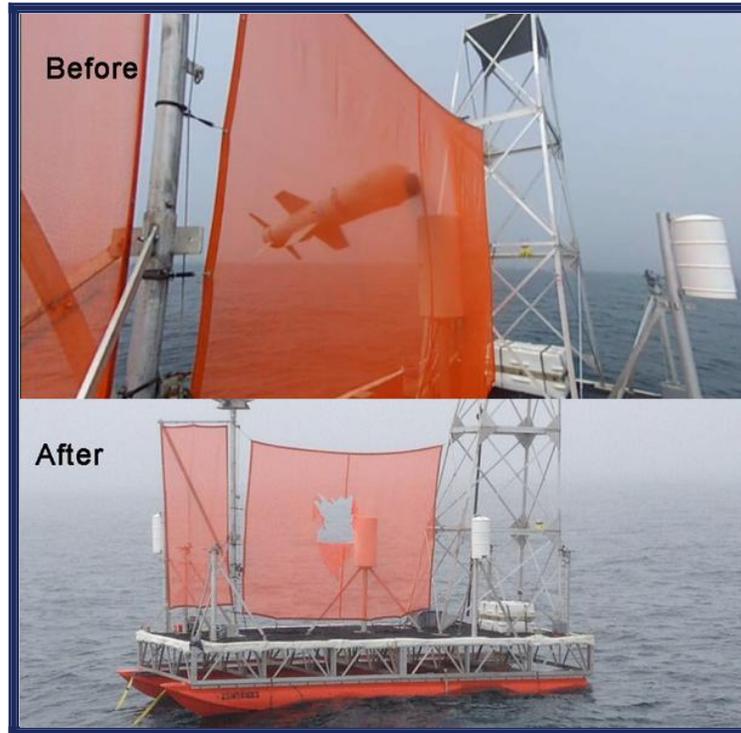


P-8A Poseidon fires Harpoon, hits mark



Top photo: A Harpoon AGM-84D Block IC missile, which was released from a P-8A Poseidon (not visible), directly hits a Low Cost Modular Target (LCMT) at the Point Mugu Sea Test Range in California June 24. Bottom photo: A LCMT at the Point Mugu Sea Test Range is shown after the Harpoon successfully strikes it. (U.S. Navy photos)

PMA-290, PMA-201 successfully launch missile during testing evolution

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. — After approximately six minutes of flight time, one of NAVAIR's test aircraft successfully launched a Harpoon missile during a live fire event June 24 in California at the Navy's Point Mugu Sea Test Range and scored a direct hit on a Low Cost Modular Target.

Completing only one practice dry run, a P-8A Poseidon from Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 20 successfully fired a Harpoon AGM-84D Block IC missile from station 10 on the first hot run, which was later confirmed by onsite explosive ordnance disposal personnel.

“The successful launch of one of the U.S. Navy's most dependable over-the-horizon all-weather anti-ship missiles, the Harpoon Block IC, from the P-8A is a significant milestone in naval aviation,” said Capt. Carl Chebi, Precision Strike Weapons (PMA-201) program manager.

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For more than 40 years, the Harpoon weapon system has served the Navy well by offering a low-level and sea-skimming cruise trajectory that supports high survivability and effectiveness. This air-launched variant of the Harpoon IC is currently integrated on the P-3C.

According to Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Program Office (PMA-290) Program Manager Capt. Scott Dillon, the significance of this program milestone is that the P-8A was able to launch the Harpoon at a target and achieve a direct hit.

“As the Navy’s replacement for the P-3 Orion, the P-8A Poseidon will be performing maritime surveillance missions as needed by the operations tempo and the success of this testing evolution brings us one step closer to Initial Operational Capability [IOC] this fall,” Dillon said. “The test was very successful and the Harpoon directly hitting the target proves the system’s capability and lethality.”

The purpose of this test was to validate the weapons hardware and software integration. The weapons integration testing that was achieved last week at Point Mugu was a culmination for all of the lab development and integration as well as developmental testing over the past year to get one step closer to fielding an anti-surface warfare (ASuW) weapon for fleet IOC, said Paul Sheridan, the P-8A assistant program manager for system engineering assigned to PMA-290’s Weapons Systems Integration team.

At the completion of this developmental testing, the P-8A will be ready for Harpoon operational testing to support fleet IOC.

“This live-fire event was made possible through the efforts of teams across NAVAIR including PMA-290 and PMA-201 here, in China Lake and Corona, Calif.,” said Chebi. “The teams continuously meet the challenges placed before them from test-asset preparations, ground testing, separation tests and the end-to-end live-fire evaluation. PMA-201 will continue to support the P-8A program and provide solutions to meet current requirements as well as the integration of future requirements that will advance the Navy’s long-range maritime patrol capability.”

Dillon and Sheridan agreed with Chebi that the Harpoon P-8A testing was a collaborative effort between PMA-290 and PMA-201.

The P-8A Poseidon will replace the P-3C Orion as a long-range anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, capable of broad-area, maritime and littoral operations. This valuable addition to naval air forces will protect the sea base and enhance the Navy’s forward presence.