Carrier Onboard Delivery
Aircraft and Squadron Lineage
with patch collection

VR-23 TBM-3R over Korea, 1953.

VRC_30 Det 5 conducts normal operations around Mount Fuji.

VRC-50 US-3A Miss Piggy

VR-24 TF/C1A 6019 (usn)

VRC-40 C-2A(R) Greyhound visits Perth Australia Airport 20 April 2012
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Carrier Onboard Delivery (COD) is the mission of delivering people, mail, and high-priority cargo to a carrier at sea by air. COD doesn’t seem to have been a mission, certainly not a dedicated aircraft, before about 1950. For one thing, up until then there were a goodly number of airplanes in the air group with more than one seat and a bomb bay that could be used for transportation by air to and from the carrier. Tailhook-equipped utility aircraft like the Grumman J2F Duck could also be used when necessary.

The airplanes in the air group were fairly simple and reliable in any event. However, as the single-seat AD Skyraider, which did not have a bomb bay, began to replace the SB2C Helldivers and TBM Avengers and airplane electronic systems grew in number and complexity, a logistics gap appeared.

The first solution was the TBM-3R, R being the Navy designation at the time for a transport. This was one of several conversions of surplus TBM aircraft to other purposes.

The TBM-3R appears to have been introduced in 1951. For certain, it was in widespread use during the Korean War.
There were lots of TBMs left over after World War II so some were repurposed. One new mission was Carrier On-board Delivery, or COD.

The gun turret was removed along with other mission equipment and seats added.

The canopy was extended over the tail gunner's position.

Two seats were installed in the compartment aft of the pilot and two in the former turret area. Two seats were also provided in the former radioman compartment below the turret area for a total of six passenger seats. One was usually occupied by the load master/crew chief, leaving the other five available for passengers.

A basket was installed in the bomb bay.
TBM-3R COD

There were at least three different variations of the TBM-3 canopy modification incorporating different amounts of sheet metal but the cabin access remained the same:

The canopy was extended over the tail gunner's position. Two seats were installed in the compartment aft of the pilot and two in the former turret area.

There were at least three different variations of the canopy modification incorporating different amounts of sheet metal but the cabin access remained the same:
Rick Morgan reports that the conversions were first used in early 1951 for transport of urgent cargo (spare parts, etc.) and personnel to the carriers off Korea as reported in the July 1951 edition of Naval Aviation News. According to his search of allotment records, approximately 27 TBM-3Rs were created; most were assigned to VR (air transportation) squadrons worldwide. In July 1954, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Squadron</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VR-5 (RS)</td>
<td>San Diego, California</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>VR-22 (RB)</td>
<td>Norfolk, Virginia</td>
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Although one mission proposed for the multipurpose Douglas AD-5 was COD, the TBMs were all replaced in the Navy VR squadrons by the Grumman TF-1 (C-1) by January 1957.
The AD-5 was the next COD development. It was created as a multi-place, multi-purpose modification of the AD Skyraider. The upper fuselage was widened to provide side-by-side seating for a pilot and a crewman and create a compartment aft of them for additional crewmen.

Previous multi-place versions of the Skyraider for airborne early warning and night attack missions had a crew compartment in the fuselage aft and below the pilot. In addition to the mission-dedicated AD-5W and AD-5N, the Navy also bought AD-5s that were only equipped for day attack so the large aft compartment was empty. It could be filled with four litters, four rearward-facing passenger seats, or cargo. The AD-5s don't seem to have been assigned to the transport squadrons as CODs, however, and none received a R designation.
Neither the TBM-3R or the AD-5 was capable of filling two of the Navy's emerging high-priority cargo requirements, jet engines and nuclear weapons. The result was a variant of the Navy's new twin-engine, antisubmarine warfare aircraft, the Grumman S2F. Designated the TF-1, it had a slightly wider and somewhat deeper fuselage with a large double door on the left side of the fuselage and windows on each side. Nine seats could be set up in the passenger compartment to accommodate eight passengers and the load master.

The TF-1 first flight was made on 19 February 1955. The "T" (rather than "R") designation was for trainer since that was one of the roles originally envisioned for the aircraft. Grumman built a total of 88. It could carry a payload of about 3,500 pounds for 1,000 miles. On 26 June 1958, a TF-1 delivered a J34 engine to Yorktown, 300 miles at sea, the first use of its cabin capability to deliver one. In 1962, the TF was redesignated C-1A. At one point, many aircraft carriers had a TF/C-1 directly assigned, not as a detachment or otherwise part of the air group/wing.
In 1963, the CNO was reportedly concerned about resupply of the carriers of essential items too big for the C-1 and requested an evaluation by NATC of the C-130 for operation to and from Forrestal-class carriers. The first question was whether to train a C-130 pilot to make carrier landings or checkout a carrier-qualified pilot in the C-130. The obvious answer was that a fighter pilot, LT James H. Flatley III, would fly it along with another carrier-suitability branch pilot as copilot and a C-130 flight engineer volunteer from VR-1. The NATC pilots were checked out in the C-130 by a Lockheed test pilot. The changes to the C-130F, BuNo 148798 borrowed from the Marine Corps, were minimal and did not include the addition of a tailhook: the nose gear strut response was stiffened by the substitution of a smaller bleed orifice, higher capacity brakes were installed, and the external tanks were removed.
In any event, the Navy had already decided to buy a COD derivative of its new AEW airplane, the Grumman E-2 Hawkeye, configured for carrier onboard delivery. The E-2A had first flown in October 1961 and was first deployed in 1965. The C-2 first flew in 1964, with the wing and engines from a prototype E-2A mounted on a much wider and deeper fuselage equipped with a rear ramp. It had a four-man crew and could carry either 26 passengers or total cargo of about 10,000 pounds or a mix of passengers and cargo. Maximum range was about 1,200 nautical miles. C-2A production totaled two conversions from prototype E-2A BuNos 148147/8 and 17 new airframes, BuNos 152786-2797. The first of these entered service in 1966. The C-2s were not assigned to a carrier but operated by east and west-coast based Fleet Logistic Support (VRC) squadrons with detachments located worldwide.

The C-2 had the capability to carry outsized and heavy cargo but did not have as much range as desired for carrier onboard delivery in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. In the 1970s, the Navy had a competition for a much larger airplane. Boeing, Douglas, and Fokker proposed derivatives of their twin jet transports, the 737, DC-9, and F-28 respectively. Although the Navy thought that they were feasible, none were taken up at the time.
However, a Lockheed Full Scale Development S-3 Viking, BuNo 157998, was converted to a COD configuration, US-3A, in 1976. In this case, the existing fuselage was retained but the aft pair of ejection seats were removed and replaced with six passenger seats, three abreast, for five passengers and a load master. The bomb bay and electronic compartments were configured to carry cargo and a large cargo pod was created that was carried on the stores pylon. The prototype first flew in July 1976 and it was assigned to Kitty Hawk in 1977. It not only had a range of 2,400 miles with external fuel tanks in lieu of the cargo pods, it retained an inflight refueling capability so unlike the C-2, it was not restricted to a peacetime radius of action that allowed it to return to a shore base in the event that a carrier landing was not accomplished. It could not, however, transport large items.

Lockheed proposed a US-3A with a wider and longer fuselage that utilized the S-3 cockpit, wings, stabilizer, and engines. It would have provided seating for as many as 30 passengers or cargo space/access for two large jet engines. The Navy elected not to buy it. However, in 1981 five more US-3As were converted from FSD aircraft, BuNos 157994-997, and another test aircraft, BuNo 158868, for high-priority logistics transportation in the Pacific. These were operated by VRC-50.
The modified airplane, BuNo 152797, was evaluated as a receiver behind the KA-6D, KC-130F/R, and KC135 tankers in both day and night conditions. Although more than 250 engagements were successfully accomplished without damage to either tanker or receiver, the conclusion was that the C-2 was not suited for inflight refueling due to its handling qualities and the consequences of failure to successfully refuel outweighed the benefits of being able to. The test airplane had its refueling probe removed and was returned to service with the external piping still present for a time.
In 1983, Naval Air Systems Command revisited the Fokker F-28 to the extent of accomplishing a flight evaluation of the Fellowship at Fokker's factory in Amsterdam and at NAS Sigonella. It would have had the payload of the C-2 and the range of the S-3. While the conclusion of the evaluation was that the "airplane has potential for the carrier-based carrier-on-board delivery, tanker, or AEW mission," no contract resulted.

The Navy elected instead to maintain the existing mix of the C-1 and C-2 for intermediate-range missions; the US-3 for high-speed, long-range missions with high-priority, small cargo; and a huge helicopter, the Sikorsky CH-53E, for short-range transport of large, heavy items from shore bases.
A service life extension program had been accomplished on the surviving C-2As from the original purchase of 19, with deliveries of the refurbished aircraft between 1978 and 1982. However, only 12 remained, not enough to meet the demand for COD support since the C-1s were being retired and only a handful of the volume-limited US-3As were available. After considering other options, the Navy elected the unusual step of putting the C-2 back into production although the degree of difficulty was somewhat reduced by the fact that the E-2 was still in production. The Navy bought 39, BuNos 162140-2178.

The major external difference between the original C-2s and the “reprocured” C-2s was a larger APU. Less obvious was a redesigned nose landing gear. The housing for the crash recorder/locator was not carried over to the new C-2s. The first one flew in February 1985, just in time to begin replacement of the original Greyhounds, the last of which was retired by the end of 1987.

The last C-1 in service, BuNo 146048, was retired on 30 September 1988. The last of the new C-2s had been delivered in 1990. The US-3As were retired in 1994.

In the late 1990s, the Navy considered the development of the Common Support Aircraft (CSA). It was to replace the E-2C for AEW, the S-3 for ASW, the ES-3A for signal intelligence gathering (Sigint), and the C-2 for COD beginning in 2013. (The EA-6B would be replaced by a derivative of the F/A-18F.) The concept was a victim of budget priorities and mission revaluation. The S-3s and ES-3As were retired, with ASW to be accomplished by a combination of carrier and destroyer-based helicopters and shore-based airplanes. Sigint would primarily be accomplished as before by shore-based airplanes although the F/A-18F has some capability in that regard. The E-2C continued in low-rate production and is being replaced by an upgrade, the E-2D.

As a result, there has been no replacement of the C-2s, which began going through a service life extension program including avionics upgrades in 2005. They are currently expected to serve through 2027.
The announced replacement for the C-2 is a variant of the Bell-Boeing V-22 tilt-rotor aircraft. While lacking the speed and range of an S-3 specifically reconfigured for COD and the payload-range of an improved C-2 that were also evaluated, the HV-22 will have the ability to make vertical takeoffs and landings from any ship with a suitable landing area. The range can be extended by inflight refueling and it can land on larger surface combatants or an aircraft carrier even in the unlikely event that arrested landings are not possible.

The HV-22 is the only carrier based aircraft capable of transporting the F-35 engine for shore to sea to shore.
Naval Air Transportation Command, Wing and Squadron Evolution

Naval Air Transport Service
VRU4
VR24
An R5D Skymaster assigned to Transport Squadron (VR) 1 pictured operating in the European Theater in 1944. (no picture) On December 12, 1941, the battleships of the U.S. Pacific Fleet lay in ruin in the oil stained waters of Pearl Harbor and Japanese forces were on the offensive from the sands of Wake Atoll to the Philippine Islands. With the Navy confronting the specter of a prolonged war waged over thousands of miles of ocean waters, on that day the Navy took a major step in assembling the logistical framework for the upcoming campaigns by establishing the Naval Air Transport Service (NATS). Naval aircraft had long been used for logistics, whether supporting Marine expeditionary operations in Central America or Rear Admiral Richard E. Byrd’s polar expeditions, but not until the creation of NATS were operations carrying personnel, equipment, and cargo given such a sizeable footprint in naval aviation. The creation of NATS spawned the establishment of the first Transport Squadrons (VR), with VR-1, the first of thirteen squadrons of its type to fly with NATS during World War II, established on March 9, 1942.

In carrying out their flights transport crews certainly benefited from the advancement in the airline industry that had occurred during the years before World War II, the Pan American clippers having pioneered transoceanic air travel and aircraft manufacturers having produced a series of increasingly capable aircraft. Among them was Douglas Aircraft Company, whose DC-3 made its first flight on December 17, 1935, and soon equipped the major U.S. airlines. One of the most successful aircraft ever built, the DC-3 had a top speed of 192 M.P.H. and a range of 1,495 miles. The Navy procured the first of 568 DC-3s in 1941, designating them R4D Skytrains, and also accepted delivery of over 200 Douglas DC-4s, which were designated R5D Skymasters. These airplanes formed the backbone of NATS, which also included flying boats, notably PB2Y Coronados, the Martin Mars, and two of the famed Pan American clippers acquired for overseas transport flights.
It did not take long for NATS aircraft to begin reaching milestones, the first full year of operations bringing the command’s first transoceanic flight between Alameda, California, and Honolulu, Hawaii, as well as the inauguration of routes as far north as Iceland and into nations of South America. The following year, NATS R5Ds began flying to the British Isles, this route the avenue for one of the notable accomplishments of the war when transport planes delivered 150,000 lb. of vital minesweeping equipment that was vital to supporting Operation Overlord, the D-Day invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944.

In the Pacific such was the enormity of the logistics requirements that a single squadron, the Hawaii-based VR-11, boasted a complement of 1,000 pilots, and at the height of the war all NATS aircraft in that theater logged 320,000 miles per week. The array of cargo delivered included equipment, personnel, and, most importantly for G.I.s, millions of pounds of mail. As the island-hopping campaign progressed, flight nurses became integral parts of the crews on some VR aircraft employed for casualty evacuation, with some personnel from VR-11 selected to man a new squadron, Air Transport Evacuation Squadron (VRE) 1. During the Okinawa campaign, VRE-1 aircraft covered nearly 1.25 million miles in evacuating nearly 10,000 casualties from the embattled island to hospitals on Guam.

The end of World War II brought the beginning of the end for NATS. The command survived until July 1, 1948, when after six and one half years of operations, it was disestablished after its squadrons had been consolidated with the Air Force Air Transport Command to form the Military Air Transport Service (MATS). Though VR squadron aircraft no longer had “Naval Air Transport Service” painted on their fuselages, their foundation would always be in that organization formed in the darkest days of World War II that was a lifeline for victory on the front lines of battle.
The **Naval Air Transport Service** or NATS, was a branch of the [United States Navy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Navy) from 1941 to 1948. At its height during [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II), NATS's totaled four wings of 18 VR **squadrions** that operated 540 aircraft with 26,000 personnel assigned. "VR" is the Navy acronym for transport squadron – "V" is for heavier than air and "R" is for transport.

On December 12, 1941, the battleships of the U.S. Pacific Fleet lay in ruin in the oil stained waters of Pearl Harbor and Japanese forces were on the offensive from the sands of Wake Atoll to the Philippine Islands. With the Navy confronting the specter of a prolonged war waged over thousands of miles of ocean waters, on that day the Navy took a major step in assembling the logistical framework for the upcoming campaigns by establishing the Naval Air Transport Service (NATS). Five days after [Pearl Harbor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attack_on_Pearl_Harbor), Capt. C. H. Schildhauer presented a detailed plan for a naval air transport program to the Secretary of the Navy, **Frank Knox**. Knox immediately approved the plan. The Naval Air Transport Service was established 12 December 1941, under the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) to provide rapid air delivery of critical equipment, spare parts, and specialist personnel to naval activities and fleet forces worldwide.

This was a tall order since the largest transport operated by the Navy at this time were four **R2Ds** (DC-2). The first military transport version of the **DC-3**, the C-47, was first flown on 23 December 1941. Throughout the war, the Navy obtained its **R4Ds** (C-47) and later the C-54 (**R5D**) from U.S. Army contracts. Initially, additional DC-3s were appropriated from the commercial airlines.
The next month, the Navy contracted American Airlines to operate an R4D school at Meacham Field, Fort Worth, Texas. The 30-day-long school included 30 hours of flight instruction and 30 hours of inflight observation. Student capacity was 30 per month. The Navy relied heavily on the expertise of former Naval aviators who work for the commercial airlines who had been recalled to the Navy because of the war.

On 9 March 1942, the first NATS squadron, VR-1, was commissioned at NAS Norfolk with four R4D (C-47) aircraft, 27 officers, and 150 men. Initially, most of VR-1 flights were south in support of the Atlantic anti-submarine effort.

VR-3, NATS's transcontinental squadron, was commissioned on 15 July at the Fairfax Airport, Kansas City, Kansas with four R4D Skytrains (DC-3s) appropriated from Trans World Airlines. NATS also established its headquarters at Fairfax. In October, NATS moved its operation to the newly completed NAS Olathe, 25 miles to the southwest. The squadron later received R5D Loadmasters.

The same month, the Pacific Wing Command was established in Honolulu.
The next year was spent building up the NATS operation. In March 1943, NATS Wing West Coast and NATS Wing Atlantic were formed.

NATS received its first R5D(C-54) in the spring of 1943.

NATS utilized the airlines as much as was feasible. Pan American conducted a navigation school at Coral Gables, Florida and American Export Airlines operated a similar navigation school at LaGuardia Airport, NY. By the end of 1943, the American Airlines R4D school expanded to train 50 pilots a month. The Pennsylvania Central Airlines school at Roanoke, Virginia which had been training Army C-47 pilots was taken over by the Navy when the Army cancelled its contract. United Airlines also began training Navy mechanics at the Oakland Airport by the end of the year. All transport pilots were required to be good instrument pilots so all NATS-bound pilots were sent through the Instrument Instructor School at NAS Atlanta. R4D and R5D aircraft commander school was located at Olathe.

Air Transport Squadron FIVE (VR-5) which was commissioned 24 June 1943 at Naval Air Station Seattle. The Squadron was tasked with flying the Douglas R-4D "Skytrain", R-5D "SkyMaster", Beechcraft SNB "Expeditor" and the Noorduyn JA-1 "Norseman" aircraft in regular air service to Seattle, Oakland, San Francisco, the Aleutian Islands, Fairbanks and Point Barrow on the Alaskan Mainland.
NATS also contracted Pan American to operate seaplane transport service from San Francisco to Hawaii. Pan America utilized Martin M-130 China Clippers, Boeing 314s, and Navy supplied Consolidated PB2Y Coronados. Pan Am initially operated out of its prewar terminal at Treasure Island. By 1944, conflict with Navy surface ship traffic around Treasure Island caused Pan Am to move its operation south to Mills Field, now San Francisco International Airport. At the end of September 1944, Pan Am was operating four Boeing 314s and 15 PB2Y plus a few miscellaneous types.

Meanwhile, in March 1943, VR-4 was commissioned at Oakland as a maintenance squadron. The next month VR-6 was established at Dinner Key, Miami and took over transport seaplane training from VR-1. The same month, VR-7, an R4D squadron was formed to service the Caribbean and South America. VR-7 was based at Miami Municipal, aka Amelia Earhart Airport, which was a part of the three airfield NAS Miami complex.
Naval Air Transport Squadron Eight (VR-8) was originally established at NAS Patuxent River, Maryland in October 1943. In November 1944 it began cargo and mail service to San Juan PR and Bermuda WI. It maintained a daily schedule with the Martin PBM Mariner aircraft. Few records exist for this time period and the squadron was disestablished in June 1946.

After the establishment of VR-11 at NAS Oakland, California in September 1943, it moved to NAF Honolulu shortly thereafter and although the chronology is rather cloudy, sometime during the 1943-1945 period a detachment in the Pacific was designated VR-8 to support the Naval Air Transport activity on several islands including Guam. In November of 1946, these detachments and VR-11 were combined and the VR-8 designation affixed. The assumed the maintenance and support of Naval Air Transport units transiting the Pacific area, including the Martin Mars JRM flying from Keehi Lagoon in Hawaii.

With the advent of the Douglas R5D Skymaster into the Naval Air Transport Service, fewer fueling stops were required to transit the Pacific and VR-8 moved to Hickam AFB with a detachment still supporting the JRM at Keehi Lagoon until it was withdrawn from service. In January 1948 the squadron was assigned to the Military Air Transport Service along with VR-3 and VR-6. This unified command consisted of all the USAF Air Transport Command squadron and the three Navy units. This was followed in June 1948 by a move to Germany to supplement the Air Force in Operation Vittles supplying vital needs to the citizens of Berlin during the Russian Blockade. It was again joined by VR-6 operating into Berlin, with VR-3 operating between the U.S. and the allied controlled area of Germany.
In 1948, the newly created Defense Department, with economy and efficiency as its goal, combined the Air Force's Air Transport Command and NATS into the Military Air Transport Command or MATS. The Navy's contribution to MATS consisted of five squadrons and 58 aircraft. VR-3, VR-6, VR-7, VR-8, and VR-22 were put under the operational command of MATS/MAC. The Navy Air Transport Service (NATS) was disestablished on 1 July 1948, completing 6 1/2 years of distinguished service. VR-3, the last Navy component of MATS/MAC, was disestablished at McGuire AFB, NJ on July 19, 1967.

Although NATS was dissolved, the Navy retained several transport squadrons for its specific needs.

http://www.vrc-50.org/historyNATS.htm  
http://www.vpnavy.org/nats_history.html
Naval Air Transport—a Long and Proud History

Unknown to many, the Navy has been in the air logistics business for many years, starting with the establishment of the Naval Air Transport Service (NATS) in the early days of World War II. Beginning in 1942, Navy aircrews flying the venerable Douglas C-47 “Skytrain” conducted numerous logistics support missions between India and China. These crews performed heroically, contending with both weather and Japanese fighter aircraft while crossing the Himalayan mountains in carrying out the famous “over-the-hump” operations. NATS continued to grow, and by the end of the War, 430 Navy transport aircraft traversed a world-wide route system of over 70,000 miles in providing airlift to deployed U.S. military forces. In 1948, shortly after the Department of Defense was created as the unifying central authority over the three branches of the Armed Forces, NATS was combined with the Air Force’s Air Transport Command to form the Military Air Transport Service (MATS), the predecessor of today’s Air Mobility Command. As an integral part of MATS, Navy VR squadrons distinguished themselves in numerous operations, including the Berlin Airlift, and played important roles in both the Korean and Vietnam War.

Eventually, Navy participation in MATS ceased, but Congress recognized the importance and unique aspects of Navy organic air logistics capability, and codified the requirement in Title 10 USC 5062(b):

“All naval aviation shall be integrated with the naval services as part thereof within the Department of the Navy. Naval aviation consists of combat and service and training forces, and includes land-based naval aviation, air transport essential for naval operations,...”

This page adapted from the Naval Reserve Association website
Carrier Onboard Delivery
Squadron Evolution

VR-5 -> VR-21 Det Atsugi >----------------------------- VR-21
VR-23 >----------------------^ VR-23 Det Atsugi >-------^ VR-21 Det Atsugi >----------------------------- VRC-50 >----------------------->
VRC-40 >------------------------------------------------------------------------->
VRM Wing and VRM squadrons 30, 40, 50 start stand-up in 2018
During the summer of 1946 COMNAVAIRLANT determined that a need existed for a Utility Transport Squadron to serve the U.S. Naval Forces along the East Coast. VRJ2 was established in 1945 at Norfolk Virginia to meet that need. In 1946, the squadron was redesigned Transport Utility Squadron VRU2.
THOUSANDS of military men share a common bond with American astronauts, a European prince, and for that matter, with America’s space monkeys. Able and Baker. They have all been transported by Air Transport Squadron 22, for the transport functions performed by VR-22 in its 23-year history are many and varied. The log of VR-22 will be closed this month with the decommissioning order for the “ Anything-Anywhere” squadron.

VR-22 was originally commissioned as Utility Transport Squadron Two (VR-2) on June 14, 1946. In its first year the utility squadron flew two twin engine Grumman seaplanes and four single-engine B-24s scattered in single plane detachments from Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, to Quonset Point, R.I.

The Norfolk based squadron was redesignated Air Transport Squadron 22 in September 1948, but its job remained the same. With the Korean War and the need for increased fleet logistic support, VR-22 became Fleet Tactical Support Squadron 22 in December 1950 and assumed a carrier-based delivery mission. Almost immediately the squadron received its first C-130 Hercules.

By 1952, VR-22’s aircraft complement had grown to eight C-130s, eight C-54s and four C-46s, and the “Milk Run” to the Far East was established. In 1953, two Navy transports were rated G.I. by the Air Force’s highest degree of combat readiness.

In 1965, while maintaining its increasingly heavy flying schedule and maintaining its combat readiness, VR-22 was awarded the MAC Flying Safety Award for the fifth consecutive year, making it the only Navy squadron to be placed on the MAC Safety Honor Roll. During the month of August 1966, operational readiness reached a high of 99% and at no time during the year did it drop below 90%. Air Force minimum is 74%.

The creation of the space program increased the service of the VR-22 and its personnel. The squadron’s transport capacities were increased to meet the requirements of the Space Shuttle and the transport aircraft were modified to accommodate the shuttle.

In their August 1967 review, the squadron’s personnel were praised for their professionalism and dedication to their duties. They were credited with helping to make the space program a success.

The VR-22 C-130 Hercules flown by the squadron was a symbol of the squadron’s commitment to excellence and dedication. It was a testament to the hard work and dedication of the personnel who worked tirelessly to ensure the successful completion of their missions.

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During the summer of 1946 it was determined, in a survey conducted by COMNAVAIRLANT, that a need existed for a Utility Transport Squadron to serve the U.S. Naval Forces in Europe. As a result of this survey, on 3 December 1946 Utility Transport Squadron Four (VRU4) was commissioned at London, England. The squadron beat at this time ranged from Bodo, Norway (inside the Arctic Circle) to Oslo, Stockholm, and Copenhagen in the north, through Bremen, Munich, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Brussels, and Paris in central Europe, to Madrid, Lisbon, Casablanca, Algiers, Nice, Rome, Naples, Malta, Tripoli, and Athens, in the south. Squadron Headquarters was located at Royal Air Force Station Hendon England near downtown London, and a Detachment was established at the Naval Air Facility Port Lyautey, French Morocco in north Africa. Lcdr Harold S. Howard was ordered to the squadron as Commanding Officer (Acting). The commissioning aircraft complement consisted of five R4D and four JRB type aircraft, one of each assigned to the Detachment at Port Lyautey. Regular flights were scheduled once a week from London to Frankfurt and Munich, and twice each week to Paris and to Bremen. Planes also flew to all parts of the Continent and throughout the Mediterranean theatre.

All first class mail and most of the parcel post to fleet units operating in Mediterranean and North European waters is delivered by VRU4. Couriers, high ranking State Department, Army, Navy officers and their dependents share space with the cargo that maintains Naval establishments throughout the Mediterranean area.

VRU-4 Tail letters RD

7 November 1946, U.S. Navy Letter ACL 156-46
Utility Transport Squadron Four (VRU4)

Major maintenance for all VRU4 aircraft was to be provided by the Port Lyautey Morocco Detachment. On 10 December 1946 a second Detachment was formed at Naples, Italy with one R4D assigned. This detachment was disestablished in April 1947 upon ratification of the Italian Peace Treaty, and the R4D was reassigned to the Port Lyautey detachment. On 13 January 1947, Cdr. E. F. Jacobs reported for duty as Commanding Officer. In July 1947 two additional R4D aircraft were assigned to the squadron.

By the Fall of 1947 the workload in the Mediterranean area had increased to such an extent that two additional aircraft, an R4D and a Martin Mars JRB, were transferred from London to Port Lyautey, and the personnel complement consisting of 29 officers and 141 enlisted men was split approximately equal between headquarters and the detachment. Facilities at NAF Port Lyautey were at first meager, but by the summer of 1948, the conditions had improved considerably. The aircraft assigned to VRU4 detachment were inadequate to handle the existing workload in the Mediterranean and consequently on 23 July 1948, two R5D aircraft and crews from VR1 were temporarily attached to VRU4 in Port Lyautey.

On 1 September 1948 the designation of the squadron was changed from Utility Transport Squadron Four to Air Transport Squadron Twenty Four.
The primary mission of VR-24 was to service the U.S. Navy 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean, and when called upon, U.S. Naval Forces operating in other parts of the world. VR-24 and its Detachments delivered freight, mail, and personnel to U.S., NATO, and friendly foreign bases, ports of call, and via Carrier-On-deck-Delivery, to U.S. Navy ships at sea. VR-24 also performed life-saving medical evacuations and disaster relief missions throughout its far-flung areas of operation.

To accomplish their mission, VR-24 air crews often flew in and out of airports that had only primitive communications and navigation aids, cargo handling equipment, and ground support services. Missions were often completed under the most adverse weather conditions.

In February of 1952 the first TBM aircraft arrived at Naples Det to be utilized for carrier-on-board delivery (COD). These aircraft along with officers and men to fly and maintain them were transferred to the Detachment from VR-22. These aircraft were later phased out and replaced by TF1 type aircraft in 1955. COD aircrews providing the vital link between land bases and ship at sea, often operated at maximum ranges from austere remote detachment sites.

The men and women of VR-24 met these challenges through hard work, long hours, and innovation. VR-24 soon became known as the "world's biggest little airline" that could deliver ...............ANYTHING, ANYTIME, ANYWHERE.

VR-24 Tail code JM   1957
The Grumman C-1A Trader and C-2A Greyhound COD aircraft are based at the VR24 Detachment at Capodichino Airdrome at Naples Italy, but routinely operate from isolated airfields throughout the Mediterranean area where VR24 sets up its advanced bases. The aircraft are a familiar and welcome sight to the men of the Sixth Fleet, for they fly directly to and from the carriers with personnel, cargo, and the all important mail from home while the fleet operated far at sea. Often the COD aircraft are called upon to evacuate sick or injured personnel in need of hospitalization on shore.

In January, 1976 VR24 commenced the move to relocate its squadron headquarters to NAF Sigonella, Sicily. By June 1976 the chapter which began in old Napoli 30 years before in December of 1946 (like Port Lyautey) came to an abrupt end. With this move, and type of modern day aircraft VR24 had at this time, the last vestiges of VR24 and its most illustrious past came to an abrupt end and the "Worlds Biggest Little Airline" ceased to exist!! It was about this time that the squadron was redesignated as the "Lifting Eagles", a most appropriate title for the type of aircraft they were flying and operations they were involved in at this time. The squadron came into the 80s with twenty one aircraft broken down as follows: 3 CT39G Saberliners, 4 C130 Hercules, 6 C1A Traders, 5 C2A Greyhounds, and 3 RH53D Sea Stallions. At this time the personnel complement consisted of 55 officers and 225 enlisted men at Headquarters in Sigonella, and 25 officers and 125 enlisted men at the Rota Detachment. The C1A Trader completed its last mission on 19 April 1984 signifying the end of an era in logistics support that spanned three decades. A part of VR24 since 1955 , the aircraft were ferried to the USS John F Kennedy for further transfer to VRC-50. Currently VR24s Lifting Eagles are operating the reprocured Grumman C2A Greyhound and the CT39G Sabreliner.

VR24 began 1992 with multiple Dets in Souda Bay, Rota, and Prestwick, Scotland. The squadron was in Norway during March of 1992 with CVN 69, the USS Eisenhower, participating in Teamwork 1992. At the same time VR24 was once again in Saudi Arabia and the UAE (United Arab Emirates) supporting the Carrier Battle Group in the Persian Gulf. Early in 1993 the day finally arrived when VR24 would be no more. On 29 January 1993, in a ceremony at NAS Sigonella, Sicily, it was decommissioned (officially 31 March). It had been in commission continuously for 46 years, the longest continuous commissioning of any Transport squadron in the Navy.
A major boost to its COD capabilities was realized when the VR-24 Detachment, Naples, began operating the TF-1 "Trader" in March 1956. The U.S. Navy's COD operations using the single-engine Grumman TBM-3R COD aircraft pointed up the need for increased load carrying capabilities to deliver high-priority cargo, not to mention the need for additional safety for passengers, to ships at sea. The answer was the Trader, a variant of the Grumman S2F "Tracker", developed as a replacement for both the TBM Avenger and Grumman's AF "Guardian", yet another single engine ASW aircraft. First flown in January, 1955, the TF-1, which would be redesignated "C1A" in 1962, was very similar to the Tracker, using the same wings, Wright R-1820 power plants, and tail components. The Trader's fuselage was, however, deepened to provide additional space below the plane's wing spar, which passed through the top of the fuselage. The added space allowed for seating of up to nine passengers and/or a mix of cargo, passengers, and mail. Large doors on the left side of the fuselage aft of the wing made loading bulky cargo and/or mail much easier than had been the case with the TBM. The TF/C1A's reliability is indicated by the fact that VR-24 Det Naples continued to operate the TF/C1 long after it began receiving the much larger and more advanced Grumman C-2 "Greyhound". VR-24 Det Naples finally transferred its last C1A to the USS John F. Kennedy in 1984, almost thirty years after receiving its first one.

http://www.vr-24.org/Aircraft_photo_pages/Page_two_TF_C1A_photos.htm

VR-24 Insignia


Pacific Fleet Carrier onboard delivery traces its ancestry to Naval Air Transport Service Wing West Coast Air Transport Squadron FIVE (VR-5) which was commissioned 24 June 1943 at Naval Air Station Seattle. The Squadron was tasked with flying the Douglas R-4D "Skytrain", R-5D "SkyMaster", Beechcraft SNB "Expeditor" and the Noorduyn JA-1 "Norseman" aircraft in regular air service to Seattle, Oakland, San Francisco, the Aleutian Islands, Fairbanks and Point Barrow on the Alaskan Mainland.

In 1948, the Naval Air Transportation Service and Air Transport Command merged and became the Military Air Transport Service. VR-5 was placed under the command of Fleet Logistics Support Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet. In 1950, VR-5 moved its base of operations from NAS Seattle to NAS Moffett Field CA. Detachments were established in Seattle and at NAS North Island, CA. VR-5 was disestablished 15 July 1957 and became VR-21, with detachments at Atsugi, Japan and NAS North Island.

http://www.cacclw.navy.mil/vrc30/history.html
On 26 June 1958, VR-21 NAS North Island Detachment made their first COD landing in Grumman C-1A Trader aircraft on USS YORKTOWN (CV-10). The Detachment relocated to NAS Alameda in 1960.

VR-21 operated a detachment from Atsugi

On 1 October 1966 VR-21 was decommissioned. On the same day, VR-21 detachment Atsugi was disestablished and VRC-50 was established.

VR-21 Tail Letters **RZ** 4 August 1948, U.S. Navy Letter ACL 69-48

VR-23

Air Transport Squadron 23 (VR-23) Detachment established at NAS Atsugi, Japan in 1951. VR-23 Detachment NAS Atsugi is disestablished in 1957.

VR-21 Detachment Atsugi established the same day.

Rimad3 said...
That picture of the Turkey(TBM-3R) is wearing the letters RK on her tail. Those are the letters of VR-23 ATSUGI JAPAN. We switched from Turkeys to the TF-1 in 1956, the last TBM was ferried out in November 1956 shortly after I arrived. The COD Unit was part of a squadron of R4D and R5D aircraft along with six TF-1 types in the COD. The squadron was commanded by Capt. A Y Parunak, and the OIC of the COD was CDR. Matthias. On July 1, 1957, VR-23 became VR-21 Det Atsugi with CDR Mathias the OIC and the COD was led by CDR RR (Dog) Fannin. I was the Plane Captain of Wheel Chair 5. It was a great outfit. I was with it until January 1959.

January 16, 2012 at 8:33 PM
The 1960’s

On 1 October 1966 VR-21 was decommissioned. The Alameda Detachment was commissioned as Fleet Tactical Support Squadron THREE ZERO (VR-30) equipped with Convair C-131 Samaritans and C-1A Trader aircraft.

VR-30's mission included logistics support for Commander in Chief U.S. Pacific Fleet units. On 9 November 1966, VR-30 made its first COD arrested landing in the C-1A on the USS BON HOMME RICHARD (CVA-31).

The squadron was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation for exemplary service from 1 January to 30 November 1967. From 1968 to 1973 VR-30 COD detachments operated aboard various carriers in support of recovery operations for Apollo X, XI, XII, and XVI.

In 1969, squadron C-1A's and crews operated from Danang, Republic of Vietnam in support of CTF-77. In 1971 VR-30 joined the Jet Age with two North American CT-39 Saberliners for high-speed executive airlift. In May 1973 the squadron received the first of four C-9B Skytrain II's to further improve its logistics support capability. On 12 March 1974 the Navy's first female Aviator, Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Barbara A. Allen reported for duty.

After relocating to NAS North Island, VR-30 was decommissioned on 1 October 1978 and VRC-30 was concurrently commissioned.

http://www.cacclw.navy.mil/vrc30/history.html
Carrier Onboard Delivery Evolves

VRC-30 transitioned to the C-2A in late 1981 by accepting deliveries of the first "Greyhounds", the aircraft the squadron operates today.

In February 1980, VRC-30 added the C-12 Fleet Replacement Squadron, providing ground and flight instruction for all Pacific Fleet Navy and Marine Corps Pilots and Aircrew in the UC-12B/F Beechcraft Super King Air. VRC-30's C-12 FRS acted as the Commander, Naval Air Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet NATOPS Model Manager and Unit Evaluator, in addition to their primary job of flight instruction.

In 1994 VRC-30 took sole responsibility for Pacific Fleet C-2 operations by absorbing personnel and aircraft when VRC-50 was decommissioned. Four deployable sea going detachments were formed at North Island, supported by a "homeguard" shore component. VRC-30 Detachment FIVE was established in August 1994 in Atsugi, Japan as part of Carrier Air Wing FIVE and the Forward Deployed Naval Forces. The Providers earned Meritorious Unit Commendation for exemplary service from October 1993 to September 1994. The squadron earned its first COMNAVAIRPAC Battle Efficiency award in 1996.

In 1997 VRC-30's Detachment THREE became the first fully integrated, night capable C-2 detachment when it deployed with CVW-2 aboard USS CONSTELLATION (CV-64). The century concluded with another "Battle E" award in 1998. The year also saw Detachments ONE and TWO earn the Golden Hook Award for best carrier landing grades in the air wing while operating in support of Operation DESERT FOX and Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. The Providers also earned their seventh Chief of Naval Operations Safety award since 1979.

http://www.cacclw.navy.mil/vrc30/history.html
The new millennium proved to be a continuation of the tradition of excellence for VRC-30. The squadron participated in every major military exercise on the west coast as well as combat operations in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. The Providers again earned the COMNAVAIRPAC Battle Efficiency award in 2002 and 2003. In 2004 VRC-30 stood down C-12 operations, focusing solely on the COD mission.

The years to follow saw several major developments and upgrades in the C-2A, beginning with the critical Service Life Extension Program (SLEP) in 2006. The SLEP increased the airframe lifespan from 10,000 flight hours or 15,000 carrier landings to 15,000 flight hours or 36,000 carrier landings. The program will allow the current fleet of Greyhounds to operate until 2027. The SLEP was followed by an aircraft rewire in 2008, and the most recent LOT 4 upgrade in August 2010. The LOT 4 upgrade, completed in September 2012, provided pilots with a new CNS-ATM glass cockpit and the eight-bladed NP2000 propeller system, which increased performance, reduced airframe vibration, and improved maintainability. During this period of substantial change and while maintaining a high operational tempo, the Providers continued to earn seven more Battle Efficiency awards in 2005, 2006, 2007, 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2016.
During 2016, the Providers of VRC-30 supported the USS NIMITZ (CVN-68), USS CARL VINSON (CVN-70), USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN-71), and USS JOHN C. STENNIS (CVN-74). VRC-30 flew 2,597 sorties, transported 12,282 passengers, and carried over 830,000 pounds of mail and cargo while supporting Fleet Replacement Squadron (FRS), Carrier Air Wing (CVW), Chief of Naval Air Training (CNATRA) carrier qualifications, CVN Flight Deck Certifications, CVW work-ups and deployed forces around the world. In addition to the critical Aircraft Carrier support the Providers supplied, they are a cornerstone in the training and readiness of the Navy Special Warfare community. VRC-30 directly supported 120 personnel airdrop evolutions for the Leap Frogs (United States Navy SEAL Demonstration Team), Naval Special Warfare Development Group, and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Training and Evaluation Unit ONE in preparation for public relations events and upcoming deployments in support of Operation INHERENT RESOLVE. Notable Leap Frog events that VRC-30 provided support for were Stanford Stadium, the El Centro Air Show, as well as providing 14 days of lifts for the Leap Frogs tandem jump training. The Providers also safely conducted a round trip, high-risk aircraft transfer from San Diego, California to Atsugi, Japan encompassing 11,364 miles. The aircraft transfer provided Detachment FIVE with a mission capable aircraft for FDNF (Forward Deployed Naval Forces) tasking with Carrier Strike Group FIVE and returned an aircraft to San Diego, California for critical maintenance actions. VRC-30 also had the privilege of housing Marine Corps squadron VMX-1 and participating in the V-22 FBE (Fleet Battle Experiment) during the summer of 2016, a major milestone for the VRC community as it was first time the Osprey was utilized in its future role as the replacement aircraft for the C-2A Greyhound. The Providers accomplished all of this in addition to successfully conducting workups and deployments for Det 2 and Det 4, as well as the accomplishments of our permanently forward deployed Det 5.

http://www.cacclw.navy.mil/vrc30/history.html
Maintaining and flying the squadron's 12 aircraft are nearly 300 enlisted personnel and officers. Unlike most squadrons, VRC-40 does not deploy as a unit. Instead, two plane detachments aboard each deployed aircraft carrier provide continuous fleet support. VRC-40 supports the fleet from ships and bases as far north as Norway, down the Eastern Seaboard and Gulf Coast, throughout the Caribbean, in Central and South America, and all over the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern theaters.

After flying the C-1A "Trader" aircraft for over 26 years, VRC-40 completed a transition to the C-2A in 1986, marking the end of the reciprocating engine era in Naval Aviation history. VRC-40's continuing mission is the efficient transportation of passengers, mail, and cargo to and from carriers at sea, as well as airborne insertion of Special Warfare personnel.

While speed and efficiency are requisite to completion of the squadron's mission, safety is of paramount importance. Every year, VRC-40 carries over three million pounds of mail and cargo and effects over 1,000 arrested landings. Astronauts Alan Shepard and Scott Carpenter, numerous Congressional and Cabinet members, business leaders, and entertainers such as Whitney Houston, Charlie Daniels, Jimmy Buffett, and Meat Loaf have all flown with the "RAWHIDES".

VRC-40 is expanding its traditional role as a carrier onboard delivery platform to include such missions as Special Warfare insertion and cargo air drops. The C-2A is capable of dropping up to 14 combat loaded personnel or 20 without combat gear in support of Special Warfare operations. These jumps may be executed in either the static line or free-fall method. Cargo drops include packages varying in size from four to 2,500 pounds. They can be delivered manually by the loadmaster, or released using a roller rail system. Each package has its own parachute which is deployed via a static line. These missions emphasize the ever increasing role the C-2A and VRC-40 play in supporting the fleet.

Among VRC-40's many achievements, is the receipt of the coveted Chief of Naval Operations Safety Award. VRC-40's enviable mission accomplishments serve as an example to others and symbolize our motto of "Service to the Fleet with Safety, Dependability, and Courtesy."

Source: http://www.vrc-50.org/thervcs.htm
On 1 October 1966 the Atsugi based VR-21 detachment was disestablished. Fleet Tactical Support Squadron FIFTY (VRC-50) was established the same day at Naval Air Station, Atsugi, Japan. The newly formed squadron initially operated the C-1A "Trader" aircraft for Carrier Onboard Delivery (COD) The introduction of the C-2A "Greyhound", 6 December 1966, marked the beginning of C-2A COD service to the fleet. Seven months later, on 11 July 1967, the CT-39E "Sabreliner" (light transport jet) arrived and an additional phase of operations commenced. The CT-39E aircraft cruised at 450 knots at a maximum altitude of 45,000 feet, providing rapid transportation between Western Pacific military and civilian airports.

In June 1969 three C-130F "Hercules" transports were assigned to the squadron. Then in February 1971, VRC-50 received orders to change its homeport from Atsugi, Japan to NAS North Island at San Diego, California. [Authorized By: CNO, DTG R171535Z Feb 71] As part of this move, the C-130 aircraft were transferred to VR-21 in Barber's Point, Hawaii, while the CT39Es, C-1As, and five C-2As were transferred to VRC-50 Detachment Cubi Point, Republic of the Philippines on a six-month rotational basis. In December 1971, the squadron established a C-1A detachment at Danang Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, and assumed responsibility for Yankee Station Carrier Onboard Delivery. A further change of homeport, from Naval Air Station, North Island to Naval Air Station, Cubi Point Republic of the Philippines occurred in July 1972. [Authorized By: CNO, DTG 281950Z Jun 72]The Danang Detachment following the homeport change, was phased out seven months later allowing the squadron to operate as a unit for the first time in 4 1/2 years. VRC-50 “Hoo Dogs” CT-39E at Atsugi May 1971.
In April 1976, VRC-50 was redesignated "Fleet Logistics Support Squadron FIFTY. The return of the C130 aircraft in March 1977 brought the aircraft inventory to six C-1As, seven C-2As, two CT-39Es and three C-130Fs. With additional use of the C-1A and expanded use of the C-2A aircraft, VRC-50 again provided Carrier Onboard Delivery (COD) support to SEVENTH Fleet units operating in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean until calendar year 1981.

With the retirement of the C-1A from the operational service, the first US-3A detachment personnel reported aboard in August 1981, and VRC-50 assumed operational control of the Diego Garcia detachment in March 1982, providing direct support to Carrier Battle Groups on "Gonzo" Station in the North Arabian Sea. It was here that the US-3A aircraft earned the name "Miss Piggy" following its 2,000 mile mail run.

In December 1988, VRC-50 closed a chapter in its long operational history when its remaining CT-39E was transferred to MCAS Futenma, Okinawa, terminating its "Sabreliner" operations.

In August 1990, the FOO DOG C-2A detachment aboard USS INDEPENDENCE(CV 62) established a 1-plane foothold in the Arabian Gulf which later combined with other logistic units to facilitate the biggest assembly of naval, air and land forces since D-Day. On 15 January 1991, two days before the commencement of Operation DESERT STORM, VRC-50 established a permanent detachment in Fujairah, United Arab Emirates, which remained until 1 September 1993.

Following the eruption of Mount Pinatubo and as part of the U. S. military withdrawal from the Republic of the Philippines, VRC-50 made a homeport change from Naval Air Station, Cubi Point to Andersen Air Force Base Guam effective 1 August 1992 while still providing uninterrupted logistics support to SEVENTH Fleet units.
On 30 September 1994, the FOG-DOGS' final Commanding Officer, Commander Donald T. Boothe, led the last 32 officers and 230 enlisted personnel in a disestablishment ceremony aboard Andersen AFB, Guam. This ended over 28 years of dedicated sacrifice and service to SEVENTH Fleet forces operating in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, an area of responsibility (AOR) nearly two thirds the earth's surface. Throughout this time men and women of the VRC-50 FOO DOGS have provided the airborne logistics support that made possible America’s forward Naval presence in Asia, the Middle East and the Pacific. Supported by VRC50, these forces have ensured stability, built international relationships, provided humanitarian aid, deterred aggression and won conflicts. VRC-50 was officially disestablished on 7 October 1994.

In August 1994 the US-3A completed 13 years of Fleet service with the transfer of VRC-50's final four "Pigs" to VS-41 at NAS North island, California, for use as fleet replacement pilot trainers and VIP aircraft. In September 1994 one C-130 aircraft was explosively disabled on Andersen AFB, Guam and the final two C-130F's were transferred to Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, for preservation. All C-2A aircraft were transferred to VRC-30 at NAS North Island or to VRC-30 Det 5, Atsugi, Japan.
The Navy’s variant of the V-22 Osprey that will serve as the future carrier onboard delivery (COD) aircraft has an official designation: CMV-22B. The Navy announced one year ago (2015) that it would buy the V-22 – which is already used by Air Force special operators and has revolutionized how the Marine Corps operates at sea and ashore.

The COD mission is currently carried out by the Northrop Grumman C-2A Greyhound turboprop plane, which carries people, mail, supplies and more to the aircraft carrier from shore facilities.

The Navy previously intended to host a competition to replace the C-2A with a similar fixed-wing aircraft, but last year’s decision to use the Osprey allows the Navy to take advantage of a hot production line and a mature logistics and training infrastructure. The V-22 has also operated off the flight deck of Military Sealift Command supply ships during exercises, and the Navy could invest in certifying the V-22 to land on and take off from the flight decks of destroyers and other surface ships, making the V-22 a more flexible choice than a conventional fixed-wing plane, according to the service.
USNI News understands that the C-2A may have had some advantages over the Bell-Boeing V-22, such as being able to fly at higher altitudes. However, early COD replacement efforts may have indicated that replacing the old plane would be costlier than originally expected.

The Marines call their variant the MV-22, and the Air Force variant is the CV-22. The Navy ultimately designated its variant using both designators. According to an Air Force primer on aircraft designators, the C stands for cargo and means the plane is “designed to carry heavy cargo, passengers, and/or medical patients.” The M stands for multimission and “identifies aircraft specially configured to support special operations.” And the V signifies a vertical-takeoff or short-takeoff fixed-wing plane, such as the AV-8B. Over the past year, documents in the Navy and Defense Department have referred to the Navy’s Osprey variant as the HV-22 – with the H denoting a rotary-wing rather than fixed-wing aircraft. However, the H designator also implies a search and rescue aircraft, and though the Osprey could conceivably participate in search and rescue missions, that is not included in the COD mission set.
The “CMV” designation is meant to best reflect the nature of the COD mission, which, according to a statement from Naval Air Systems Command, “is to provide the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander with time-critical, long-range aerial logistics support by transporting personnel, mail and priority cargo from advance bases to the sea base.” To accomplish this mission, the CMV-22B will be the same as the MV-22, plus an extended-range fuel system, a high-frequency beyond line of sight radio and a public address system in the back of the aircraft. To accomplish this mission, the CMV-22B will be the same as the MV-22, plus an extended-range fuel system, a high-frequency beyond line of sight radio and a public address system in the back of the aircraft.

The Navy’s program of record originally called for 48 planes total, but the Navy has since determined it only needs to buy 44. The NAVAIR statement says CMV-22B production will begin in Fiscal Year 2018, and aircraft deliveries will begin in 2020.
The US Navy will establish Fleet Logistics Multi-Mission Squadron (VRM) 30 at NAS North Island (CA) as well as the Naval Aviation Training Support Group (NATSG) at MCAS New River (NC) on 1 October 2018.

The new carrier-onboard-delivery (COD) squadron will be the first of three to operate the CMV-22B Osprey tiltrotor transport aircraft. VRM-30 Providers ('RW-xx'), the successor of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 30 operating the C-2A Greyhound, will deploy COD Ospreys with each carrier air wing from the West Coast and Japan.

Besides VRM-30, a second fleet squadron equipped with the CVM-22B will be established (date not set yet). VRM-40 Rawhides ('JK-xx') will be based at NAS Norfolk (VA) as a successor of VRC-40. VRM-40 will deploy COD Ospreys with each carrier air wing from the East Coast.

Overall, NATSG will support the transition from C-2A to CMV-22B and will use MV-22B of the USMC fleet replacement (FRS) squadron, Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron (VMMT) 204. Currently, a detachment of Commander, Airborne Command & Control and Logistics Wing, the type wing for the two VRC squadrons as well as the E-2D squadrons, supervises the US Navy’s V-22 training at New River. This detachment will eventually become a new US Navy type wing at North Island as the reporting command for the two planned VRM fleet squadrons.

Eventually, a third squadron CVM-22B squadron will be established, designated VRM-50 (date not set yet). This unit will take the role as the CVM-22B FRS when the training shifts from New River.

VRC-50 (the coded 'RG-xx') was disestablished as "Foo Dogs" on 7 October 1994 and last flew the US-3A Viking in the COD role from Andersen AFB (Guam). Most probably, VRM-50 will take-over the nick-name and the squadron tradition.

Shared credit: Richard R. Burgess (Seapower)

Photo and artist impression: US Navy

Photo C-2A VRC-40: Stephan de Bruijn (on instagram stephan_debruijn)
The Navy will pursue the three changes it needs via engineering change proposals to the existing MV-22 design. Those ECPs are not yet under contract, USNI News understands, but are planned for FY 2016 and should be finalized in the coming months.

To accomplish this mission, the CMV-22B will be the same as the MV-22, plus an extended-range fuel system, a high-frequency beyond line of sight radio and a public address system in the back of the aircraft. The Navy’s program of record originally called for 48 planes total, but the Navy has since determined it only needs to buy 44. The NAVAIR statement says production on the CMV-22B will begin in Fiscal Year 2018, and aircraft deliveries will begin in 2020. The Navy will pursue the three changes it needs via engineering change proposals to the existing MV-22 design.

A CMV squadron has been established in NAS Norfolk VA. A second CMV squadron will be established in San Diego NAS North Island CA. Both squadrons will be under a new CMV Wing Commander.