

HH-60W Jolly Green II



The Air Force has completed two of five objectives in the current HH-60W FOT&E plan to evaluate deferred capabilities and deficiency corrections from the FY22 IOT&E. DOT&E intends to publish a classified FOT&E report when all five objectives are complete.

SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

The Air Force HH-60W Jolly Green II is a new-build, dual-piloted, twin-engine helicopter that will replace the HH-60G. The aircraft is designed to extend the combat radius without aerial refueling, conduct out-of-ground-effect hover at its mid-mission gross weight, and improve survivability.

MISSION

Commanders will employ units equipped with the HH-60W to:

- Recover isolated personnel from hostile or denied territory, day or night, in adverse weather, and in a variety of threat environments from terrorist to chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear.
- Conduct humanitarian missions, civil search and rescue, disaster relief, medical evacuation, and non-combatant evacuation operations.

PROGRAM

The HH-60W is an Acquisition Category IC program. DOT&E approved the LFT&E Strategy in April 2015, the Milestone C TEMP in January 2020, and an updated full-rate production (FRP) TEMP in March 2023. DOT&E published a combined IOT&E and LFT&E report with a classified annex in March 2023 to inform the FRP decision.

DOT&E approved the current FOT&E test plan in June 2023. This test phase is evaluating upgraded hover symbology for reduced visibility approaches, the integration of a weapon deferred from IOT&E, and corrections of deficiencies discovered before and during IOT&E. Subsequent FOT&E plans will evaluate other deferred capabilities, primarily enhanced defensive systems, the full data link capability, and additional communications systems.

» MAJOR CONTRACTOR

- Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, a subsidiary of Lockheed Martin Corporation – Stratford, Connecticut

TEST ADEQUACY

The Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center (AFOTEC) conducted FOT&E in November 2023 per the DOT&E-approved test plan and observed by DOT&E. This testing, along with data collected from earlier testing in June 2023, completed two objectives covering defensive system and mission planning updates. AFOTEC issued a periodic report in February 2024 covering these objectives. DOT&E has received the test data and will publish a classified report when all five test plan objectives are completed. The final FOT&E objectives evaluating the upgraded hover symbology during restricted visibility approaches, the redesigned external mounted gun system, and the deferred GAU-18

weapon are currently estimated for FY25 or FY26.

PERFORMANCE

» EFFECTIVENESS

Updates to the defensive system software have improved the display of situational awareness information to crews operating in threat environments. Updated mission planning software improved crews' ability to plan missions, transfer data to the aircraft, and replan missions in flight. Crew surveys highlighted some remaining shortfalls that occasionally slowed mission planning or caused a loss of map data that degraded situational awareness. However, improved stability of mission planning systems and changes to aircraft launch procedures enabled crews to perform alert launches in less than the required time on seven of eight FOT&E sorties.

DOT&E will publish a detailed assessment in a classified report when all objectives for this test phase are complete.

» SUITABILITY

Technical data supporting maintenance has improved, but aircraft availability remains challenged by spares shortfalls in the supply system, particularly for the mission computer, data transfer unit, radar warning receiver (RWR) antenna units, and hoist cables. DOT&E will publish a detailed assessment in

a classified report when all FOT&E objectives are complete.

» **SURVIVABILITY**

Preliminary analysis of FOT&E data shows that updates to the RWR, missile warning system, and countermeasures dispensing system have improved crews' ability to conduct the personnel recovery mission in threat environments. The program is investigating further improvements to threat displays based on the latest test data. DOT&E will publish a detailed assessment in a classified report when all FOT&E objectives are complete.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Air Force should:

1. Complete FOT&E objectives regarding the upgraded hover symbology, the GAU-18, and the updated external gun mount.
2. Conduct FOT&E of the remaining deferred capabilities and planned capability upgrades as recommended in the FY23 Annual Report.
3. Continue to develop and implement software improvements to defensive systems and mission displays.