

Canadian CF-18 Hornets Ready To Serve In Bosnia

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Six Canadian Forces CF-18 fighter aircraft, together with nearly 125 Canadian troops, will embark in mid-August on a three-month mission in support of the North American Treaty Organization (NATO) stabilization force in Bosnia.

The Canadian CF-18s will operate out of Aviano Air Base, Italy. Their mission is to assist NATO forces in detecting violations of the no-fly zone and to help ensure the safety of ground troops.

"This deployment of CF-18s is another indication of the Hornet's outstanding international operational experience and its interoperability with NATO forces," said Jean Boyle, vice president for international marketing for The Boeing Company.

The Boeing CF-18s will continue the Hornet's record of NATO operations over Bosnia.

Since July 1993, Navy F/A-18s on board aircraft carriers in the Adriatic Sea and Marine Corps F/A-18s at Aviano Air Base, Italy, have been flying round-the-clock missions in support of NATO air operations over Bosnia-Herzegovina. They were joined by Spanish Air Force EF-18s in 1995.

The versatile F/A-18s have performed air-to-air combat air patrol missions, close air support air-to-ground missions, photo reconnaissance missions, forward air controller-airborne missions and tactical air controller-airborne missions over Bosnia. The Hornets have often performed their missions at night or in bad weather.

U.S. Navy and Marine Corps F/A-18s led the initial wave of NATO air strikes against Bosnian Serb positions on Aug. 30, 1995, that paved the way for negotiations to begin on a Bosnian peace agreement.

During the Persian Gulf crisis in 1990-91, more than 200 U.S. and Canadian Hornets flew ground missions in support of the allied coalition's drive to liberate Kuwait from occupation by Iraq. F/A-18s participated in virtually every conceivable mission area and shot down Iraqi fighters. Navy and Marine Corps Hornets flew more than 11,000 sorties and recorded availability rates of 99 percent.

F/A-18s were again deployed in the Persian Gulf region in 1992 as part of Operation Southern Watch to enforce the allied coalition's no-fly zone in Iraq. Hornets from the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk flew combat air patrol and suppression of enemy air defense missions over southern Iraq in January 1993. In December 1992, F/A-18s from the Kitty Hawk supported U.S. relief efforts in Somalia as part of Operation Restore Hope.

Canada was the first international customer for the Hornet, and its fleet of Hornets is the largest outside the United States. Operating out of Canadian Forces Base Cold Lake and Canadian Forces Base Bagotville in Canada, the CF-18A/B model Hornets are capable of performing a variety of missions and can be easily and economically upgraded.

The Hornet design is based on the use of programmable, state-of-the-art digital computers so that future improvements to its capability can be made without expensive changes to hardware.

Truly a strike fighter, the F/A-18 combines the capabilities of an attack aircraft or bomber with those of a fighter interceptor.

The F/A-18 Hornet is the fighter aircraft of choice of eight air forces as well as the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps.

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