, stabilators, antennas removed, and tow plates installed. The huge CH-47F Chinooks must undergo the most disassembly by removing the forward transmission, Aft Pylon/transmission assembly and removal of the rotor blades. AH-64D Apaches have their blades folded, stabilators removed, and mooring lugs installed to facilitate securing the helicopter to the ship. The pilots ferrying the aircraft to the port must ensure that fuel levels are correct since there is no refuel capability on the civilian port at the destination. After all preparations have been made, the aircraft were RORO (Roll on Roll off) onto the Civilian vessel Greenlake for the voyage across the Atlantic. This is just one of the many ways Aviation Maintenance is supporting the war fighters at Fort Hood.



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Thought for Today:

In life... don't let the weeds grow up around your dreams.





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Aviation Reset Program

By Larry Forbes

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The Aviation Reset Program was established in 2004 to inspect, repair and return to worldwide deployable status all aircraft, aviation weapons, and aviation support systems returning from combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The purpose of Reset is to ensure the structural health and long term usable life of our aircraft and associated support equipment.

Here at Fort Hood, we primarily Reset the HH-60 model aircraft which is an Air Ambulance with an occasional UH-60 Utility model thrown in the mix now and then. Generally, there are up to 5 aircraft at different levels of completion undergoing Reset at one time. The TAT (turn around time) for the Reset process is programmed to take 80 days and based on statistics from the Reset program. Our TAT has averaged 68.6 days.

The process begins with the owning unit either delivering the aircraft to our facility or by a coordinated delivery by STRATAIR (see related article), where we will unload and transport the aircraft to our facility or the Killeen/Temple facility depending where the aircraft is scheduled to be inducted. During Aviation Reset, the aircraft, if possible, are first given a pre-reset test flight to determine any undocumented issues that could be corrected during reset. After that is completed the aircraft are disassembled, thoroughly cleaned and inspected. If needed, components are repaired or replaced, structural faults corrected and records are thoroughly reviewed.

After the aircraft and individual components are thoroughly cleaned, inspected and repaired as needed the reassembling process begins. When the aircraft has completed the reassembly then it's time for the aircraft systems to be tested and flight controls rigged, meaning that controls are checked and aligned so that when a pilot commands a particular control to do something the aircraft responds as it is suppose to instantly.

After the mechanics have completed the ground system checks and determined that the aircraft is ready for flight, the aircraft are turned over to pilots who will do their own ground checks and once they are confident it is ready for flight they complete a maintenance test flight to ensure the aircraft is ready to return to the owning unit. Prior to returning the aircraft to the unit the aircraft is given another once over to ensure the unit is getting a quality product. Once that is completed the unit is notified and they will arrive to inspect the aircraft for themselves and do their own test flight. When they are satisfied with the final product they will take possession and fly to their home station.

Then the cycle starts over with a new aircraft Reset induction.

