



## NOAA Teachers in the Air Barney Peterson and Dana Tomlinson Onboard NOAA Aircraft 42 P-3 Turbo-Prop (“Kermit”) February 15, 2008

**NOAA Teacher in the Air:** Dana Tomlinson and Barney Peterson

**NOAA Aircraft:** 42 P-3 Kermit Turbo-Prop

**Mission:** Winter Storms Reconnaissance

**Date:** Friday, February 15, 2008

**Geographical Area of Flight:** Exercise on Friday consisted of taxiing plane from repair facility to FlightCraft hangar at PDX Portland International Airport.

### Science and Technology Log

We met with Project Manager Jack Parrish and drove back to the airport. On the plane’s previous flight, it had sustained damage to the port wing due to a birdstrike. The plane had been repaired and was being returned to the parking place from which it is flown. Evidence of the repair was a small patch on the leading edge of the wing.



**The small, smooth patch on the wing where the repair had been made**

Our project manager explained that the aircraft is, by design, known as a Lockheed WP-3D



**The Kermit logo can be seen to the left of the stairs as Flight Director Almeida boards the plane.**

Orion, N42RF. Its official name in the NOAA fleet is Kermit, after the Muppet character, and the logo on the port side of the plane was designed by NOAA personnel and Jim Henson Productions. It shows Kermit hopping through the air with the words “Sky Hopper”. A sister ship, also a P-3 (N43-RF), is called Miss Piggy, and NOAA’s Gulfstream IV-SP jet is called Gonzo.

When we first met Kermit it was in the repair hangar. At that time Pilot Al Girimonte gave us a safety briefing and had us try on very sophisticated life jackets and then our survival suits. We familiarized ourselves with the

features of each piece of equipment: inflation, numerous signaling devices, small GPS unit, and oxygen supply.



**LCDR Girimonte showed us life jackets and gave instructions on how to put them on.**



**TIA's Dana Tomlinson (left) and Barney Peterson (right) show that they remember how to put on survival suits from their Teacher at Sea days.**

We both spent some time with Lcdr Girimonte, Flight Directors Damiano and Almeida, and Project Manager Parrish familiarizing ourselves with the instrumentation on the exterior of the aircraft before introduction to the inside. At that point they taxied Kermit to the FlightCraft hangar during which we sat in the cockpit and got to listen to pilots Girimonte and Newman communicate with the tower.



**The repair complete, Kermit was rolled out onto the runway and we prepared to taxi around to the hangar from which we would depart.**

After the aircraft was parked we returned to the hotel to await information on whether or not we would be tasked to fly on Sunday. Project Manager Parrish had already told us that we were not tasked (assigned to fly) for Saturday so we had taken advantage of the opportunity to taxi in the plane in case no flight orders came through while we were in Portland. We were both hoping that this would not be our only time in the aircraft!

### **Personal Log**

We both have been fortunate to have been Teachers at Sea and

were feeling really excited to have the chance to fly as Teachers in the Air. When Jack Parrish told us that riding in Kermit during the taxi from repair hangar to FlightCraft might be our only chance to be in the plane while it was moving we were both really disappointed. We spent the afternoon getting as much time with the plane and the crew as possible and hoping that orders would come through to actually do weather reconnaissance. We really appreciated the time the crew put into answering our questions and showing us around. Needless to say we were both hoping we would get to spend much more time with Kermit and the crew.