



**NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations  
(OMAO)**

**Aircraft Flights and Mission Info Summary**

**June 2018**



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## Aircraft Operations

NOAA's fleet of nine manned aircraft is operated, managed and maintained by NOAA's Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) and the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps (NOAA Corps) – one of the nation's seven Uniformed Services - based at OMAO's Aircraft Operations Center (AOC). Located at Lakeland Linder Regional Airport in Lakeland, Florida, the officers, crew, and scientists from AOC provide capable, mission-ready aircraft and professional crews to the scientific community – see photo below. AOC is committed to the safe, efficient and economical use of NOAA aircraft and has more than four decades of experience developing, coordinating and successfully and safely conducting airborne environmental data gathering missions. OMAO's aircraft fleet includes the following platforms and the web links provide additional photos, information on each aircraft, and the missions they serve:

- [Lockheed WP-3D Orion \(P3\) "Hurricane Hunter"](#) [Tail ID# N42RF]
- [Lockheed WP-3D Orion \(P3\) "Hurricane Hunter"](#) [Tail ID# N43RF]
- [Gulfstream IV-SP \(G-IV\) "Hurricane Hunter"](#) [Tail ID# N49RF]
- [Gulfstream Turbo \(Jet Prop\) Commander AC-695A \(Jet Prop Commander\)](#) [Tail ID# N45RF]
- [Beechcraft King Air 350CER \(King Air\)](#) [Tail ID# N68RF]
- [De Havilland DHC-6-300 Twin Otter \(Twin Otter\)](#) [Tail ID# N46RF]
- [De Havilland DHC-6-300 Twin Otter \(Twin Otter\)](#) [Tail ID# N48RF]
- [De Havilland DHC-6-300 Twin Otter \(Twin Otter\)](#) [Tail ID# N56RF]
- [De Havilland DHC-6-300 Twin Otter \(Twin Otter\)](#) [Tail ID# N57RF]

In addition to the fleet of nine, manned aircraft, AOC provides oversight and guidance for all of NOAA's Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) operations. Please visit [AOC's UAS Section](#) for additional information.



## June Mission Summary

Whether studying severe weather, assessing marine mammal populations, surveying coastal erosion, investigating oil spills, flight checking aeronautical charts, or improving hurricane prediction models, the AOC flight crews, scientists, and partners, operate all across the United States and beyond, including in some of the world's most demanding flight regimes.

The following Mission Summary provides an overview of the status or location(s) and mission(s) for each aircraft for the month. Please note all mission bases, projected flight locations, and mission parameters and requirements may shift based on changing needs and circumstances.

For the latest news from the NOAA skies, please visit the Aircraft Operations Center on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



### **P3 "Hurricane Hunter" [Tail ID# N42RF]**

Aircraft is scheduled for paint following maintenance and corrosion repair. Science equipment testing and training flights to resume. Aircraft will be hurricane ready on June 23.

### **P3 "Hurricane Hunter" [Tail ID# N43RF]**

Currently down for re-winging in Naval Air Station Jacksonville, Florida. The aircraft is due out of maintenance in October, 2018; instrumentation and outfitting at AOC will follow. The aircraft will be mission ready in May 2019.



### [G-IV "Hurricane Hunter" \[Tail ID# N49RF\]](#)

The aircraft is hurricane ready and standing by for tasking.



### [Jet Prop Commander \[Tail ID# N45RF\]](#)

**Who:** Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from [NOAA's National Ocean Service, National Geodetic Survey Grav-D Program](#).

**What:** Gravity for the Redefinition of the American Vertical Datum (GRAV-D) Program Flights

**When:** Present - June 20

**Where:** Based at Palm Springs, California, the aircraft will conduct flights over southern Nevada and California.

**Why:** Grid pattern flight lines will be flown at 20,000 feet over the Southeast United States while collecting GPS and inertial data to update the U.S. vertical datum. A vertical datum is a base measurement point (or set of points) from which all elevations are determined.



### **King Air [Tail ID# N68RF]**

**Who:** Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from [NOAA's National Ocean Service, National Geodetic Survey's Coastal Mapping Program](#).

**What:** Coastal Mapping

**When:** Present - July 25

**Where:** New Jersey, New York, and Maryland

**Why:** Coastal mapping flights provide critical baseline data to help accurately map the U.S. shoreline. The data is important for national security, maritime shipping, and navigation.



### **Twin Otter [Tail ID# N46RF]**

**Who:** Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from [NOAA's Earth System Research Laboratory \(ESRL\), Chemical Sciences Division \(CSD\)](#).

**What:** Fire Winds (FIREX)

**When:** Present - June 19

**Where:** Based at the AOC in Lakeland, Florida, with flights over Florida.

**Why:** To help us better understand and predict the impact of North American fires on the atmosphere and ultimately support better land management.

## **Twin Otter [Tail ID# N48RF]**

**Who:** Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from [NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service \(NMFS\)](#), [Northeast Fisheries Science Center \(NEFSC\)](#).

**What:** North Atlantic Right Whale Survey

**When:** Present - July 31

**Where:** Based out of Falmouth, Massachusetts. The survey area will cover coastal waters off Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine.

**Why:** The objectives of this project are to provide real time sighting information to commercial shipping interests in an effort to reduce collisions between ships and North Atlantic Right Whales, to better understand the distribution and abundance of the North Atlantic Right Whale, and to collect photographic images of individual right whales for mark-recapture analysis to monitor the population. With as few as 400 remaining, surveillance flights to track their migration patterns are important for conservation and recovery efforts.

## **Twin Otter [Tail ID# N56RF]**

### **Project 1:**

**Who:** Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from [NOAA's Office of Atmospheric Research \(OAR\)](#) and [Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory \(PMEL\)](#).

**What:** Arctic Heat

**When:** Present - June 3

**Where:** Based out of Kotzebue, Alaska. Survey area includes the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas.

**Why:** The purpose of this project is to perform near-surface data collection that will lead to improvements in weather and sea-ice forecasting in the Pacific Arctic.

### **Project 2:**

**Who:** Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from [NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service \(NMFS\)](#), [Alaska Regional Office \(ARO\)](#).

**What:** Steller Sea Lions

**When:** June 18 - July 11

**Where:** Based out Dutch Harbor and Adak, Alaska.

**Why:** As part of the *Marine Mammal Protection Act*, the purpose of this project is to monitor the western population stock and recovery efforts of Steller Sea Lions from Endangered Species status.

## **Twin Otter [Tail ID# N57RF]**

**Who:** Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from [NOAA's National Ocean Service, National Geodetic Survey's Coastal Mapping Program](#).

**What:** Coastal mapping flights

**When:** Present - Sept 30

**Where:** The aircraft will be based in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, with mission flights heading north up the East Coast.

**Why:** These flights provide critical baseline data to help accurately map the U.S. shoreline. The data is important for national security, maritime shipping, and navigation.