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## UH-1Y pilots fire first APKWS shots

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NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The Navy and Marine Corps recently fired the first shots of the Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System II from a UH-1Y helicopter at Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division in China Lake, Calif., Sept. 9-13.

The recent shots, part of the program's low-rate initial production phase, mark the start of APWKS testing on the UH-1Y in preparation for fielding next year.

During the tests, Marine pilots fired a total of six shots from a UH-1Y against stationary targets with ranges varying from 1.5-5 kilometers. The initial shots from UH-1Y mark the first time a MK152 warhead has been fired from any aircraft, allowing safer operation aboard ships than the previous M151 warhead.

"I am very excited to bring this new capability to our Marines in combat," said Capt. Brian Corey, APKWS program manager. "This highly effective weapon will allow aviators to complete their missions while minimizing the risk of harm to allies and non-combatants."

APKWS II, a semi-active laser guidance section that integrates with current 2.75-inch rocket motors and warheads, provides aviators with a highly precise weapon that is effective against soft and lightly armored targets while minimizing collateral damage.

"We have seen great success firing APKWS from both AH-1W and UH-1Y helicopters," said Lt. Cmdr. Nick Green, Airborne Rockets/Pyro deputy program manager for the Direct and Time Sensitive Strike Weapons program office (PMA-242). "Recent tests have proven the capability this weapon will bring to the warfighter."

Last month APKWS entered the first phase of production testing at China Lake's facility. A LAU-68 launcher successfully fired two laser-guided rockets and hit a stationary target. The test firings initiated a sequence of tests that enable the Navy to accept the guidance sections for initial operational test and evaluation, the final test phase prior to fielding the system.

"We are on track to field APKWS next year," Green said. "I am very proud of our team for working so hard toward fielding APKWS on our threshold platform, AH-1W, and our objective platform, UH-1Y, at the same time."

Initial operating capability of APKWS on the Corps' AH-1W and UH-1Y helicopters is scheduled for second quarter of fiscal year 2012.