



WING UPDATE

2ND MAW CHERRY POINT

A wise military commander once said, "The price of success ... is continued success."

When Major General Robert F. Hedelund took command of the 2D Marine Aircraft Wing (2D MAW) from Major General Glenn M. Walters in May 2013, he brought with him a set of tenets that he titled, "What Matters to Us." His goal was to take an organization that was repeatedly proving itself in the crucible of combat and apply three broad principles to everyday operations to ensure the Marines of 2D MAW continued the Wing's legacy of success.

By the time the year was up, 2D MAW had cemented that legacy by applying the commander's first tenet – operational excellence. "We are mission focused," emphasized Hedelund. "We deliver the world's finest aviation support through professional and relevant execution of all six functions of Marine aviation and aviation ground support. A fundamental by-product of this tenet is safe execution of every evolution." The ultimate result of this principle's application was the successful support of the combatant commander in Afghanistan, expeditionary prowess during global operations and exercises, and the revolutionizing of capabilities of the air combat element (ACE) of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF).



OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF)

In his initial planning guidance, General James E. Amos, 35th Commandant, directed that the Corps "remain a multi-capable, combined arms force, comfortable operating at the high and the low ends of the threat spectrum, or in the shaded areas where they overlap." The Wing, specifically 2D MAW (Fwd), immediately demonstrated the ability to operate exactly as directed when it deployed to Southwestern Afghanistan and assumed control of the airspace from 3D MAW in January.

The Marines of 2D MAW maintained a high operational tempo during the turnover with 3D MAW (Fwd) and ensured continuing support to Marines, soldiers, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), and Afghan National Security Forces, helping to deny insurgents' freedom of movement during the slower pace of the winter fighting season.

Marines and units organic to every 2D MAW group participated in OEF throughout the year. Both fixed-wing and rotary-wing squadrons maintained air superiority and provided close air support (CAS) missions while being supported by the Marine Wing Support Squadrons (MWSS) and Marine Aviation Logistics Squadrons (MALS) from 2D MAW.

Marines and Sailors also worked and trained alongside coalition partners and allies in myriad operations and exercises including Operation Neon Falcon with the Royal Bahrain Air Force, training with the Kuwait Air Force, and participating in operations during Exercise Eager Lion in Jordan alongside military forces from 18 countries.

AROUND THE GLOBE

While many 2D MAW units conducted operations in Afghanistan, others were scattered across the globe applying the commanding general's second tenet – 2D MAW Marines and Sailors will be standards based – they will embrace the Corps' standards as well as the standards set for their areas of specialty. "We will know our profession, our role, our machines, our capabilities and our limitations – cold."

They did this by excelling in the full spectrum of operations in support of Marine expeditionary units (MEUs), special purpose MAGTFs, the unit deployment program (UDP), joint shipboard training and continental



United States (CONUS)-based training. Highlights from the year include: Marine Aircraft Group 29 (MAG-29) provided support for Combined Joint Task Force – Horn of Africa (CJTTF-HOA); multinational training with German and Italian military contingents during Exercise Bold Quest 1-13; JTF-North on the Arizona border, which assisted with horizontal construction and road projects; forward-arming and refueling point (FARP) operations during Exercise Spartan Vasilles; CAS escort sorties and hasty tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel (TRAP) missions during Exercise Carolina Thunder; and Weapons and Tactics Instructor's (WTI) Course 2-13.

MAG-26 provided direct support for the 22nd MEU; 2d Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment with a troop lift for 120 Marines; static-line and free-fall parachute operations with 2d Reconnaissance Battalion; medium-lift support for SPMAGTF-Crisis Response in Moron, Spain; and hosted training for the Israeli Air Force on the MV-22B Osprey maintenance program.

MAG-14 deployed squadrons to Iwakuni, Japan in support of the UDP; supported Exercise Red

Flag13-3 at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada; deployed Marines to Rota, Spain in support of the 26th MEU; began a construction project at Marine Corps Auxiliary Landing Field Bogue, North Carolina; participated in Mountain Roundup in Idaho, Key Resolve in Korea, and Exercise Bold Quest in Indiana. Bold Quest 13-1 allowed 2D MAW to train with its NATO allies and sister services. United States armed forces partnered with Germany, Italy, Norway, and France to conduct the exercise. The large-force nature of the exercise provided an operationally dynamic environment for pilots and the opportunity for planners to incorporate assets and personnel not normally available. The Group also hosted U.S. Senator Kay Hagan from North Carolina and Lieutenant General Robert E. Schmidle Jr., Deputy Commandant for Marine Aviation.

MAG-31 deployed multiple squadrons to mainland Japan in support of the UDP while supporting a wide variety of training exercises including Exercise Cobra Gold in Thailand, Exercise Balikatan in the Republic of the Philippines, Exercise Eager Lion in Bahrain, Exercise Lava Viper in Hawaii, and Exercise

Asan Fury in Guam. The Group also attached a squadron to USS *Harry S. Truman* (CVN 75) to integrate with strike group assets during composite training unit exercise (COMPTUEX). A detachment of Marines and equipment was also sent to Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Yuma, Arizona, and Navy Air Facility (NAF) El Centro, California, in support of Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course 1-14.

Marine Air Control Group 28 (MACG-28) provided support to both the 22nd and 26th MEUs; conducted live-fire shoots with the M2 .50-caliber and M240B machine guns and the Stinger Missile System; and supported a comprehensive list of training exercises including Exercise Eager Lion, Marine Air Command and Control System Integrated Simulation Training Exercise (MISTEX) 3-14, Exercise Rolling Thunder with 2d Marine Division, and a Tactical Air Control Party Exercise. MACG-28 provided mobile training teams (MTT) to educate personnel on the latest technological advances for the Common Aviation Command and Control System (CAC2S).

CONTINUING A PROUD HERITAGE

As a warfighting organization rich in tradition and proud history, the Marine Corps recognizes the unique role aviation has in the Corps. In its 101st year, Marine Corps aviation embarked on a new century of supporting the warfighter. The Marines of 2D MAW embraced this legacy of innovation through the implementation of technological advances and evolved training tactics.

Several milestones happened throughout the year beginning with the "All Home" flight, where an MV-22B Osprey from each of MAG-26's seven squadrons took flight over Cherry Point, signifying the rare event of all seven squadrons home at once. MAG-29 celebrated

the final flight of the UH-1N Huey during its sundown event in January. Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 467 (HMLA-467) added its first "Yankee," the UH-1Y Venom, to its aircraft arsenal 17 April. The "Sabers" were the last squadron Corps-wide to upgrade to the Venom from the UH-1N Huey. The new aircraft boasts its most noticeable change, four-bladed, ballistically tolerant main and tail rotors. It also features upgraded integrated avionics systems, dual engines, and the ability to carry larger payloads.

Marine Fighter Attack Training Squadron 501 (VMFAT-501) revolutionized hot pit refueling operations resulting in increased sortie generation rates. VMFAT-501

also completed its first short takeoff, vertical landing (STOVL) flight in the F-35B Lightning II.

To further demonstrate its commitment toward improving today's aviation, 2D MAW transferred Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 2 (VMU-2) from MACG-28 to MAG-14 to realize the benefits of integrating the squadron's unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) RQ-7B Shadow with Group operations.

An AV-8B Harrier assigned to VMA-223 lands aboard the amphibious assault ship USS *Wasp* (LHD 1) during flight deck qualifications on 28 June 2013.

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**TOP**

An AH-1W Super Cobra takes off during a joint shipboard training exercise in 2013. The Wing participated in a variety of training exercises scattered across the globe demonstrating the ability to operate across the full spectrum of operations.

PHOTO COURTESY: U.S. MARINE CORPS

CENTER

LCpl Miguel A. Romero, a heavy equipment operator with MWSS-271, works diligently to achieve the mission at Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan on 8 May 2013.

PHOTO COURTESY: U.S. MARINE CORPS

**BOTTOM**

A Marine F-35B Lightning II lifts off from the runway during the first short take-off and vertical landing mission at Eglin Air Force Base, FL, on 25 Oct 2013. Maj Brendan M. Walsh, of the VMFAT-501, flew the milestone Joint Strike Fighter training mission.

U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO/SAMUEL KING JR.



VMU-2 demonstrated the benefits of integrating the Shadow during a training exercise with 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, and 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines. During the exercise, VMU-2 Marines provided the infantry with near real-time full motion video increasing communications capabilities. With a constant stream of information from UAVs, ground commanders were able to react quickly to previously unseen threats and move decisively against targets of opportunity.

This was an award-winning year for 2D MAW; several units and individuals were recognized for their merit and accomplishments. MAG-14 boasted several unit awards including VMU-2 earning the Edward S. Fris Trophy for Air Control Unit of the Year; Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare Training Squadron 1 (VMAQ-1) earning the Royal N. Moore Electronic Warfare Squadron of the Year award, and

VMFA-115, also known as the "Silver Eagles," reflected on their storied tradition and history as they celebrated 70 years of excellence on 8 November, aboard Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort. Established on 1 July 1943 in Santa Barbara, CA, the Silver Eagles have distinguished themselves time and time again in the history books. They started off with a fleet of F4U-1 Corsairs and were the first Marine Corps squadron to receive a full complement of the F9F-2 Panther jet fighters in 1949. The squadron was also the first Marine Corps' jet squadron to serve aboard a carrier, the USS *Roosevelt*, in 1950.

PHOTO COURTESY: U.S. MARINE CORPS



Marine Attack Squadron 231 (VMA-231) receiving the Chief of Naval Operations Safety Award and an award from Boeing for surpassing 30,000 mishap-free flight hours. Likewise, two MAG-26 pilots were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for a pre-dawn combat raid in the Helmand province, making them the first MV-22B pilots to receive the decoration. The career planner at 2D MAW was also dubbed the best in the Corps; likewise, 2D MAW's Capt. Christine Taranto was selected as the Marine Corps' 2013 Female Athlete of the Year.

Throughout all of these accomplishments lie the threads of the 2D MAW commander's third tenet – respect and concern for all. "We are all inclusive – every one of us matters!" said Hedelund. "Whether we're single, married, family, partners, civilian Marines, or fellow Marines and Sailors; we take care of ourselves and we take care of each other. We insist on interested, engaged, and concerned leadership at every level in order to build the best possible climate."

By applying all of the commander's tenets, in 2013 2D MAW continued to deploy the best-trained, most-ready MEU air combat elements, unit deployment squadrons and detachments, and special purpose MAGTFs. Extensive training cycles preceding departure ensured those units remained ready, proficient and competent throughout the work-ups and deployments. Units trained to a variety of mission sets so if diverted to a surprise location for an unforeseen crisis, 2D MAW units would arrive on scene with the airborne power and precision the country demands of its Marine Corps. Throughout the year, 2D MAW showcased its ability to answer that demand, set the bar high, and remain second to none.

RIGHT

MV-22B Ospreys fly in formation over the airfield at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point. In early 2013, 2D MAW conducted an "all home" flight, where an MV-22B Osprey from each of MAG-26's seven squadrons took flight over Cherry Point, signifying that all seven squadrons were all home at once.

PHOTO COURTESY: U.S. MARINE CORPS

FAR RIGHT

SSgt Joseph M. Sellars, an MV-22B Osprey crew chief with VMM-264, provides aerial support over Camp Bastion, Helmand province, Afghanistan on 31 March 2013.

PHOTO COURTESY: U.S. MARINE CORPS



