NAWCAD Lakehurst Hosts Groundbreaking Ceremony For New Test Site Capability

Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division Lakehurst held a groundbreaking ceremony on Jan. 14 for an upgrade of the Runway Arrested Landing Site testing facility. The update will house a Joint Precision Approach and Landing System (JPALS) and an Unmanned Carrier Aviation Mission Control System for the MQ-25 and other aircraft programs. (U.S. Navy Photo)
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JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST, N.J. – On a day when the ground at Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division Lakehurst was so cold it made digging into the dirt a challenge, a groundbreaking ceremony for an upgrade of the Runway Arrested Landing Site testing facility welcomed the start of a new chapter in the installation's testing capabilities.

The Jan. 14 event was attended by representatives of the Unmanned Carrier Aviation (PMA-268), Aircraft Launch and

Recovery Equipment (ALRE) (PMA-251) program offices, and NAWCAD Lakehurst leadership, including Capts. Daniel Fucito and Mike Kline, as well as other stakeholders of the project.

When completed, the update will house a Joint Precision Approach and Landing System (JPALS) and an Unmanned Carrier Aviation Mission Control System for the MQ-25 and other aircraft programs.

“This groundbreaking represents a significant step forward in Lakehurst’s ability to complete the initial carrier suitability testing for one of the Navy’s major North Star programs in the MQ-25,” said CDR. Adam Pawlak, NAWCAD Lakehurst Officer-in-Charge.

The JPALS update will allow compatibility testing for the MQ-25 on ALRE systems, starting with the TC-13 steam catapult and MK-7 arresting gear currently used on legacy aircraft carriers. Future testing will also be conducted using the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System and Advanced Arresting Gear found on the newer Ford-class carriers.

The update will also include a Mobile Integrated Telemetry System, which can be used to set up temporary aircraft data management telemetry systems during testing.

Pawlak added the groundbreaking ceremony lays the foundation for Lakehurst’s ability to test critical unmanned platforms of the future.