

## **State of the Bases Brief**

(7 Feb 2017)

### **Significant events of 2017**

- **2 Feb: Voluntary Protection Program (VPP) star site ceremony on the air station**
  - Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) highest honor for worksites that exhibit an elite level of safety excellence.
  - We're the only operational installation in the Marine Corps to receive VPP star status.
  
- **Feb: VMFAT-501 graduated their first two CAT I pilots.**
  - All former students were transition pilots (either flew the F-18, AV-8, or EA-6). CAT I pilots are pipeline students who have only flown trainer jets prior to training on the F-35
  - Total in 2017, VMFAT-501: 30 pilots trained, 10 of which were CAT I pilots, 4 of those 10 were UK
  
- **10 Feb: MAG-31 Change of command.**
  - Col. Robert Cooper relinquished command to Col. Frank Latt.
  
- **25 March: Family of Montford Point Marine Willis Jameson received the Congressional Gold Medal on his behalf.**
  - President Obama signed law awarding Congressional Gold Medal to all Montford Point Marines
  
- **1 April: Began process of assuming operational control of Townsend Bombing Range from Georgia Air National Guard.**
  - Turnover complete, assumed full responsibility on 1 Oct.
  - Acquired title to all lands of extended range on 31 Dec.
  
- **8 May: VMFA(AW)-224 deployed to middle east in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.**
  - They returned home from deployment before Thanksgiving which was a huge win for the squadron and their families.
  
- **7 July: Col Miller assumed command of MCAS Beaufort from Col Buck.**
  - Col Buck retired after a great 30 year career.
  
- **Early Sept: VMFA-312 deployed aboard the USS Roosevelt.**
  
- **Early Sept: Hurricane Irma.**
  - Evacuated the air station and Laurel Bay for a couple of days
  - No major damage to our infrastructure – mostly a storm surge event
  - Great coordination with Beaufort County during the hurricane.

- **22 Sept: VMFA-122 departed MCAS Beaufort for MCAS Yuma, AZ.**
  - They are transitioning to an F-35 squadron.
  - Shows the evolution of the F-35 program.
  - Not scheduled to lose another squadron until FY 2023.
  - VMFA(AW)-533 will head to MCAS Cherry Point
  
- **16 Oct: Georgia DNR purchased nearly 20,000 acres for the Sansavilla wildlife management area as partner in Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI).**
  - Does two things
    - 1) Protects it as a wildlife management area and
    - 2) Provides protected species habitat as an alternative away from TBR and the possibility of limitations on training so we can maintain readiness
  
- **14 Dec: UK received their final F-35B prior to their departure in 2018**
  
- **25 Jan: UK started moving parts and equipment from our air station to the UK.**
  - This is preparation for 617 Squadron to stand up at RAF Base Marham later in 2018
  - First time we've had a UK A-400 Atlas on our runway.

### 2018 Expectations

- **New F-35 Hangar completion**
  
- **Townsend Bombing Range:** continued modernization
  
- **Bid farewell to our UK friends at VMFAT-501.**
  - We'll celebrate the evolution of their F-35 program, but we will miss their presence and expertise on the air station.
  
- **Bolden elementary construction:** Slated for completion in late summer 2018.
  
- **Our squadrons will continue to operate at a high operational tempo**
  - 115 scheduled to deploy in 2018
  - 251 deployed to Japan
  - 224 returned from deployment in November
  - 312 deployed on the Roosevelt
  - 533 working up for a deployment
  - 501 trained 30 pilots in 2017 and expected to train more than that in 2018