

Screaming Eagles prepare to deploy

By Lt.j.g. Gavin DeFreitas, Screaming Eagles' reporter, Friday, December 16, 2005

With just over a week left, Patrol Squadron One prepares to step out the door for another six-month deployment to Japan in support of Commander, Seventh Fleet. Anticipation and anxiety among the squadron's service members is running high, but so are the emotions of having to leave family members and loved ones behind. During the 18 months at home, VP-1 accomplished many notable feats and excelled beyond all expectations.

To kick off the Inter-Deployment Readiness Cycle, the squadron took part in several missions supporting the Expeditionary Strike Group Marine Expeditionary Unit in the desert and demonstrated the P-3's ability to support troops on the ground. During the IDRC, Patrol One participated in numerous Joint Task Force Exercises in support of deploying battle groups out of North Island, San Diego. These exercises provided opportunities for aircrews to gain first-hand experience in complex battle group coordinated operations. The Screaming Eagles also conducted successful Maverick and Harpoon missile shots in Hawaii. Other noteworthy events during the home cycle were two Extended Echo Ranging exercises. During the first of the two exercises, Cmdr. Rick Nielsen was the Commander Task Group, leading operations for the two-week exercise encompassing over 250 flight hours.

Members of the Maintenance Department demonstrated their excellence by scoring an impressive 92 percent on the Conventional Weapon Training Proficiency Inspection. The squadron completed its IDRC by scoring a grade of "On Track" on 40 of 42 Naval Aviation programs during their Aviation Maintenance Inspection, as well as grading out high on their Operational Readiness Exercises. Patrol Squadron One is deploying to Misawa and Kadena, Japan, which will serve as their hub of operations as they detach to locations throughout Seventh Fleet. Aircrews will use all of their skills honed from the many training flights and numerous exercises over the past 18 months, while the maintainers skillfully and safely keep the aircraft in the air as they did during the home cycle.

While supporting Commander Seventh Fleet, they can expect to fly Maritime Patrol missions, Surface Surveillance missions and Coordinated Anti-Submarine Warfare exercises with various allied nations, in addition to search and rescue missions. With the hard work and dedication shown by the squadron Sailors, the excellent training and guidance provided by Commander Patrol and Reconnaissance Wing 10 and the constant unwavering support of NAS Whidbey Island, the Screaming Eagles are ready, willing and prepared for deployment.