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July 27, 2013
Release #18-13



HSC-12 Changes of Command

By Lt. j.g. Gregory Westin, HSC-12 Public Affairs

CORAL SEA -- The “Golden Falcons” of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 12 held a change of command ceremony July 27, on board the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS George Washington (CVN 73), during their 2013 patrol.

Cmdr. Jeffrey P. Holzer relieved Cmdr. Christopher G. Bailey as commanding officer.

The ceremony took place on George Washington’s flight deck as a symbolic lead change taking place in the air. The lead change represents the passing of responsibility of the command from one officer to another.

“It’s important that we hold change of command ceremonies so the crew physically sees the shift in the chain of command,” said Capt. Michael Boyle, commander, Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5. “It gives people an opportunity to say goodbye to the off-going commanding officer while welcoming [Holzer] to his new position.”

Bailey assumed command of HSC-12 in June 2012. During his tour, the “Golden Falcons” deployed with Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 2 on board USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Following the deployment, he led the squadron in a permanent duty station move from San Diego, Calif, to Atsugi, Japan. Bailey’s next assignment will be to U.S. Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

“I am honored and lucky to have had the opportunity to lead and deploy with an amazing group of men and women, and to be able to leave the squadron in the hands of a very good friend,” said Bailey. “Being a part of this squadron has been a highlight of my career.”

Holzer most recently served at United States Northern Command as a future maritime operations planner in the J3. While there, he was instrumental in developing plans, conducting exercises and real world operations for Defense Support to Civil Authorities and Maritime Homeland Defense. A native of Arvada, Colo., Holzer was commissioned in June 1995 and was designated as a Navy pilot in June 1997.

“I’m proud to be the new commanding officer,” said Holzer. “I’m also proud of where we are, as a squadron. My expectations are for everyone to continue to do a great job and also, look for ways to improve themselves and our squadron as a whole. We will continue to move forward with professionalism and ‘Golden Falcon’ pride.”

Holzer’s previous assignments include: Helicopter Combat Support Squadron (HC) 11, HC-6, Helicopter Tactical Wing Atlantic Weapons and Tactics Unit officer in charge, HC-3 instructor and operations officer, and HSC-21 as officer in charge, Detachment Five.

“We look forward to the continued success of the world-famous Golden Falcons,” concluded Boyle.

HSC-12 is the oldest U.S. Navy Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron. Their primary mission is to effectively employ the versatility and lethality of the MH-60S Seahawk aircraft to support the strike group commander's objectives. The missions include: force protection, special operations, search and rescue (SAR), combat search and rescue (CSAR), anti-surface warfare (ASUW), and logistics.

The Golden Falcons are one of the nine squadrons of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 embarked on U.S. Navy's forward-deployed aircraft carrier George Washington to provide a combat-ready force that protects the collective maritime interest of the U.S. and its partners and allies in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.

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