

VHX PRESIDENTIAL HELICOPTER REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT

Marine Helicopter Squadron One (HMX-1) is required to provide safe and timely transportation for the President and Vice President of the United States, foreign heads of state, and others as directed by the White House Military Office. When the President is onboard Marine One, this aircraft is the Commander-in-Chief's primary command-and-control platform and must provide him with the flexibility and capabilities necessary to execute the duties of his office. The global nature of these commitments requires HMX-1 aircraft to deploy worldwide and operate in varying environmental and climatic conditions without mission degradation.

Currently two type, model, and series aircraft are utilized by HMX-1 for the Presidential support mission – the VH-3D and the VH-60N. Numerous modifications and improvements have been incorporated in both aircraft over the past several years to accommodate emerging technologies and additional White House requirements. Although robust platforms that enjoy one

of the best safety records in the Fleet, the VH-3D/VH-60N are aging designs with a finite ability to incorporate new technology. Given the dramatically changed nature of the threat environment since Sept. 11, 2001, the need for improved communications and survival capabilities has grown beyond the VH Fleet's structural and performance growth ability.

The VH-3D/VH-60N replacement currently referred to as VHX, will be a conventional helicopter. Its capabilities, which at a minimum will match those of the VH-3D, are split into four functional areas; aircraft operations, communications, survivability, and Presidential accommodations. VHX will have increased capabilities in these areas, while retaining core capabilities carried forward from the VH-3D and VH-60N. The VHX will meet current threat requirements, as well as other yet unseen challenges, to provide the President of the United States with robust and efficient transportation.