



THE NAVAL AVIATION ENTERPRISE AIR PLAN



...One Vision, One Team

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#46, October 2015

“We are taking steps in the right direction now to reduce our legacy F/A-18 out of reporting numbers, and we are learning lessons that we can – and must – apply to improve the readiness of our Super Hornet fleet as well as other TMS communities.” - Vice Adm. Mike Shoemaker, Commander, Naval Air Forces/Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

Tactical Aviation Inventory Management Lessons Learned

Naval Aviation is aggressively managing its tactical aviation (TACAIR) inventory; however, generating sufficient numbers of in-reporting (IR) F/A-18 A-F to meet the flight line readiness requirements is a significant challenge. High operations tempo led to F/A-18 overutilization, while accelerating the timeline that aircraft reached high-flight-hour life limits and scheduled depot maintenance milestones. At the same time, depots experienced decreased production capacity due to fiscal constraints and sequestration impacts. Additionally, F-35 Initial Operating Capability (IOC) was delayed, forcing Naval Aviation to fly F/A-18 A-Ds well beyond their projected service lives while placing greater workload on depots and further compounding the flight line readiness issues.

This Air Plan addresses questions about TACAIR Inventory Management and shares lessons learned that can be applied across all communities.

What actions is Naval Aviation taking?

- To overcome attrition and keep pace with production demands, Commander Fleet Readiness Centers (COMFRC) is executing a targeted hiring plan. During fiscal year 2015, COMFRC hired approximately 1,530 new employees as part of this effort.
- COMFRC is implementing Critical Chain Project Management (CCPM) methods to accelerate depot work. CCPM is based on Theory of Constraints, which helps FRCs level-load their resources in ways to drive more reliable on-time delivery of aircraft.
- By better coordinating and prioritizing engineering efforts, Naval Aviation is reducing the in-service repair response time and turnaround time for maintenance to increase the number of IR aircraft. (See the [NAE Air Plan from June 2015](#) for examples.)
- In order to reduce the utilization on the F/A-18 A-D, the Marine Corps adjusted the Training and Exercise Employment Plan (TEEP) by deploying AV-8B squadrons in lieu of F/A-18 squadrons and rescheduled F/A-18 and AV-8B squadron transitions to the F-35B. All efforts are designed to reduce the strain on the F/A-18 community.
- To ensure Naval Aviation can continue to meet our TACAIR commitments, NAE leaders are advocating for the procurement of additional airframes.
- Naval Aviation is working inside the current budget process to ensure readiness “enabler” accounts (non-Flight Hour accounts that directly impact flight line readiness) are adequately resourced and funded.

In what ways is Naval Aviation using technology advancements to reduce the rate of utilization?

- Naval Aviation is seeking ways in which technology might provide greater proficiency with less time to train. For example, Magic Carpet, a capability originally designed for the F-35C, is a technological upgrade to the F/A-18 that will make it easier for pilots to land on an aircraft carrier. This technology can potentially reduce the number of field carrier landing practices required for proficiency.
- Naval Aviation leaders are looking to decrease aircraft utilization through the implementation of the Naval Aviation Simulator Master Plan (NASMP). The NASMP provides the ability to do distributed training between/among integrated simulators in various Fleet Concentration Areas. It is intended to complement flying hours and will allow aircrew to train to certain scenarios that would otherwise be cost prohibitive or constrained by assets and range space.

What have Naval Aviation leaders learned through TACAIR inventory management that can be applied to other TMS teams?

- Problems with the TACAIR inventory did not materialize overnight and were not unforeseen. There were many lessons learned from the F/A-18 A-D face-to-face Air Board meeting in October 2014 and the August 2014 Harrier Independent Readiness Review and the resulting action items. There is an understanding of the importance of adequate spare parts inventories, as well as FRC production, their manning levels, the need for standardized work packages and better scheduling tools. Additionally, Naval Aviation recognizes the importance of Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) participation in the sustainment and readiness generation process.

Main Points

- Tackling TACAIR inventory challenges will require action by all NAE stakeholders – resource sponsors, providers and operators – as well as support from many agencies external to the NAE.
- Leaders at every level within the Naval Aviation community must think innovatively about how to best manage aircraft inventory. Leaders should look for ways to achieve required readiness and accomplish missions while putting as little “wear and tear” on the aircraft as possible.

Facts/Figures/Resources

- The Integrated Logistics Support Management System (ILSMS) data analysis tool uses a 10-year historical baseline to identify components that perform outside established parameters. ILSMS can provide early indications of potential degraders before they affect readiness or costs.
- The CCPM method is being implemented across all aircraft lines and Fleet Readiness Centers (FRC). Aimed at increasing FRCs’ throughput rates, CCPM demonstrated early success with some lines seeing a throughput increase of 20 percent.