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Project News

Army Demonstrates Helicopter Rinse System at Wheeler Army Airfield

By Cynthia Greenwood

Army officials unveiled the first Department of Defense (DoD) joint Service helicopter rinse system at a ribbon-cutting ceremony on January 25 at Oahu's Wheeler Army Airfield. (See [Clear Water Rinse System Improves Aircrew Safety](#), *CorrDefense*, October 2005. [Click here](#))

The 25th Aviation Brigade pilot of an OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter landed on the rinse pad to provide a rinsing demonstration for those who attended.

The activities took place on a misty, cloudy afternoon, within view of Kolekole Pass, the historic Waianae mountain pass that Japanese pilots flew high above, on their infamous journey toward Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Colonel Howard J. Killian, the Commander of the U.S. Army Garrison, Hawaii, addressed the group and acknowledged several guests, including Steven Carr, the Corrosion Program Manager from Army Aviation and Missile Command (AMCOM). Col. A.T. Ball, 25th Aviation Brigade Commander, and Col. Yvette Kelley, the Pacific Regional Office Deputy Director, performed the ribbon-cutting after Reverend William Kaina performed a traditional Hawaiian blessing.

For several years Carr has spearheaded a joint DoD effort to fund and install a unique system designed to rinse DoD helicopters. The system helps aircrews combat the corrosion that adversely affects flight safety. "The rinse system is unique because it is the only system designed specifically for all DoD rotary-winged aircraft," said Col. Killian.

Killian pointed out many of the system's benefits. It rinses 20 helicopters per hour; it can recognize the CH-47, UH-60, OH-58D, and other types electronically, and will activate the appropriate nozzles on the rinse pad; and it has an oil/water separator and a unique filtration system, considered unconventional and "leading edge" technology, that is engaged as part of the contaminant removal process. "The system also removes solvents, hydraulic fluids, fuel, heavy metals, and salt from contaminated rinse water, allowing it to be recycled back to potable quality standards according to the Environmental Protection Agency," he said.



An OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopter gets a rinsing at Wheeler Army Airfield, Oahu, during a demonstration sponsored by Army Aviation and Missile Command. Photos by Cynthia Greenwood, CorrDefense.



(Above left) Reverend William Kaina has just finished performing a traditional Hawaiian blessing on the patch of earth in front of the rinse pad.



(Above right) Col. A.T. Ball, 25th Aviation Brigade Commander, and Col. Yvette Kelley, Pacific Regional Office Deputy Director, cut the ribbon during a ceremony unveiling the DoD's first clear water rinse system.

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-Steven Carr, the Corrosion Program Manager from Army Aviation and Missile Command (AMCOM)

"This rinse system is important to the safety of our helicopter crews as it eliminates the corrosion that causes many flight safety problems," Carr said. "Wheeler Army Airfield is at the forefront of the Army Aviation's fight against corrosion."