

Community Leaders Forum
MCAS Miramar – Apr 22, 2010

The April CLF meeting was held in the Commanding Officer's Conference Room on board MCAS Miramar at 5:30 p.m. on the 22 of April.

Opening remarks were from the Commanding Officer, Col. Frank Richie. Col. Richie told us that approximately \$290 Million is being spent on the base to prepare for the arrival of 8 squadrons of V-22 Osprey aircraft. This will require the construction of a new hangar, the modification of another hanger and a redesign of the refueling pits. The introduction of the V-22 will take some time. Each existing squadron of CH-46 helicopters will give up their old helicopters and transition to the new V-22. The ground and flight crews will have to learn all aspects of flying and maintaining this new and very different aircraft. It will take several years to complete the project of replacing the CH-46s with the V-22s. People living in proximity to the base will notice a reduction in noise and vibration as the CH-46s are phased out. The V-22s are much quieter aircraft and typically will fly the same route structure as the jets.

Col. Richie also informed us that MCAS Miramar has been designated as one of two "GREEN" bases. The base will begin using methane gas from the landfill that is partially owned by Miramar to power generators. Also, additional economic stimulus dollars are being sought to add thousands of square feet of photovoltaic panels. With these solar collectors, Miramar should be able to rely almost entirely on internally produced power, a huge savings to the taxpayer in the long term.

Major Mike Boorstein from Marine Air Group 16 Operations department was the guest speaker for this meeting. His topic was the V-22.

The V-22 Osprey is a propeller driven aircraft that can take off like a helicopter. The aircraft can fly from 0 to 300 knots and travel from 200 feet altitude to over 25,000 feet. The aircraft is entirely controlled by computer. The pilot provides inputs to the computer and then the computer issues the appropriate commands to the flight controls to cause the aircraft to perform the maneuvers requested by the pilot. There are no direct cables or rods for flight controls, nor are there lots of hydraulic lines like in conventional aircraft.

The transition to this new aircraft has already begun. VMM-161 has 3 aircraft onboard that they practice flying and use to train maintenance personnel. The base plans to begin the transition of two squadrons every year until all eight squadrons are equipped with the new aircraft. Miramar will be home for eight squadrons of 12 aircraft each, though it is expected that approximately one third of these squadrons will be deployed at any given time frame.

The east coast Marine Squadrons were the first to receive the V-22. This aircraft has performed very well in Iraq/Afghanistan theaters. It is fast, reliable and has proven to be superior to the helicopters it is replacing.

Miramar field operations have taken a significant jump this March compared to March of last year. This past March the base had 8948 flight operations compared to March of 2009 where 4008 flight operations were logged. This was partly due to the deployment schedule as well as a significant increase in field carrier landing practice operations.

Noise complaints for March 2010 were higher as well. The base received 25 noise complaints this past March compared to 19 for March of 2009.

There are two flight routes that affect Rancho Bernardo. They are the Lakee North, which was formally called the Julian North jet route. That route received no noise complaints from Rancho Bernardo residents during March. The other route is the I-15 helicopter route, which received 2 noise complaints, one of which was from Rancho Bernardo.

The next planned CLF meeting will be May 20, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

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