

PMA-213 celebrates new GPS-based landing system progress



Capt. Darrell Lack, program manager for Naval Air Traffic Management Systems Program Office (PMA-213), discusses delivery of the Joint Precision Approach and Landing System prototype, seen behind him, during a dedication ceremony Jan. 11 at the Landing System Test Facility at NAS Patuxent River, Md. JPALS is the next-generation GPS-based precision approach and landing capability, providing increased operational availability and interoperability. (U.S. Navy photo)

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The latest in a series of Engineering Development Models (EDM) of a technology that promises to revolutionize how the DoD safely lands its aircraft was unveiled by the Naval Air Traffic Management Systems Program Office (PMA-213) during a dedication ceremony here Jan. 11.

“We now have real, testable hardware after several years of conceptual modeling and design,” Capt. Darrell Lack, PMA-213 program manager, told the group gathered to celebrate the latest advancement of the Joint Precision Approach and Landing System (JPALS).

“We will retire aging, radar-based, precision-approach and landing systems that are experiencing increasing obsolescence issues and evolve into a GPS-based precision-approach and landing system,” Lack said. “This system

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will provide secure performance at sea, on land and in expeditionary environments with increased operational availability and interoperability.”

PMA-213 received the second JPALS EDM in October and plans to install it on all CVN, LHD and LHA class ships as part of “Increment 1A.” The system offers critical enabling technology for the CVN-78 ship class, F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter and Navy unmanned air systems, while allowing retirement of costly, radar-based systems, Lack said. JPALS-compliant aircraft will be compatible with the civil aviation, GPS-based infrastructure when fielded.

EDM-2 is the initial production representative unit of the AN/USN-3(V)1 JPALS, consisting of four shipboard-suitable equipment racks and multiple GPS and UHF data-link antennas. A team, including the JPALS prime contractor Raytheon Network Centric Systems and NAWCAD Research and Engineering personnel will integrate the unit into the System Integration Lab at the Landing Systems Test Facility for further development.

With Navy, Air Force and Army participation, JPALS will provide a family of interoperable systems for civil and multinational, manned and unmanned aircraft. A JPALS increment 1A Test Readiness Review is scheduled for April and a Milestone C review to enter production is planned in fiscal 2013.