

Navy Receives First Fleet-Representative Next-Generation Jammer Mid-Band Pods



Kennie Martinez and Marc Dannemiller, Raytheon Intelligence & Space employees, unbox the first of two Next Generation Jammer Mid-Band fleet representative pods that were delivered to the Airborne Electronic Attack Systems pod shop at Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division, Patuxent River, Maryland, July 7. *U.S. NAVY*

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The U.S. Navy's first AN/ALQ-249 Next Generation Jammer Mid-Band (NGJ-MB) production representative pods arrived at the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division Patuxent River, Maryland, July 7, the Naval Air Systems Command said Aug. 8.

The two fleet representative test articles, which make up an NGJ-MB shipset, were delivered to the Airborne Electronic Attack Systems Program Office (PMA-234) pod shop where they

will be used to complete the developmental test program and commence operational test that requires the use of operationally representative hardware and software.

Lt. Alexander Belbin, AEA project officer with NAWCAD's Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (VX) 23, said he's most looking forward to being able to test what the fleet is getting.

"We will test the pods for everything we expect to encounter in the fleet," said Belbin. "For example, the power they generate, the frequency range they operate in, and the effects we can achieve against expected targets across the spectrum."

The remainder of developmental test will be conducted by VX-23 and VX-31, located at the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division, China Lake, California, and operational testing will be conducted by VX-9 at Naval Air Weapons Station China Lake. To date, NGJ-MB has successfully completed more than 300 hours of developmental flight testing and has more than 5,000 hours of chamber and lab testing using the engineering development models that were designed specifically for developmental testing.

NGJ-MB is part of a larger system that will augment and ultimately replace the legacy ALQ-99 Tactical Jamming System currently used on the EA-18G Growler.

Belbin said NGJ-MB's increased power and capacity to target multiple systems will be significant enhancements over the ALQ-99.

"I have flown the Growler in the fleet and will eventually be going back. I may one day fly missions with the very pods that we will be testing for the first time," Belbin said.

The U.S. Navy will receive six shipsets from Raytheon Intelligence & Space, the original equipment manufacturer. Once the flight test program is complete, the pods will be sent to the fleet in conjunction with the first low rate

initial production shipsets for initial operational capability, which is scheduled for fall 2023.

“It is imperative we deliver this game-changing electronic warfare capability to the warfighter as quickly as possible,” said Capt. Dave Rueter, PMA-234 program manager. “Receiving the production representative pods allows us to finish the flight test program and ensure we have a reliable product for the U.S. Navy and our Royal Australian Air Force cooperative partners.”