



Ceremony launches new FRCSW helo facility

FLEET READINESS CENTER SOUTHWEST, NAVAL AIR STATION NORTH ISLAND, Calif., -- Fleet vertical lift squadrons can look forward to getting their assets returned much faster in the coming years as Fleet Readiness Center Southwest (FRCSW) marked the completion of its new 100,000 square-foot helicopter maintenance facility Jan. 21 aboard Naval Air Station North Island.

Costing almost \$50 million, the building is the Navy's first and only facility solely dedicated to the support and service of H-60 Seahawk multi-mission helicopters.

FRCSW Commanding Officer Capt. Timothy Pfannenstein said the design of the new hangar (Building 325) is the result of a collaborative effort between Naval Base Coronado, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest (NAVFAC) and Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) H-60 Multi-Mission Helicopter Program, PMA-299.

"This building is a generational leap forward in supporting our aviation fleet," Pfannenstein said. "It sets the tone for the future of FRCSW and is a physical representation of one of our four pillars within the FRCSW command strategy -- that of infrastructure renewal."

Capt. Pfannenstein spoke of the significant impact the new hangar will have in improving the readiness of H-60 aircraft to the fleet.

"With 30 bays, we will perform maintenance without aircraft waiting for spots. Reducing wait generates readiness," he said. "The building will consolidate our Integrated Production Team, which will reduce transit time for talent, skills, materials, and tools and generate efficient use of all of our resources. Doing so reduces costs and improves speed. Doing both generates readiness."

In his remarks, Rear Adm. Paul Sohl, Commander, Fleet Readiness Centers (COMFRC), challenged the FRCSW H-60 workforce to exceed previous production levels.

"You produce nearly half of the H-60s that the fleet needs," Sohl said. "That number last year was about 50. With this new hangar, that capacity can grow to 80."

Sohl also spoke of the facility's energy efficient design that uses natural light to the fullest extent possible and features exterior building skins which sandwich the insulation for both cool and heat reducing energy costs.

Echoing Sohl's comments, guest speaker Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment Dennis McGinn said "Across the FRC enterprise we are seeing more products through less expenditure of electricity, water and fuel and that really translates directly into readiness. This building is an example of getting product out with extending less energy, by being smart in how you design it and the processes."

Construction of the new facility began in December 2012 and resulted in the demolition of



January 22, 2016

Ceremony launches new FRCSW helo facility

10 buildings, three of which were used to maintain the H-60s.