



June 3, 2011

## Last S-3B Viking overhauled at FRCSE heads for California-based test squadron

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Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 30 pilot, Cmdr. David Simmons and Naval Flight Officer Lt. Chris Pedersen take off from Naval Air Station Jacksonville May 26 in an S-3B Viking heading home to Naval Base Ventura County, Calif., where the “Bloodhounds” will use the aircraft to clear the Sea Range. Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE) artisans performed a one-of-a-kind restoration to add five to six years of service life to the aircraft. FRCSE aircraft painters applied the unique paint scheme. (U.S. Navy photo by Vic Pitts/Released)

An aircrew from Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 30 delivered the third and final Lockheed S-3B Viking aircraft to undergo specialized depot-level restoration at Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE) to the California-based squadron May 26.

VX-30 Pilot Cmdr. David Simmons and Naval Flight Officer Lt. Chris Pedersen flew the Viking to Naval Base Ventura County at Point Mugu, Calif., where the “Bloodhounds” will use the aircraft to clear the Sea Range, the Department of Defense’s largest overwater missile test range.

Simmons said the Viking flew “flawlessly” for more than six hours during the flight to Southern California. He said the squadron “is very pleased” with its newest aircraft.



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“When stopping for gas in El Paso, a member of the fueling crew noticed the Viking and said, ‘I haven’t seen one of these in a while, and I have never seen one painted so nicely.’ This praise from a casual observer is a testament to the exhaustive work ethic and true professionalism of the entire FRCSE team,” said Simmons.

FRCSE artisans performed a unique depot-level restoration referred to as Planned Maintenance Interval (PMI) 1, 2 and 3. They disassembled, inspected and repaired the dependable, all-weather surveillance jet.

This one-of-a-kind restoration will add five to six years of service life to the aircraft before another PMI is due.

FRCSE inducted the first of three Viking aircraft to undergo the one-of-a-kind restoration in March 2009. The facility established maintenance and repair capability by locating hangar space and tooling. In addition, the facility hired artisans with S-3 experience for the project.

VX-30 Commanding Officer Cmdr. John Rousseau and Lt. Pedersen accepted delivery of the first refurbished aircraft and returned it to California in April 2010.

On Nov. 4, 2010, FRCSE delivered the second Viking aircraft to VX-30, but the first to sport a 1942 heritage paint scheme in preparation for this year’s Centennial of Naval Aviation celebration.

Sea Control Squadron (VS) 22, the last remaining S-3 squadron in the Navy, most recently flew these aircraft in Iraq just months before the squadron was decommissioned Sept. 25, 2008 at Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Fla.

The Viking, developed by Lockheed Martin and delivered to military service in 1974, has had an illustrious military career. Often called the “War Hoover” for the engine’s low-pitched sound, the Viking was originally designed to track and destroy enemy submarines during the Cold War.

It made history on March 25, 2003 when it fired the first combat-launched Maverick missile during Operation Iraqi Freedom.



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Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCSE) artisans performed a unique, depot-level restoration and painted the Lockheed S-3B Viking in a WWII heritage paint scheme on the second of three aircraft delivered in November 2010 to Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 30 at Point Mugu, Calif. The “Bloodhounds” are using the aircraft to clear the Sea Range, the Department of Defense’s largest overwater missile test range. (U.S. Navy photo by Vic Pitts/Released)