Erickson Incorporated’s H-53 Program

The Marine Corps and Navy own, operate, and maintain 175 combined MH-53 Sea Dragon and CH-53E Super Stallion aircraft as part of the fleet’s Heavy Lift capability. The H-53 platform has served as an integral part of the Marine Corps mission of transporting heavy equipment, supplies, and troops for amphibious assault and the Navy’s mission of Airborne Mine Counter Measures (AMCM) and Vertical Onboard Delivery (VOD). In order to meet their mission requirement, the Marines, Navy, and Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) concluded that they needed to add aircraft to the fleet. Two MH-53Es formerly operated by the Navy, were retired in 2004 to the Arizona desert at the Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group (AMARG). These two helicopters became candidates for refurbishment and re-entry to the fleet for the Marines.

At that time, Erickson Incorporated was under contract for Sikorsky, manufacturing five tail pylons for the CH-53E. PMA-261 visited Erickson’s facilities in 2015 to see firsthand Erickson’s capability and capacity to support legacy aircraft. In September 2015, Erickson was awarded a sub-contract under the prime contractor Adams Communication & Engineering Technology Inc. (ACET) for the reconstitution of the two MH-53E helicopters. In November 2015, Erickson took possession of the two airframes and is currently in the final stages of the refurbishment.

Erickson has increased its capacity for supporting H-53s by expanding hangar space and hiring experienced H-53 professionals to grow the program. Since October of 2016, Erickson has received four additional H-53 aircraft for different maintenance evolutions to include Planned Maintenance Interval (PMI) and Reset. Erickson delivered its first H-53 helicopter to the Marines in late October 2017 after having performed both PMI and Reset on the aircraft.

Erickson is a 47-year-old company specializing in manufacturing, maintenance repair and overall of legacy aircraft, and operations for fixed-wing and medium and heavy lift helicopters, most notably for the S-64 Aircrane. Erickson offers a unique holistic support package to the H-53 platform which includes Depot, Intermediate, and Organizational maintenance as well as parts fabrication/manufacturing and engineering solutions. To date, Erickson has carried out thousands of discrepancy rectifications and has fabricated more than 450 parts, as well as designed and implemented 25 engineering repairs. The company plans to further expand its capacity to be able to meet customers’ needs in support of this platform and the Marines and Sailors’ mission.

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