



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

Aircraft Flights and Mission Info Summary

July 2019



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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](#)) based at OMAO's Aircraft Operations Center ([AOC](#)). Located at Lakeland Linder Regional Airport in Lakeland, Florida, the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps (NOAA Corps) – one of the nation's seven Uniformed Services - 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 \(WP-3D\) "Hurricane Hunter"](#) [Tail ID# N42RF]
- [Lockheed WP-3D Orion \(WP-3D\) "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 \(King Air 350\)](#) [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.



July 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](#).



WP-3D "Hurricane Hunter" [Tail ID# N42RF]

The aircraft is hurricane ready and standing by for tasking. The aircraft will also support the [EAA Oshkosh Airventure](#) from July 22-28.

WP-3D "Hurricane Hunter" [Tail ID# N43RF]

Instrumentation and outfitting will continue at AOC until operationally and research mission-ready on July 15.



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

The aircraft is currently undergoing unscheduled maintenance. The aircraft will be mission ready on, or about, July 11.



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

Who: Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from [Nation Ocean Service \(NOS\)](#), [Nation Geodetic Survey \(NGS\) Grav-D Program](#)

What: GRAV-D

When: Present - September 15

Where: Ontario, California; Reno, Nevada; and Grand Junction, Colorado. The aircraft will conduct flights over the Southwest U.S.

Why: Grid pattern flight lines will be flown at 20,000 feet over the Southwest 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 350 \[Tail ID# N68RF\]](#)

Who: Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from [NOS, NGS Coastal Mapping Program](#)

What: Coastal mapping flights

When: July 8 - September 30

Where: TBD based on weather and tide stages.

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



Twin Otter [Tail ID# N46RF]

Pilot training is scheduled for July 1-14 at AOC

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: July 15 - August 15

Where: Western U.S.

Why: The research program proposed here outlines a comprehensive research effort to 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 [NOS, NGS Coastal Mapping Program](#)

What: Coastal mapping flights

When: Present - July 14

Where: TBD based on weather and tide stages.

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

Who: Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from [ESRL, CSD](#).

What: Fire Winds (FIREX)

When: July 15 - September 12

Where: Western U.S.

Why: The research program proposed here outlines a comprehensive research effort to understand and predict the impact of North American fires on the atmosphere and ultimately support better land management.

Twin Otter [Tail ID# N56RF]

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

What: Alaska Steller Sea Lions

When: June 21 - July 12

Where: Sitka, Kodiak, and Homer, 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.

Who: Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from the [Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research](#) and the [Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory](#).

What: Arctic Heat

When: July 15 - July 24

Where: Chukchi and Beaufort Seas, 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.

Twin Otter [Tail ID# N57RF]

Who: Officers and crew of OMAO/NOAA Corps along with scientists from [NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center](#)

What: Northeast North Atlantic Right Whale Surveys

When: Present - September 12

Where: Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada

Why: The objectives of this project are to provide real time sighting information to commercial shipping interests in an effort to reduce ship collisions, to better understand the distribution and abundance, and to collect photographic images of the critically endangered North Atlantic Right Whales. With as few as 400 remaining, surveillance flights to track their migration patterns are important for conservation and recovery efforts.