



VP ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

AN ASSOCIATION OF VETERANS WHO SERVED WITH THE NAVAL AIR RESERVE PATROL SQUADRONS BASED AT NAS SQUANTUM MA, NAS SOUTH WEYMOUTH MA, AND NAS BRUNSWICK ME.

NOTE, CURRENT AND FORMER MEMBERS OF ANY U.S. NAVY PATROL SQUADRON ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US!

ISSUE 93

[HTTP://WWW.VPASSOCIATION.ORG](http://www.vpassociation.org)

SEP 2023

Welcome to another edition of the VP Association newsletter. Please direct all VP Association-related inquiries or correspondence to Marc Frattasio, PO Box 30, Pembroke MA 02339, 781-294-4491, marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.

RECCO:



ABOVE: VP-92 P-3C on display at an air show at Andrews AFB in Washington DC on May 21st 2005. This photo was taken by Stephen Miller. Got something similar to share? Contact Marc Frattasio at marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.

FINAL FLIGHTS:

Brian Clougher, Jim Crandall, Ann Hamilton, Jerry O'Brien and Bob Vallencourt passed away recently. Brian and Jim were AWs in VP-92. Ann was an AO and Jerry was an AX. Bob was a flight engineer who served in VP-92 in the 1970s and the VP-MAU in the 1980s.

SPEAKING OF THE COST OF PRINTING AND MAILING NEWSLETTERS...

If you have an e-mail address and get your newsletter in the mail please contact George Driscoll at gnddriscoll@gmail.com ASAP so we can send it to you via e-mail. Remember, we do not charge

dues and operate on a shoestring thanks to volunteer labor, memorabilia sales, and donations. If you have an e-mail address and get a paper newsletter it would be better for us to send it via e-mail.

LOST CONTACT:

Be sure to inform George Driscoll at gnddriscoll@gmail.com about home or e-mail address changes.

A NOTE AND WARNING FROM ARTHUR SANSONE:

We have been members of the Navy Federal Credit Union for over 41 years. We were on a world cruise from January 3, 2023, to May 12, 2023 and did not receive emails during that time. When we returned home we were shocked to find that we were hacked for \$121,610.18 on a NFCU debit card.

In addition, we received an email from the NFCU stating, “The Navy Federal Debit card which (we had not ordered) on 01/26/23 was mailed to a different address than we have on file.” In all the time we had been members, we never had a NFCU Debit Card, nor did we ever request one. We were told by NFCU employees that a Debit Card would never be sent unless requested by the member.

After numerous letters, they sent us \$55,883.12 and told us that we were responsible for the remainder of the \$65,777.06; and now they refused to speak to us. We notified the Norwood Police Department, and NFCU refused to speak to them. The police Department sent out a warrant and NFCU claimed they never received it; so NPD sent another warrant using a different method.

One of our friends told us that their NFCU credit card was hacked for a substantial amount of money, and it took them over three months to get their money back. They are no longer members of NFCU. After looking online, we found multiple people who had similar issues with the Credit Union. We have also learned that the NFCU is in no way affiliated with the Navy or any branch of the military.

THE 2023 MINUTEMANCIPATION WEEKEND:



Over the extended weekend of Friday, Saturday, and Sunday August 25th through the 27th a group of former VP-92 AWs and a couple of token NFOs who served together during the squadron’s final two decades met up at A. J. Bucchi’s palatial estate in Newport, RI for three days of food, booze, and B.S. The “Minutemancipation” weekend normally rotates from one person to another over the years, but for the past two years it has been hosted by A. J., who lays out a terrific spread of steamed clams and boiled lobster.

WAYNE THOMAS REPORTS THAT JOHN DONATELLO IS AWOL:

Wayne Thomas reports that John Donatello, formerly with VP-912 at NAS South Weymouth, has gone missing. He says that John's telephone has been disconnected and he no longer appears to reside at his former home in the town of Herriman, Utah. Wayne has asked that if anybody out there knows what happened to John, please contact him at wayne.thomas@dc.gov with details.

VP ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATION AT THE VP-30 P-3 SUNSETTING EVENT:

On Friday June 23rd VP-30 held a special event in its hangar at NAS Jacksonville, FL to send its last P-3 Orion to the famous military aircraft storage and disposal facility at David Monthan AFB in Arizona. Your newsletter editor flew down from Boston for the day to participate in this historic event.



ABOVE: Rick Hodgekins and your newsletter editor posed in front of the polished propeller that VP-30 will have on display inside its hangar in perpetuity to serve as a reminder of the P-3s that it operated for sixty years.

The Navy retired the P-3 Orion from patrol squadron service when reserve commands VP-62 and VP-69 sent their last P-3s to the boneyard on June 4th and September 30th of last year, respectively. VP-30 had retained a few P-3s into 2023 to provide foreign operator training, but this is no longer necessary. Going forward, foreign operator training on P-3s will be provided by a civilian company

called MHD-Rockland. They own five P-3Cs and four similar Lockheed Electras, which are based at the Keystone Airpark in Keystone Heights, FL. See www.mhdrockland.com for details.

As of now, there are only three commands left in the Navy operating P-3s, VXS-1 at NAS Patuxent River, MD and VX-30 and VQ-1 at NAS Whidbey Island, WA. VXS-1 uses its two or three P-3s to support the Naval Research Laboratory, VX-30 uses its handful of aircraft for research and development purposes, and VQ-1 uses its few P-3s as non-mission-capable pilot proficiency trainers.

A few photos taken at the VP-30 event are presented below:



ABOVE: Presentation given inside the VP-30 hangar. **BELOW:** Long line of people waiting to go inside VP-30's last P-3 Orion.





ABOVE: Flight and ground crew assembled in front of VP-30's last P-3 just before they started up the engines for the final time. **BELOW:** One of VP-30's P-8A Poseidons, the P-3's replacement.





ABOVE: VP-30's last P-3 takes off from NAS Jacksonville. **BELOW:** After it took off, the aircraft turned around, made a low pass over the runway, and then head off for the boneyard at David Monthan, AFB in Arizona. And so, the P-3 Orion era in USN patrol squadron service came to an end.



A NOTE AND PHOTO FROM TOM STANTON:



Here is something interesting that I found in my photo files. This VP-92 Flight took place sometime in 1980. Larry Glick is the gentleman with the large letter VP-92 hat. A few folks I remember from the right side are LCDR Colby Rottler, LCDR Don Harbison, LCDR Tom Stanton (that's me with the glasses), Lt Mike Swiatkowski and the CO standing beside Larry (CDR Dobbs).

You may see others you recognize. Larry Glick was a famous Boston radio personality who loved aviation and the Naval Reserve at South Weymouth in particular. I remember listening to him after this flight and he could not stop talking about this special event and the great people he met at VP-92.

NAS BRUNSWICK AND JOINT VP-92 / VP-MAU REUNION COMING UP SOON:

The NAS Brunswick reunion is only a few weeks away. All banquet reservations must be in by September 1st, but you can still come to the reunion by paying the general admission fee at the gate. There are various events scheduled for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday September 15th through 17th. Go to the Brunswick Naval Aviation Museum's web site at bnamuseum.org for the reunion schedule.

P-3C Orions from the German and US Navy (VX-30) will be on static display on Saturday, along with a VP-8 P-8A Poseidon and some US Navy training aircraft. The Canadians are sending a CP-140 Aurora too. The Navy will retire its last P-3s in 2025 so this may be your last chance to see one!

There will be a combined VP-92 and VP-MAU mini-reunion held in the BNAM's main exhibition hall from 11 AM to noon on Saturday September 16th. All former VP-92 and VP-MAU personnel and their guests are welcome to come and reconnect with old shipmates. **Please note there is no extra charge for the mini-reunion, but you'll have to purchase admission (\$35) to the larger base reunion to come.**

We'll have some free "geedunk" to hand out to former VP-92 and VP-MAU personnel at the mini-reunion while the supply lasts. We've been asking you for many months to tell us if you are coming, in an effort to order enough "geedunk" for everybody. Its too late to order more, so what we have on hand now is all there will be. We ordered enough for everybody who told us they are coming plus a few extras. We'll be handing this stuff out on a first-come first-served basis until we run out.

CHINA PROTESTS U.S. NAVY P-8 FLIGHT OVER TAIWAY STRAIT (USNI News 7/13):

China's military protested a U.S. Navy P-8A flight through the Taiwan Strait on Thursday, as the PLA continues operating near the island. China's Ministry of National Defense said the U.S. "hyped [the aircraft transit] publicly," according to an English language statement citing a People's Liberation Army Eastern Theater Command spokesperson. "The troops of the PLA Eastern Theater Command have tracked and monitored the US aircraft in the whole course, and handled it in line with laws and regulations," Col. Shi Yi said in a statement.

The P-8A Poseidon flew south over the Taiwan Strait, USNI News understands. U.S. Navy P-8As periodically fly over the Taiwan Strait. "A U.S. Navy P-8A Poseidon transited the Taiwan Strait in international airspace on July 13 (local time). By operating within the Taiwan Strait in accordance with international law, the United States upholds the navigational rights and freedoms of all nations," U.S. 7th Fleet said in a statement. "The aircraft's transit of the Taiwan Strait demonstrates the United States' commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific. The United States military flies, sails and operates anywhere international law allows."

The U.S. aircraft's flight comes as the PLA and the People's Liberation Army Navy perform drills around Taiwan. As of Thursday morning local time, Taiwan identified 33 aircraft flying near the island, including 24 that flew over the median line in the strait or into the air defense identification zone, according to Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense. The ADIZ is not the same as air space and is a larger area. The 24 PLA aircraft include Shenyang J-16 fighters and Xian H-6 bombers.

"The PLA aircraft conducted surveillance on a P-8A aircraft from the US and engaged in long-range aerial reconnaissance training," Taiwan's MND said. The median line is an informal partition in the strait between Taiwan and China. Since former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's (D-Calif.) visit to Taiwan last summer, PLAN ships and aircraft have increasingly crossed the median line in the strait, a Taiwan Coast Guard official told USNI News. China performed a series of drills around Taiwan after Pelosi's visit last August and did so again in April after House Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.) met with Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen in California. As of Thursday morning, nine PLAN ships were operating around the island, according to Taiwan's MND.

USNI News article by Mallory Shelbourne

NEW SUB FOR NORTHERN FLEET WILL BE NAMED "MARIUPOL" (Barents Observer 7/10):

Russia is about to start building six improved Kilo-class submarines for Arctic waters. They will all get their names from occupied Ukrainian cities. The Russian Navy has signed contracts with the United Shipbuilding Corporation to build a fleet of diesel-fueled submarines of the class 636.3. A contract for the first three vessels was reportedly signed during the Army-2022 military forum in August 2022. The new subs will be the first of their kind in the Northern Fleet. At this time Russia has a total of ten improved Kilo-class vessels in operation, all built before the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Work on the first vessel is reported to start in 2024. It will get the name Mariupol after the occupied Ukrainian city that was completely destroyed by attacking Russian forces. Countless civilians were killed in the battles and grave war crimes committed by the involved Russian and Chechen troops. Also troops from the Northern Fleet are believed to have been engaged in the fighting and in early June 2023, the governor of Murmansk paid a visit to soldiers from his region based in the city.

Following the Mariupol, another five improved Kilo-class submarines will be built for the Northern Fleet, all named for occupied Ukrainian territories. Paradoxically, the improved Kilo-class subs play a key role in Russia's onslaught on Ukraine. The Black Sea Fleet has six vessels of the kind in operation, and all of them are regularly engaged in missile attacks on Ukrainian cities. Hundreds of civilians have been killed in the attacks. A representative of the Russian military-industrial complex in 2022 told TASS that the Project 636.3 has "repeatedly proved its abilities under battle conditions."

The subs are an improved version of the 636 project ("Varshavyanka"), a kind of vessel built by Russia since the mid-1990s and exported to China, Algeria and Vietnam. The submarines are all built at the Admiralty Yard in St.Petersburg. They are 73 meter long and ten meter wide, and can operate down to 300 meter depths. It has a top speed of 20 knots and can operate autonomous for 45 days and at distances up to 7500 nautical miles. It has a crew of 52 men and is equipped with six torpedo chambers, mines and Kalibr cruise missiles.

Barents Observer article by Atle Staalesen

HOW DRONES BY AIR AND SEA HELP FLORIDA FORECASTS (Miami Herald 6/30):

When it comes to forecasting the world's most powerful storms, the more data you have, the better. Now, new air and sea drones are helping NOAA hurricane scientists explore the storms from never-before-seen angles.

From pinpointing potentially lifesaving details about storm conditions to answering questions previously unknown to science, the new tech is filling crucial gaps in understanding. "I have so many questions from looking at data over years," said NOAA Hurricane Field Program deputy director Heather Holbach. Holbach has flown through hurricane eyewalls nearly 100 times in pursuit of her research to refine wind speed estimates. The only way to answer those questions, Holbach says, is with more data from inside the storms — and drones can go where humans can't.

"I'm super excited to see where this is going to take us," she said. Take for instance, the Saildrone Explorer. It's an "uncrewed surface vessel" — that's a boat-like drone. The 23-foot-long, 1,000-pound, bright orange drone is solar- and hydro-powered, and it's remotely controlled via satellite by teams around the world. It continuously collects info about its surroundings to provide data points including salinity, water temperature and turbulence, as well as nearly real-time visuals from the ocean's surface.

Drones go inside hurricanes

Since National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration began a partnership with the California-based company Saildrone in 2014, the autonomous aquatic data collector has become a major boon for hurricane scientists. "The most valuable thing is we can steer these into hurricanes," said NOAA oceanographer Greg Foltz. "That's unique."

The data that the Saildrone collects from inside the storm's fury, where waves can reach 90 feet tall and winds climb to 125 mph, is fed directly into hurricane models. "We hope ultimately to improve the models and improve hurricane intensity prediction," Foltz said.

One particular concern is rapid intensification, or when hurricane winds increase by 35 mph or more in a 24 hour period. It's a pattern that is thought to be increasing with climate change, and more accurate predictions could help forecasters warn communities sooner. NOAA does not own the vessels. Instead, the agency pays Saildrone for the data they collect. Saildrone and NOAA collaborate throughout the hurricane season as they plan where to deploy the drones.

This hurricane season, plans include sending 10 of the drones into the tropical Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico. Two will remain on land for rapid deployment should a hurricane pop up in the Gulf, including one in St. Petersburg. Applications aren't limited to hurricanes. Saildrones and other autonomous tools could also be used to measure changes in ocean conditions over time or harmful algal blooms like red tide, researchers added.

Insights from all angles of the storm

Drone tech and other remote devices are now being used to measure storms at all angles. Here's a look at some of the tools being deployed by NOAA:

- Below the surface: Gliders, battery-powered drones that look like torpedoes, use buoyancy and gravity to glide up and down the water column. They provide water temperature, salinity and other data and can operate for months at a time.
- At the surface: Saildrone Explorers cruise where the sky meets the sea — a crucial place in the development of hurricanes. They measure data points like air, water and sea surface temperature, salinity, relative humidity, barometric pressure and wind speed and direction. Last year, the Saildrone provided visuals from a different perspective — inside Category 4 Hurricane Fiona. "Being able to see those videos from the Saildrone is just eye-opening, because I'm very interested in what's happening at the ocean's surface," Holbach said.
- In the air: "Uncrewed aircraft systems," also known as drones, are sent into the layers of the hurricane where NOAA's crewed planes can't descend — heights of about 4,000 feet and below. The drones measure for maximum wind speed, pressure, humidity, turbulence and other factors. Drones in various phases of testing include the Blackswift, a small, lightweight flier, and the larger Altius, both of which penetrate into the storm. Last year, the Altius rode into Hurricane Ian's Category 5 force winds when the Hurricane Hunter crew had to turn back for safety. The drone lasted 102 minutes and was able to transmit back to the NOAA crew from 130 miles away. Another new addition to the drone fleet is the Dragoon, an aircraft in the testing phase that can fly for over 26 hours and will be used to monitor the outside perimeter of storms.
- Riding the wind: Dropsondes, small tube-shaped instruments outfitted with sensors, are launched directly into the storm from NOAA's crewed aircraft. As they catch a ride on the hurricane express, they report vital info back to scientists.

This hurricane season, NOAA scientists are looking to bring all the helpful tech together in one hurricane. "If we can get the glider, the saildrone and uncrewed aircraft all measuring in the same place at the same time, that gives scientists a really incredible picture of the air-sea interaction with dynamics," said NOAA Corps Captain William Mowitt, who directs the agency's Uncrewed Systems Operations Center.

Data collected by the uncrewed technology will also feed into the Hurricane Analysis and Forecast System — a new forecast model that NOAA is launching this year. NOAA received \$6.9 billion in the

2023 federal budget, with an emphasis on programs that improve the agency’s ability to “predict extreme weather associated with climate change.”

Will drones replace NOAA’s Hurricane Hunters?

Are drones taking over for humans in exploring hurricanes? Not anytime soon. With the next generation of NOAA’s famous “Hurricane Hunter” aircraft currently in development, people are still going to be flying into storms for many years to come, said Joseph Cione, lead meteorologist with NOAA’s Hurricane Research Division. However, he predicts a “slow transition” toward fully uncrewed systems over the next several decades.

For now, NOAA researchers say going into the storm still provides valuable firsthand insights. “That’s one of things I love about getting on this plane and flying,” Holbach said inside of NOAA’s hurricane hunting P-3 Orion aircraft, nicknamed “Miss Piggy.” “I learn so much just from looking out the windows, seeing what it looks like and being able to immediately connect that to the data.”

Miami Herald article by Ryan Ballog

CANADA APPROVED FOR POSEIDON MMA (Janes 6/29):

The US government has approved the sale to Canada of the Boeing P-8A Poseidon maritime multimission aircraft (MMA). The US Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) announced the Department of State approval and the prospective procurement of 16 aircraft on 27 June. The sale, which also includes spares, training, and support, would be valued at approximately USD5.9 billion.



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“This proposed sale will increase Canadian maritime forces' interoperability with the United States and other allied forces, as well as their ability to contribute to missions of mutual interest. This will significantly improve network-centric warfare capability for the US forces operating globally alongside Canada,” the DSCA said.

The Canadian government is looking to acquire the Poseidon for its Canadian Multi-Mission Aircraft (CMMA) requirement to replace the ageing Lockheed CP-140 Auroras of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). The RCAF, which operates all Canadian military aviation, fields 14 P-3 Orion-derived CP-140 maritime patrol aircraft (MPA) that were first received in 1980. Although the fleet has lately been upgraded with Link 11 and Link 16 datalinks, the service is seeking a replacement for 2030.

The P-8A Poseidon is flown by the Royal Australian Air Force, Royal New Zealand Air Force, Royal Norwegian Air Force, UK Royal Air Force, and US Navy, and is on order with the Republic of Korea Navy and German Navy. The P-8I Neptune variant is flown by the Indian Navy.

Janes article by Gareth Jennings

TITAN SUB SEARCH COULD COST TAXPAYERS MILLIONS (Jalopnik 6/27):

Experts estimate that the rescue effort for the Titan submersible quickly surpassed a million bucks, but the U.S. Coast Guard won't try and recoup its costs. The search for the Titan submersible captured the world's attention last week. For a few days, we were all hoping for a quick recovery of everyone involved, analyzing the design of the craft and concocting theories about giant squid attacks – we were all hooked. But while we knew that everyone on board the sub paid \$250,000 to be there, did anyone consider the cost of the rescue attempt?

Well, estimates are now starting to trickle in for the cost of the rescue mission, which saw all manner of planes, ships, and remote subs scour the wreckage of the Titanic for any sign of the OceanGate craft. After four days, the search was ended after it was determined that the Titan submersible imploded while diving beneath the sea.

Now, AP News reports that the cost of that rescue effort could spiral into the millions of dollars after it called on agencies and privateers from around the globe to lend their latest equipment to the effort. According to the site, "The aircraft, alone, are expensive to operate, and the Government Accountability Office has put the hourly cost at tens of thousands of dollars. Turboprop P-3 Orion and jet-powered P-8 Poseidon sub hunters, along with C-130 Hercules, were all utilized in the search."

What's more, while the search area was scaled back in recent days, the sheer volume of water being scoured for the lost sub didn't help matters. Agencies were searching an area of the Atlantic Ocean that was "twice the size of Connecticut" to depths as far as two and a half miles down.

The complexities of a search like this meant that the costs soon began spiraling. As of Friday, The Washington Post predicted that America's role in the search "has cost about \$1.2 million to date." But, the final figure could soon surpass that estimate, as the site explains, "The complete costs, and who ultimately pays them, are unknown and depend on several factors. The search employed private companies and research vessels carrying remote operated vehicles, including the one that ultimately found the Titan. It is unclear if the U.S. government will pay those entities, but it is possible if the Defense Department put them under contract."

However, there is one agency involved in the search that is sure not to go hunting for recuperation, and that's the U.S. Coast Guard. According to AP News, the U.S. agency is "generally prohibited by federal law" from recuperating its cost following a rescue mission. In a statement released Friday, the U.S. Coast Guard said: "The Coast Guard, as a matter of both law and policy, does not seek to recover the costs associated with search and rescue from the recipients of those services." But while the cost of the search is expected to rise while workers continue looking for debris from the sub, it's worth remembering that the bill is expected to be eclipsed by the amount the U.S. spent shooting a Chinese spy balloon out the sky with fighter jets and Sidewinder missiles.

Jalopnik article by Owen Bellwood

NAS JAX AND US NAVY BID FAREWELL TO THE P-3C ORION (Action News Jax 6/23):

The Navy bid a final farewell to the P-3C Orion aircraft, which took its final flight from NAS Jax Friday afternoon. The Orion has been in service in the United States Navy for more than 60 years, spanning

generations of pilots, who used it as their instrument to carry out their mission and relied on it to get them home safely.

The sendoff started with the roar of the plane's four engines firing up one by one, followed by a quick taxi and then take off. A final goodbye with a wing wave to the hundreds of Navy veterans and family members marked the end of the P-3C, as the last of its kind headed to the boneyard in Arizona.

Just before the sendoff, former pilots, crewmembers and support staff paid homage to the Orion. "This plane has united six decades of Naval aviators," Senior Chief Petty Officer Armando Carrillo Jr. with VP-30 said.

The P-3 was formally introduced to the Naval fleet in 1962 in response to the Soviet Union's growing armada of submarines. The plane has seen action in every major American conflict since the Vietnam War. It's one of just five aircraft that can boast more than half a century of service to the United States military.

"This is the instrument that we've used to propagate freedom," Captain Derrick Eastman, Commanding Officer of the VP-30 squadron, said. VP-30 has trained servicemembers on the P-3 since the 60's. "And it is a special feeling to know that they're going out there to do the same exact things that I was taught to do over 20 years ago," Eastman said.

Captain Eastman said it's sad to say goodbye to the Orion, but its mission lives on in a new generation of aircraft tasked with carrying out the same critical role long into the future. "The legacy continues, you know, we're literally taking that baton from one platform to another, and the mission is the same," Eastman said.

At NAS Jax and throughout the country the P-3's mission will, and in many cases already has been, replaced by the newer more technologically advanced P-8A Poseidon. But the decades of service the P-3 contributed to protecting the country will never be forgotten by the countless men and women who served on the aircraft.

Action News Jax article By Jake Stofan

GOODBYE TO ROYAL NORWEIGAN AIR FORCE P-3 ORION (Scramble 6/4):

On 30 June 2023, the Luftforsvaret (Royal Norwegian Air Force) will officially withdraw the Lockheed P-3C Orion from service. On this date, the last operational aircraft will make its final flight.

The retirement of the Orion will be marked by a ceremony at Andøya Air Station, where the aircraft were based. This ceremony will serve a double purpose as it also marks the decommissioning of the Andøya Air Station.



The unit, 333 skvadron For Konge og Fedreland (For the king and fatherland), still has two active Orions. On 3 and 4 June 2023, P-3C with serial 3299 Ulabrand, made its final public appearance

overflying the Sola Airshow. On its way to and from the airshow, the aircraft made a flypast over Rygge Air Station.

So, after 54 years of service, the era of the Orion in Norwegian service will come to an end. The RNoAF replaced the Orion with the Boeing P-8A Poseidon, of which the fifth and last aircraft was delivered on 27 May 2022. Norway ordered five P-8A Maritime Multimission Aircraft (MMA) in a USD 1,2 billion Foreign Military Sale (FMS) contract in March 2017. The MMAs were purchased as a replacement for the Orions as well as the two Dassault Falcon 20ECM surveillance aircraft.

On 18 March 2023, Scramble Magazine first reported that Argentina was in negotiations with the Norwegian government for the possible purchase of three or four Lockheed P-3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft. According to our knowledge, a final contract has not been signed yet.

ARGENTINA TO BUY 4 P-3s FROM NORWAY (MarcoPress 5/20):



Argentina's Defense Ministry agreed to purchase four long-range Lockheed Martin P-3 Orion aircraft from Norway at a cost of US\$ 67 million to increase the South American country's patrolling capabilities in the South Atlantic, it was reported Friday in Buenos Aires. The units will be used by the Navy to control illegal fishing up to the 200th mile, which is reportedly on the rise.

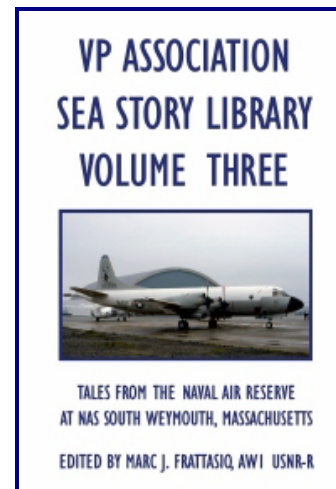
Cabinet Chief Agustín Rossi told Congress last week that this acquisition would “allow a sustained [surveillance] system in time for the next 20 years.” The deal to be paid for over the next three years through Argentina's National Defense Fund was reached with the Norwegian Defense Materiel Agency (NDMA), according to Buenos Aires media, which also pointed out that Washington's nod was needed for the transaction since two of the four aircraft are currently in the United States for maintenance. The other two aircraft are operational in Norway until June and July, at which time they will be sent to the United States before being delivered to Argentina. The equipment installed on the aircraft and the maintenance tasks were included in the negotiations.

The Lockheed P-3 Orion was developed for the U.S. Navy for maritime patrol, reconnaissance, and anti-submarine warfare. The Orion is based on the Electra passenger transport of the same company, is a low-wing monoplane, powered by four turboprops with a ventral hold for dropping bombs, torpedoes, or anti-submarine mines, and also has sub-wing supports that allow it to increase the offensive load, including anti-ship missiles.

An external characteristic of this aircraft is its elongated tail, where the magnetic anomaly detector is installed, for the search and detection of submarines. Its autonomy is 12 hours and its radius of action covers about 1,500 nautical miles (2,780 km). Since their technology is fully digital, these aircraft perform photographic intelligence and ship identification missions. But in addition to their maritime patrol duties, they are prepared for anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare, which is why they have historically been considered powerful combat aircraft.

RECOMMENDED READING:

Well, it took over a dozen years to do it, but your newsletter editor finally collected enough “sea stories” from shipmates at reunions and other gatherings over the years to finally put together a third NAS South Weymouth related sea story volume. You can check this 123-page book out at <https://www.lulu.com>. While you are there, be sure to check out volumes one and two. All proceeds from the sale of these three books goes to the VP Association. Its sad, but something on the order of a third of the people who contributed towards this book have passed on since I recorded their experiences. Unfortunately, that’s the nature of all veterans’ organizations like the VP Association. If you have an interesting or amusing story to tell about your experiences in the reserve patrol squadrons at NAS South Weymouth for inclusion in a possible fourth volume contact your newsletter editor at marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.



ON THE INTERNET:

Your newsletter editor took videos of the last VP-30 P-3 Orion’s engine starts, taxi to the runway, takeoff, and low pass. You can view these videos on the VP-92 and VP-MAU Facebook groups at www.facebook.com.

PARTING SHOTS:



ABOVE: VP-92 personnel posed out on the hangar deck at old NAS Brunswick not too long before the squadron was disestablished in 2007. Have a photo to share? Contact your newsletter editor at marc_frattasio@yahoo.com.



ABOVE: VP-MAU personnel at the command's last holiday party in December 1990. **BELOW:** The last VP-92 holiday party attended by your newsletter editor in December 1999. If you'd like to connect with old shipmates like these come to the combined VP-MAU and VP-92 mini-reunion at the NAS Brunswick base reunion on Saturday September 16th! Go to <https://bnamuseum.org> for details.



Until Next Time, Lose Not Thy Speed In Flight Lest The Earth Rise Up And Smite Thee – "Frat".

