

UH-60 Black Hawk Modernization

Army National Guard

Fiscal Year 2024 Requirements for the Army National Guard



NGAUS



The Issue

The Army National Guard UH-60/HH-60 Black Hawk fleet continues to age, with many units operating aircraft over 26 years old. This platform is required to perform missions in support of overseas contingency operations, homeland response and MEDEVAC transport. To ensure maximum lethality and readiness, it is critical to continue fielding the most advanced Black Hawk variant, the UH/HH-60M, to Army National Guard units.

◀ National Guard Black Hawk crews from KY, TN and WV rescue more than 400 citizens during 2022 KY floods

Background

The Black Hawk's mission flexibility makes it the Army National Guard's primary rotary wing asset for overseas contingency operations and state emergency response missions. The Army National Guard operates 907 Black Hawks consisting of H-60As, H-60Ls and H-60Ms, comprising more than 40% of the Total Army Black Hawk fleet. The Active Army retired its last combat H-60A in 2020, and the Active Army is fully modernized with UH/HH-60Ms in their primary combat aviation formations. More than half of the Guard's Black Hawk fleet are the oldest H-60A and H-60L models averaging more than 20 years old. In 2018, the Army started a program to re-cap H-60Ls into an H-60V model, however since the program began, ramp-up and execution of the program has been slower than projected. If any UH/HH-60Vs are fielded to Active Army Units, they will likely be fielded to command aviation companies, test and training ranges. Due to limitations of their airframes, H-60Vs will also not be outfitted with the Army's new ITE engine. Concurrent and proportional fielding of like type/model series of equipment in combat units is one of NGAUS's top priorities. The UH/HH-60M is more reliable, less expensive to operate, and has greater range to support Army National Guard overseas combat missions and domestic missions here at home saving lives when natural disasters strike such as wildfires, snowstorms, hurricanes, floods and tornadoes. Adding funding for 10 new UH-60M helicopters enables the Army National Guard to field an additional utility helicopter company, retire sooner its older H-60 helicopters, and continue to increase the readiness and capability of the Total Force. The Army National Guard must remain both ready to deploy overseas as required, and be ready to respond to domestic emergencies. Modernizing Army National Guard UH/HH-60 Black Hawks with new UH/HH-60Ms will ensure the Army National Guard remains ready, lethal, and mission-relevant to the Total Force and in support of the National Defense Strategy.

Recommendation

ARNG Designation



Designating 10 additional UH-60M aircraft for the Army National Guard within defense appropriations legislation



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