

MEDIA RELEASE

III Marine Expeditionary Force/Marine Corps Installations Pacific

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For Immediate Release

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

NEWS RELEASE

INTRODUCTION OF THE MV-22 AIRCRAFT INTO JAPAN

The Department of Defense, in close coordination with the Government of Japan, is moving forward with the introduction of the MV-22 aircraft to III Marine Expeditionary Force in Japan.

The DoD provided host nation notification to the Government of Japan in Tokyo June 29 that it will make a fleet upgrade to replace CH-46 helicopters with MV-22 Osprey aircraft. The aircraft will arrive at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni for unloading in late July.

At the request of the Government of Japan, the DoD has provided facts and preliminary findings from ongoing investigations of recent mishaps involving an MV-22 and CV-22 aircraft.

In the case of the April 11, 2012 MV-22 mishap in Morocco, flight data information indicates that the aircraft performed as expected and described in the MV-22 Naval Air Training and Operating Procedures Standardization (NATOPS) Flight Manual. The U.S. Marine Corps has determined the aircraft did not suffer from a mechanical or material failure and there were no problems with the safety of the aircraft.

In the case of the June 13, 2012 CV-22 mishap in Florida, a preliminary review of the incident has not uncovered any information which would preclude the continued operation of

the aircraft. The Department of Defense, including senior U.S. Air Force leaders, stands behind the CV-22's reliability and is convinced that the aircraft is safe for operations.

Based on these preliminary conclusions, and in close coordination with the Government of Japan, the DoD decided to proceed with the shipment of MV-22 aircraft.

In recognition of the remaining concerns of the Japanese government about the safety of the aircraft, the DoD will refrain from any flight operations of the MV-22 in Japan until the results of the investigations are presented to the Japanese government and the safety of flight operations is confirmed. The Defense Department anticipates presenting this information to the Japanese government in August.

During this period, Japan will be the only location worldwide where the United States will suspend MV-22 flight operations. The United States will continue uninterrupted flight operations of the MV-22 and CV-22 elsewhere around the world, including over the continental United States.

The MV-22 Osprey has an excellent safety record, and has surpassed 115,000 flight hours. About one third of the total hours were flown during the last two years. The Osprey achieved these flight hours performing combat operations, humanitarian assistance, training, and test and evaluation missions. Basing the Osprey in Okinawa will significantly strengthen the United States' ability to provide for the defense of Japan, perform humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations and fulfill other alliance roles.

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