

Coast Guard delivering upgraded multi-mission helicopters to Air Station Detroit



Air Station Detroit

Sept. 29, 2023

MT. CLEMENS, Mich. – Coast Guard Air Station Detroit received its first upgraded MH-65E Dolphin helicopter Tuesday to replace the legacy MH-65D helicopters that support Coast Guard missions throughout the Great Lakes region.

The avionics upgrade to the “E” configuration provides enhanced search and rescue capabilities including modern “glass cockpit” technology that increases pilot and aircrew situational awareness and provides commonality with the

service's MH-60T Jayhawk fleet.

The Dolphin upgrades also include reliability and capability improvements for the automatic flight control system, enhanced digital weather and surface radar, and multifunctional displays with more accurate fuel calculations.

The upgrades comply with the Federal Aviation Administration's Next Generation Airspace Transportation System requirements and extend the aircraft service life to the late 2030s.

The transition of Air Station Detroit's five MH-65D helicopters to the upgraded "E" configuration is expected to take approximately two months.

During the upgrade period, the unit's 23 pilots will undergo a three-week transition course at the Coast Guard's Aviation Training Center in Mobile, Ala. Aircrew and mechanics will receive formal training specific to their roles and duties delivered by a team from the Coast Guard's Aviation Technical Training Center in Elizabeth City, N.C.

"The upgrades and advanced training will enhance the situational awareness of our aircrews and improve our mission planning capabilities" said Cmdr. Christian Polyak, commanding officer of Air Station Detroit. "The replacement and inspection of key aircraft components as a part of the upgrade also extend the aircraft's service life and enable us to continue ensuring maritime safety, security and stewardship far into the future."

Air Station Detroit Dolphin helicopter crews perform search and rescue, maritime law enforcement and marine environmental protection, and provide aids to navigation and ice patrol support throughout the Great Lakes region. Air Station Detroit helicopters and aircrews also provide support to augment the North American Aerospace Defense Command's airspace security mission in Washington, D.C., and throughout the country as

required for national security.

Each MH-65D undergoes a six-month conversion to the MH-65E at the Coast Guard's Aviation Logistics Center in Elizabeth City, N.C. Detroit is the 11th of 13 MH-65 Air Stations to receive the upgraded MH-65E. The Coast Guard plans to complete conversion of all 98 of its Dolphin helicopters to the MH-65E configuration by the end of 2024.

For more information visit the MH-65 Program page at SRR – MH-65 (uscg.mil).