

Sikorsky SH-3H “Sea King”

The Hickory Aviation Museum’s SH-3H Sea King Bureau Number 149738 is on loan from the National Museum of Naval Aviation. Numerous local and state aviators began their jet training in the Buckeye. Coordinated by Kyle & Kregg Kirby.



Role	Carrier Based Anti Submarine Warfare
National origin	United States of America
Manufacturer	Sikorsky Aircraft
First flight	11 March 1959
Introduction	June 1961
Retired	27 January 2006 by the US Navy
Status	Retired, but still in service with several countries
Primary users	United States Navy / Various
Produced	1959–1970s
Number built	1,100+ in all versions by all licensees
Propulsion	2 × General Electric T58-GE-10 turbo shaft engines
Unit cost	US\$6.4 million

General characteristics

Crew: Four (2 Pilots/2 ASW Operators)
Length: 54 ft 9 in (16.7 m)
Rotor diameter: 62 ft (19 m)
Height: 16 ft 10 in (5.13 m)
Disc area: 3,019 ft² (284 m²)
Empty weight: 11,865 lb (5,382 kg)
Max. takeoff weight: 20,050 lb (10,000 kg)
Power plant: 2 x General Electric T58-GE-10 rated at 1,400 shp (1045 kW)

Performance

Maximum speed: 166 mph (267 km/h)
Range: 621mi (1,000 km)
Service ceiling: 14,700 ft (4,481 m)
Rate of climb: 1,310-2,200 ft/min (400-670 m/m)

Armament

Torpedoes: 2 x MK44/46 anti submarine torpedoes
Various: Sonobuoys and pyrotechnic devices

Operational history

U.S. Navy

The **Sikorsky SH-3 Sea King** (company designation **S-61**) is an American twin-engine anti submarine warfare (ASW) helicopter designed and built by Sikorsky Aircraft. A landmark design, it was the world's first amphibious helicopter and one of the first ASW rotorcraft to use turboshaft engines.

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The Sea King has its origins in efforts by the United States Navy as a means of counteracting the growing threat of Soviet submarines during the 1950s. Accordingly, the helicopter was specifically developed to deliver a capable ASW platform; in particular, it combined the roles of *hunter* and *killer*, which had previously been carried out by two separate helicopters. The Sea King was initially designated *HSS-2*, which was intended to imply a level of commonality to the earlier HSS-1; it was subsequently re-designated as the *SH-3A* during the early 1960s.

Introduced to service in 1961, it was operated by the United States Navy as a key ASW and utility asset for several decades prior to being replaced by the non-amphibious Sikorsky SH-60 Seahawk in the 1990s. In late 1961 and early 1962, a modified U.S. Navy HSS-2 Sea King was used to break the FAI 3 km, 100 km, 500 km, and 1000 km helicopter speed records. The Sea King also performed various other roles and missions such as search-and-rescue, transport, anti-shipping, medevac, plane guard, utility and torpedo recovery, combat support, and airborne early warning operations. Several Sea Kings, operated by the United States Marine Corps HMX-1 unit, are used as the official helicopters of the President of the United States, for which the call sign ‘Marine One’ would be used.

The Sea King has also proved to be popular on the export market with foreign military customers, and has also been sold to civil operators as well. As of 2015, many examples of the type remain in service in nations around the world. The Sea King has been built under license by Agusta in Italy, Mitsubishi in Japan, and by Westland in the United Kingdom as the Westland Sea King. The major civil versions are the S-61L and S-61N.

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