



## Carver assumes command of VX-23 from Erker

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Navy Cmdr. James Carver congratulates Marine Lt. Col. Kevin Erker after Carver assumed command of Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23 at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, Sept. 16 during an in-flight change of command ceremony. (U.S. Navy photo/Released)

PATUXENT RIVER, Maryland -- Navy Cmdr. James Carver relieved Marine Lt. Col. Kevin Erker as commanding officer of Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23 Sept. 16 after serving as the squadron's chief test pilot since October 2014.

During Erker's tenure as commanding officer, the squadron's 1,200 military members, civil servants and contractors accomplished 5,100 test project sorties with their 36 aircraft. The squadron flew 63,000 mishap-free flight hours while advancing combat capabilities for naval aviation including conducting F-35B/C developmental test flights aboard USS Nimitz (CVN 68) and USS George Washington (CVN 73) and certifying precision approach landing systems on aircraft carriers and amphibious assault ships.

Erker oversaw successful test flights of an EA-18G on 100% biofuel JP-5, the successful demonstration of an autonomous aerial refueling test program using the X-47B, as well as upgrades to the EA-6B, T-45 and OV-10G aircraft.

Carver, a native of Nashville, Tennessee, enlisted in the Navy in 1987, was commissioned as a naval flight officer via the Navy's Enlisted Commissioning Program in 1998, made two



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combat deployments in support of operations Northern Watch and Southern Watch, graduated from U.S. Naval Test Pilot School in 2006, served as an individual augmentee in Iraq and graduated from the U.S. Air Force's Air Command and Staff College in 2012.

With Carver's 'fleet-up' to commanding officer, Cmdr. Johannes Jolly assumed duties as VX-23's chief test pilot.

As part of Naval Test Wing Atlantic, VX-23 supports research, development, test and evaluation of Navy and Marine Corps fixed-wing tactical aircraft including the F-35B/C Lightning II, F/A-18A-D Hornet, F/A-18E/F Super Hornet, EA-18G Growler and EA-6B Prowler.



An F/A-18F Super Hornet carrying Navy Cmdr. James Carver takes the lead position ahead of an F/A-18E Super Hornet flown by Marine Lt. Col. Kevin Erker after Carver assumed command of Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23 during an in-flight change of command ceremony at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, Sept. 16. (U.S. Navy photo/Released)



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Capt. Brett Pierson, commander, Naval Test Wing Atlantic, and Cmdr. James Carver, commanding officer, Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23, return after Carver assumed command of the squadron during an in-flight change of command ceremony Sept. 16 at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland. (U.S. Navy photo/Released)