

# VH-92A<sup>®</sup> Patriot<sup>™</sup> Presidential Helicopter



The United States Marine Corps declared initial operational capability in December 2021 based upon the service's assessment of the VH-92A's operational effectiveness, suitability, and survivability demonstrated in IOT&E. Since the FY21 IOT&E, the program has made system improvements based on DOT&E recommendations from IOT&E and feedback from the White House Military Office (WHMO). Marine Helicopter Squadron One (HMX-1) conducted an FOT&E period from July 12 to September 16, 2022 under the auspices of the Navy's Operational Test and Evaluation Force (OPTEVFOR). VH-92A<sup>®</sup> is a registered trademark of the Department of the Navy.

## SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

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The VH-92A is a four-bladed, dual-piloted, twin-engine helicopter based on the Sikorsky S-92 medium lift helicopter, equipped with a Mission Communication System (MCS) to enable simultaneous short- and long range, secure and non-secure, voice and data communications. HMX-1 will use the VH-92A aircraft to conduct administrative lift and contingency operations intended to provide safe and timely, pre-planned or unscheduled, transport of the President of the United States and other parties as directed by the WHMO. The VH-92A is air transportable to remote locations via a single Air Force C-17 cargo aircraft. The VH-92A will replace the legacy fleet of VH-3D and VH-60N aircraft.

## MISSION

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HMX-1 will use the VH-92A aircraft to provide safe and timely transport of the President of the United States and other parties as directed by the WHMO. The MCS provides the passengers with reliable voice and data communications to carry out senior leader duties.

HMX-1 will operate the VH-92A from the White House South Lawn, commercial airports, military airfields, Navy ships, and austere sites throughout the world.

## PROGRAM

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VH-92A is an Acquisition Category IC program that does not include a Full-Rate Production decision. DOT&E approved: (1) the VH-92A Test and Evaluation Master Plan in 2015, (2) the IOT&E plan in 2020 in support of the United States Marine Corps declaration of initial operational capability and the WHMO's VH-92A Commissioning Program, and (3) the FOT&E plan in 2022 in support of verification of correction of deficiencies. The Department of the Navy procured 23 VH-92A aircraft.

### » MAJOR CONTRACTOR

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- Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, a Lockheed Martin Company – Stratford, Connecticut

## TEST ADEQUACY

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Integrated, operational, and cybersecurity testing were conducted in accordance with DOT&E-approved test plans, observed by DOT&E, and were adequate to evaluate effectiveness, suitability, and cyber survivability of the VH-92A as operated by HMX-1.

HMX-1 conducted FOT&E using operational aircraft from July 12 to September 16, 2022 under the auspices of OPTEVFOR. The majority of operations took place in the National Capitol Region using facilities and landing zones routinely employed by HMX-1. Representatives from the WHMO and other operational units

participated to the maximum extent possible. Additional data was gathered during familiarization and training events and initial operational commissioning plan events led by WHMO. In accordance with agreements made between OPTEVFOR and DOT&E, data gathered during the events were scored and included in FOT&E results when appropriate.

To address cybersecurity findings discovered during IOT&E, the Navy conducted cybersecurity testing as part of FOT&E. Results are included in the classified annex of the FOT&E report that will be published in FY23.

## PERFORMANCE

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### » EFFECTIVENESS

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The White House intends to place the VH-92A into service supporting the Presidential Lift mission in 2022 based on operational effectiveness demonstrated in FOT&E and the White House Commissioning Program. DOT&E's assessment of the VH-92A's effectiveness is described in detail in the FOT&E report that will be published in FY23.

### » SUITABILITY

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The White House intends to place the VH-92A into service supporting the Presidential Lift mission in 2022 based on operational suitability demonstrated in FOT&E and the White House Commissioning Program. DOT&E's assessment of the VH-92A's operational suitability is described

in detail in the FOT&E report that will be published in FY23.

## » **SURVIVABILITY**

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The White House intends to place the VH-92A into service supporting the Presidential Lift mission in 2022 based on

survivability demonstrated in FOT&E and the White House Commissioning Program. DOT&E's assessment of the VH-92A's survivability is described in detail in the FOT&E report that will be published in FY23.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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The Navy should:

1. Address recommendations found in DOT&E's FOT&E report and classified annex that will be published in FY23.