



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

Aircraft Flights and Mission Info Summary

September 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.



September 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]

The aircraft is hurricane ready and standing by for tasking.

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 Weather Service \(NWS\)](#), [National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center](#)

What: Science equipment calibration (w/ N46RF) and Water Resource Surveys (Soil Moisture)

When: Present – September 31

Where: Surveys will be conducted over Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana.

Why: The aircraft will conduct Low level (500 feet) surveys to collect Soil Moisture data for NWS River Forecast Centers. This data is used by NWS Weather Forecast Offices and NWS River Forecast Centers for determining baseline moisture levels prior to the winter snow fall. SWE (Snow Water Equivalent) data will be collected during the winter months and used for river and flood forecasts, water supply forecasts, and spring flood outlooks.



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 – September 31

Where: Washington, Oregon, New York (Great Lakes) (survey locations are weather dependent)

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 National Weather Service \(NWS\), National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center](#)

What: Science equipment calibration (w/ N45RF) and Water Resource Surveys (Soil Moisture)

When: Present – September 31

Where: Surveys will be conducted over Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana.

Why: The aircraft will conduct Low level (500 feet) surveys to collect Soil Moisture data for NWS River Forecast Centers. This data is used by NWS Weather Forecast Offices and NWS River Forecast Centers for determining baseline moisture levels prior to the winter snow fall. SWE (Snow Water Equivalent) data will be collected during the winter months and used for river and flood forecasts, water supply forecasts, and spring flood outlooks.

[Twin Otter \[Tail ID# N48RF\]](#)

Aircraft is inducted into scheduled maintenance in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Due out mid-October.

[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 – September 15

Where: Based out of Barrow and Kotzebue, Alaska.

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: Harbor Seals

When: September 16 – September 30

Where: Based out of Dutch Harbor, Adak, and Shemya, 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 Harbor Seals 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

When: Present - September 30

Where: Gulf Coast of Florida and Intracoastal Waterway. Based out of St. Petersburg, Florida, followed by Gulf Coast locations (TBD).

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.