Navy Concludes Helicopter Aviator Training in TH-57 SeaRanger



PENSACOLA, Fla. (Feb. 23, 2017) Two U.S. Navy TH-57C Sea Ranger helicopters conduct a formation training flight over Pensacola Beach, Fla. (U.S. Navy photo by Ensign Antonio More)

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – The. U.S. Navy has retired the Bell TH-57 Sea Ranger helicopter from training naval aviators after 57 years of training Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and foreign naval aviators to fly helicopters.

The last Sea Ranger in Training Air Wing Five, TH-57C Bureau Number 162668, side number E-106, based at Naval Air Station (NAS) Whiting Field, Florida, made its last flight on Sept. 19, 2025, and was delivered to the National Naval Aviation

Museum at NAS Pensacola, Florida. The helicopter was presented that day to museum director Sterling Gillum by the pilot, Commander James Gelsinon.

Another of the wing's TH-57Cs was delivered to the USS Lexington Museum in Corpus Christi, Texas.

The TH-57 in its three versions – A, B, and C – provided flight training over the years to student rotary wing aviators by Training Air Wing Five's Helicopter Training Squadrons HT-8, HT-18, and HT-28. The Navy procured a total of 40 TH-57As, 51 TH-57Bs, and 89 TH-57Cs.

The TH-57 is not quite gone, however, being used at NAS Patuxent River, Maryland, by an air test and evaluation squadron, HX-21.

"HX-21 still flies TH-57 for readiness flights, not testing," said Connie Briggs, a spokeswoman for the Naval Air Systems Command. "Right now, there are no immediate plans to retire the aircraft."

The TH-57 has been succeeded by the TH-73A Thrasher for training naval helicopter pilots at Whiting Field. The Thrasher is built by AgustaWestland Philadelphia, a Leonardo company.