



Japan Beefs up its Naval Capability

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Summary

"To assuage fears of countries which had faced the brunt of Japanese brutality, Japan might see merit to take India on board in the form of a naval cooperation framework to secure peace at sea. Developments in the past 4-5 years in India-Japan relations point towards that direction."

Notwithstanding Japan's prolonged recession and sustained struggle to get the country out of the "Lost Decade", and the failure of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan's (LDP) policy prescriptions to resuscitate the Japanese economy from its long slumber despite its prolonged rule over the country, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) faces daunting challenges to correct the historical wrongs, perceived by his party and his predecessors. While striving to set right the ailing domestic economy through revolutionary reforms, Hatoyama is also determined to chart a new course for country's foreign policy, which seems to be a radical departure from Tokyo's over dependence on the United States for the country's security since World War II.

Indeed, there always lurked some signs of an independent stance during the tenure of his immediate predecessors when Japan signed defence agreements with Australia and with India. These two countries find special favour in Japan's defence policy apart from the US. It seems logical and appropriate; therefore, that Hatoyama is pursuing a similar foreign policy and giving it the much-needed sharpness. His visit to China and South Korea soon after assuming office he articulated his vision of an East Asian Community in which the US was excluded and then his visit to India during the closing days of 2009 aptly demonstrates an Asian-oriented foreign policy.

Given this changing foreign policy paradigm and driven by economic imperatives, Japan is also expanding its naval power, and seeking naval cooperation with India and other Asian countries. Most its oil imports originate from the Persian Gulf and given the constitutional constraints which put a limitation on Japan's capacity to project its naval capability and use force, securing the sea lanes of communications to ensure uninterrupted supplies of critical resources to sustain its economy drives Japan to seek naval cooperation with countries like India to secure the seas for maritime trade. Though Japan's engagement in anti-piracy operations as part of coalition forces is laudable, its confidence in India's naval capability was heightened after the Indian Navy rescued the Alandora Rainbow.

The Case of Hyuga



Hyuga helicopter-carrying destroyer (DDH 181)

With a view to beefing up its naval strength, the Japanese Navy –officially the Maritime Self-Defense Forces (MSDF) – launched an destroyer, Hyuga, at the IHI Marine United shipyard in Yokohama on 23 August, 2009. The 13,500 ton vessel Hyuga, a helicopter-carrying destroyer for the MSDF made its presence known to the public for the first time.

Its appearance resembles that of an aircraft carrier, Hyuga's name comes from an Imperial Navy warship that saw ac-

tion in World War II. The original Hyuga was a battle ship, but towards the end of the War, it was modified into a unique aircraft-carrying battleship that could load some 20 fighter jets. The new Hyuga-class vessel meanwhile can carry several choppers and is mainly tasked with locating and destroying enemy submarines.

Hyuga has a flush flight deck and a large, starboard-side island structure. But it is a relatively small ship compared to carriers, with a standard displacement of 13,5000 (metric) tonnes and will displace 18,000 tonnes at full capacity load. This is about the size of the planned US destroyers of the Zumwalt (DDG 1000) class.

The Hyuga is classified as a helicopter-carrying destroyer by the Japanese. The launch of the Hyuga is worth noting for several reasons. First, the Hyuga, also known as 16DDH, is Japan's largest warship since World War II, and it is the MSDF's first warship that has a weight greater than 10,000 tons. The Hyuga is also equipped with a state-of-the-art radar system, similar to a mini Japanese version of the Aegis system. The radar can cover all directions around the clock just as the Aegis does.

Apart from carrying an Aegis-type defense system with the US-developed AN/SPY-1 multi-function radar, Hyuga's principal weapons armament will be 64 advanced ESSM-type Sparrow missiles and will be fitted with two 20-mm Phalanx Gatling guns for close-in defence against anti-ship missiles and will have six tubes for anti-submarine torpedoes.

Hyuga is the first destroyer which has a compartment for women. About twenty women officers and crew in the MSDF were assigned to the destroyer for the first time, and they are expected to build their careers together with Hyuga. Increasing the number of destroyers with compartments for women in the future will help in expanding the role of women in the MSDF.

There is considerable debate over what exactly the Hyuga is about. Japan officially calls it a helicopter-carrying destroyer, claiming it is neither a light aircraft carrier nor a helicopter carrier. But foreign observers, in particular its neighbours such as South Korea, call it Japan's first post-war helicopter carrier or light aircraft carrier. Japan plans to operate four to six of the ships, each with a hangar and deck for up to 11 choppers. Four SH-60 anti-submarine helicopters can lift off from the Hyuga flight deck at the same time. It does not carry vertical takeoff and landing aircraft, and is not equipped with the special "ski jump" decks needed for fixed-wing jets to take off.

Ironically, the US Navy briefly, and mostly at Congressional insistence, looked at similar aircraft-carrying destroyer designs in the 1970s. Based on the US Spruance (DD 963) design, such ships could have operated Harrier VSTOL aircraft as well as helicopters on a modified destroyer hull. Congress voted funding for two such ships, but instead the Navy simply built another conventional destroyer.

According to experts, Hyuga is not a light aircraft carrier for now, but it can still serve as a helicopter carrier. In contrast to Japan's Haruna-class helicopter destroyer, which carries only three choppers, the Hyuga can carry nearly four times as many, greatly improving the

MSDF's helicopter operation capabilities. The Hyuga is much larger than the 8,900-ton Oosumi-class vessels, a large landing ship that prompted a public outcry that it could be rebuilt into a light aircraft carrier. The Hyuga can also function as a flagship commanding a fleet and as a disaster rescue command station.

The launch of the Hyuga is seen by some observers to have already laid the foundation for the MSDF to achieve its long-cherished desire to possess a large aircraft carrier. Japan's Constitution, imposed by the US after the War, permits Japan to have only self-defence forces. Many Japanese, recalling the effectiveness of Japanese aircraft carriers against China in the 1930s and against the US forces in the Pacific in the early stages of the War, consider carriers to be offensive weapons.

Despite Japan's defeat in World War II, the MSDF long had a dream of operating an aircraft carrier. During the peak Cold War years in the 1960s, it wanted to build a 10,000-ton anti-submarine helicopter carrier with a large flight deck. The US military advisory group approved the idea, and Japan pushed to build it with partial funding from the US. But public opinion was vehemently opposed to the idea. Also, the government was not able to obtain budgetary support and as a result the project was scrapped. Instead, Haruna and Shirane helicopter-carrying destroyers were built. As both age now, the Hyuga has been launched to replace them. As a result, after 40 years of twists and turns, Japan's dream of building a helicopter carrier has come true.

Indeed, Japan was a leader in carrier development in the 1930s and early 1940s with their short-lived carrier Shinano, which was converted during construction from a battleship. It was the world's largest carrier to be built prior to the USS Forrestal (CVA 59), was completed in 1955.

There is an opinion that it was the Taiho, not the Shinano, which represented the zenith of Japanese carrier design. Shinano was very large, but was considered a carrier support vessel rather than a true carrier. She had numerous machine shops, supplies, and other capabilities necessary to the operation of a carrier force and carried very few aircraft for her size. Like Shinano, Taiho was sunk by a US sub.

The overwhelming dependence of Japan on oil from the Middle East, with tankers having to transit long ocean distances, and increasing Japanese political-economic involvement in the Middle East and Africa, has led many Japanese leaders to look at the utility of naval forces in a new light. Moreover, since North Korea and China, Japan's biggest likely adversaries, have large submarine fleets, Japan has a legitimate fear as its import dependent economy needs safety of vessel movement in large areas of the West Pacific and the East China Sea.

Though it is argued that unlike the US or even more recently China, Japan has no ambition to project military force, there is a need to securing resources such as oil flowing from the Persian Gulf and maintaining an appropriate naval capability seems necessary and desirable from the Japanese perspective.

From a strategic perspective, it seems reasonable to argue that Japan should be a strong power again in a part of the world where India and Japan can share mutual interests to maintain Asian order. World War II ended long ago as did the military-political atmosphere that set the Pacific ablaze. All of the absolute restraints on Japan's militarization are out of date. No wonder, debates have become intense domestically to look for means to obtain Diet approval to remove the constitutional restraints that hinders Japan becoming a 'normal' state.

In the geopolitical matrix of Asia, the China factor always looms large in assessing the strategic stances of other Asian countries. Not many trust Communist China. China is making an attempt to build a "blue water Navy" having "procured" technology from Russia and France. North Korea is a worrying and constant irritant and kidnapping of Japanese nationals and regular incursions to Japanese waters in the name of "fishing" provide legitimate ground for the SDF to ask for more power and strength.

For the US, a strong Japan would serve its own interests as the US would not have to waste resource to "defend" Japan if China attacks. From this perspective, the recent military build up by Japan could "hardly" be called peaceful. The construction of a pocket aircraft carrier (the precursor of a full STOVL) would mean that Japan has blue water ambitions, something that goes against their supposedly peaceful stance.

There is yet another angle to look at Japan's military modernization. Willy-nilly the US might begin to feel uncomfortable if Japan's defensive weapon system might change towards its military intentions, something the US might be wary about. More power to Japan might also mean higher tensions between Japan and China. A strong Japan might also propel China to leapfrog from making their brown water navy to creating a blue water navy capable of striking at great distances. A militarily strong Japan will precipitate Chinese determination to build aircraft carriers in the next few years.

If one looks at the issue from the Japan's perspective, the Japanese more than most have suffered greatly from dependence on foreign oil. In fact, just before the World War II when the US, which had most of the world's oil production and known oil reserves at that time, imposed an oil embargo in the wake of Japanese aggression in China, the Japanese were desperate for another source. The Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) was and is oil-rich, but sitting smack in between the Indies and Japan is the Philippines, then a US colony. When the US tried to stranglehold Japan by choking supply lines, the Japanese economy was in dire straits. Japan decided it had to conquer the Philippines and fight the US. In view of the above, if Japan strengthens its military, in particular its Navy, the move could be construed as repeating past mistakes, the results of which are well known. Building up a powerful Navy to protect the sea lanes and access to oil could be perceived to a return to pre-War days. Should Japan take into consideration this aspect while formulating its policy?

The Case of DDH-22

Going further in beefing Japan's defence capability, the Hatoyama government decided to commission on 23 November 2009 a new DDH-22 helicopter destroyer - Japan's largest military vessel since World War II - which began to be seen as a shrewd move by Japan to protect its regional and global interests through robust naval capabilities. Designated by the MSDF as DDH-22, it is a "helicopter carrying destroyer" and is the largest ship in the fleet to counter China's naval buildup and improve responses for contingencies.

The planned helicopter destroyer will have a strength of 248 meters, a displacement of 19,500 tons and a capability to transport up to 14 helicopters, 4,000 people and 50 trucks. It would also be able to refuel other ships. To the untrained eye, the helicopter destroyer looks a lot like a "light" aircraft carrier, which has raised questions that it could violate Japan's pacifist Constitution.

Though Japanese law states that carriers "exceed the war potential needed for a minimum level of self-defense" permitted by Japan's pacifistic Constitution, the MSDF has craved such capabilities since the 1960s. The Defense Ministry has scoffed at suggestions that it violates the Constitution by saying that the ship is necessary for Japan's defence. The ministry reasons that "helicopters are needed to seek out and keep an eye on submarines as well as to patrol surface ships from as far as possible outside the range of enemy missiles. For those reasons, a large destroyer that can carry many helicopters is necessary."

In fact, a request for the helicopter destroyer was first made for the fiscal 2010 budget when the Liberal Democratic Party was in control of government. After Hatoyama became prime minister in September 2009, new budget requests were submitted in October, including 118.1 billion Yen for the construction of a helicopter destroyer. This demonstrated that a bipartisan consensus exists in Japan for the expansion of Japan's naval power.

The ship would eventually replace the destroyer Shirane, which is scheduled to be decommissioned in fiscal 2014. To allow up to five surveillance helicopters to land and take off simultaneously, the bridge of the new helicopter destroyer will be shifted to the starboard side to make room for an uninterrupted flight deck.

At present, MSDF's latest helicopter destroyer, the Hyuga, commissioned in March 2009, has length of 197 meters and a width of 33 meters. Hyuga is the largest ship in the MSDF fleet, but the planned helicopter destroyer - DDH-22 - would have that title once it is completed. The main component of the MSDF fleet is its four destroyer flotillas, each with eight destroyers and eight helicopters. Those numbers were arrived at during the Cold War to counter Soviet submarines plying the waters around Japan.

In recent years, the Chinese Navy has been strengthening its sea-to-sea attack capabilities. Advanced Chinese destroyers carrying cruise missiles have been spotted near gas fields in the East China Sea. The Japanese drive to build the DDH-22 could be a move at least partly directed at China, though defence officials in Japan are reluctant to say so publicly. Prasanth Parameswaran writes: "Though Japan is still the Pacific's second largest naval power (after

the United States), Beijing's blistering military buildup is threatening to blunt Tokyo's superiority at sea." China's naval power projection capability became sharply clear when early in 2009 China's PLA Navy flexed its military muscle by deploying cruise-missile-laden destroyers around energy-rich gas fields in the East China Sea, and by conducting training exercises in the disputed Senkaku Islands.

Japan felt provoked and its concerns were reflected in the annual defense White Paper wherein it was observed that Japan's military posture was "inadequate". Hatoyama's approach towards China has been two-pronged: one to offer gestures of peace, including an apology for Japan's wartime transgressions, a pledge not to visit the controversial Yasukuni Shrine which honours war criminals, and the inking of a joint military exercise agreement with Beijing; and two, to approve defense acquisitions and thereby signaling that he is also willing to confront hard military realities.

Another reason for building the large helicopter destroyer is to respond to the expected increase in emergency assistance missions. Participation in international peacekeeping activities was upgraded to a primary task of the SDF, opening the path for more dispatches both in Japan and abroad. Indeed, since the end of the Cold War, successive Japanese governments have been incrementally loosening the MSDF's constitutional shackles and approving a string of increasingly ambitious international maritime missions. The Japanese MSDF has transported equipment in UN peacekeeping missions in Cambodia in 1992, engaged in humanitarian operations after Indonesia's tsunami in 2005 and in anti-piracy missions off the Somali coast in 2007.

Once Japan obtains the DDH-22 helicopter destroyer, the international role of MSDF will considerably grow, equipping the MSDF with a wide spectrum of capabilities for missions such as refueling other vessels, transporting personnel and equipment, and conducting surveillance of surrounding waters. The ship acquired will be able to deploy rotary-wing aircraft at great distance from Japanese waters, Japan will be in a position to safeguard its global lines of supply and promote its overseas interests. This is extremely important as Japan is overwhelmingly dependent on Middle Eastern oil. Japan is also deepening its economic involvement with Africa and the DDH-22 capability will help protect Japan's economic interests in Africa as well.

At present the MSDF possess 52 destroyers. With the commissioning of the new helicopter destroyer, dispatches would become much more efficient as the new ship will be capable of performing as a transport and supply ship. Not only will the helicopter destroyer be able to transport a large number of SDF ground forces and vehicles, but it could also provide fuel to other MSDF ships in its flotilla. That would eliminate the need for ships to drop anchor to refuel. Indeed, it makes sense for Japan to build a ship with a number of functions rather than constructing destroyers as destroyers and supply ships as supply ships and thereby make more efficient use of the budget.

Future

Japanese defence officials have taken pains to explain that the helicopter destroyer is not an offensive aircraft carrier as the ship will be incapable of having fighter jets land on and take-off the deck. This ship would be a destroyer to transport personnel and supplies in response to major natural disasters in Japan and abroad as well to carry aircraft necessary for continuous surveillance of waters around Japan.

Article 9 of the Constitution reads as follows: "Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes." It further says: "In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized." Therefore, the government issued a statement in 1998 that said "because offensive aircraft carriers exceed the war potential needed for a minimum level of self-defense, possession of such ships is prohibited by the Constitution."

As the MSDF prepares to decommission four other destroyers in addition to the Shirane with no provision of constructing replacement ships, the total number of destroyers possessed by the MSDF would decrease.

Indeed, Hatoyama has made Tokyo's naval capabilities the centerpiece of his lofty East Asian Community initiative. He acknowledges that Japan as a maritime country, has some responsibility to maintain peace at sea. But unless Japan explained appropriately to its neighbour about its naval build up, the specter of a militarily ambitious Japan might trigger alarm bells in an Asia still haunted by the nightmares of Japanese conquest and brutality during World War II. To assuage such fears of countries which had faced the brunt of Japanese brutality, Japan might see merit to take India on board in the form of a naval cooperation framework to secure peace at sea. Developments in the past 4-5 years in India-Japan relations point towards that direction.

Annexure

Maritime Self-Defense Force 44,100

Forces by Role

Surface units organized into 4 Escort Flotillas with a mix of 7-8 warships each. Bases Yokosuka, Kure, Sasebo, Maizuru. SSK organized into two Flotillas with bases at Kure and Yokosuka. Remaining units assigned to 5 regional districts.

Equipment Type

SUBMARINES/TACTICAL/ SSK 16:

6 *Harushio* each with 6 single 533mm TT each with T-89 HWT/UGM-84C *Harpoon* tactical USGW

10 *Oyashio* each with 6 single 533mm TT each with UGM-84C *Harpoon* tactical USGW

PRINCIPAL SURFACE COMBATANTS 52

DESTROYERS 44

DDG 40:

6 *Asagiri* each with 2 triple 324mm ASTT (6 eff.) each with Mk 46 LWT, 1 Mk 112 octuple (8 eff.) with tactical ASROC, 2 Mk 141 *Harpoon* quad (8 eff.) each with RGM-84C *Harpoon* tactical SSM, 1 Mk 29 *Sea Sparrow* octuple with 16 *Sea Sparrow* SAM, 1 76mm gun, (capacity 1 SH-60J/K *Seahawk* ASW hel)

2 *Atago* (*Aegis* Base Line 7) each with 2 quad SSM launchers (8 eff.) with tactical SSM-1B, 1 MK 41 VLS (64 eff.) with SM-2 MR SAM, tactical ASROC, 1 MK 41 VLS (32 eff.) with SM-2 MR SAM, 2 triple 324mm ASTT (6 eff.) each with MK 46 LWT, 1 127mm gun, (capacity 1 SH-60J *Seahawk* ASW hel)

2 *Hatakaze* each with 2 Mk 141 *Harpoon* quad (8 eff.) each with RGM-84C *Harpoon* tactical SSM, 1 MK 13 GMLS with 40 SM-1 MR SAM, 2 triple 324mm ASTT (6 eff.), 2 127 mm gun, 1 hel landing platform

11 *Hatsuyuki* each with 1 Mk 112 octuple (8 eff.) with tactical ASROC, 2 Mk 141 *Harpoon* quad (8 eff.) each with RGM-84C *Harpoon* tactical SSM, 1+Mk 29 *Sea Sparrow* octuple with 16 RIM-7F/M *Sea Sparrow* SAM,

2 triple ASTT (6 eff.) each with Mk 46 LWT, 1 76mm gun, (capacity 1 SH-60J/K *Seahawk* ASW hel)

4 *Kongou* (with hel deck) *Aegis* Baseline 4/5 each with 2 Mk 141 *Harpoon* quad (8 eff.) each

with RGM-84C *Harpoon* tactical SSM, 1 29 cell Mk 41 VLS (29 eff.) with SM-2 MR SAM, tactical ASROC, 1 61 cell Mk 41 VLS (61 eff.) with SM-2 MR SAM, tactical ASROC, 2 triple 324mm ASTT (6eff.), 1 127 mm gun

9 *Murasame* each with 2 quad (8eff.) each with tactical SSM-1B, 1 16 cells Mk 41 VLS with up to 16 tactical ASROC, 1 16 cell Mk 48 VLS with RIM-7M *Sea Sparrow* SAM, 2 triple 324mm TT (6eff.) each with Mk 46 LWT, 2 76mm gun, (capacity 1 SH-60J/K *Seahawk* ASW hel)

1 *Tachikaze* each with 1 Mk 13 GMLS with 8-16 RGM-84C *Harpoon* tactical SSM, 32 SM-1 MR SAM, 1 Mk 112 octuple (8eff.) with up to 16 tactical ASROC, 1 2 triple 324mm ASTT (6eff.) each with Mk 46 LWT, 127mm gun

5 *Takanami (Improved Murasame)* each with 2 quad SSM launchers (8eff.) each with tactical SSM-1B, 1 32 cell Mk 41 VLS (32eff.) with tactical ASROC/RIM-7M/ESSM *Sea Sparrow* SAM, 2 triple 324mm TT (6eff.) each with Mk 46 LWT, 1 *Otobreda* 127mm gun, (capacity 1 SH-60J/K *Seahawk* ASW hel)

DD4:

2 *Haruna* each with 1 Mk octuple (8eff.) with tactical ASROC, 1 Mk 29 *Sea Sparrow* octuple with RIM-7F/M *Sea Sparrow* SAM, 2 triple ASTT (6 eff.) each with Mk 46 LWT, 2 127mm gun, (capacity 3 SH-60J/K *Seahawk* ASW hel)

2 *Shirane* each with 1 Mk 112 octuple (8 eff.) with tactical ASROC, 1+Mk 29 *Sea Sparrow* octuple with 24+ RIM-162A *Sea Sparrow* SAM, 2 triple ASTT (6eff.) each with Mk 46 LWT, 2 127mm gun, (capacity 3 SH-60J/K *Seahawk* ASW hel)

FRIGATES/FFG 8:

6 *Abukuma* each with 2 Mk 141 *Harpoon* quad (8eff.) each with RGM-84C *Harpoon* tactical SSM, 1 Mk 112 octuple (8eff.) with tactical ASROC, 2 triple ASTT (6eff.) each with 2 Mk 46 LWT, 1 76mm gun

2 *Yubari* each with 2 Mk 141 *Harpoon* quad (8eff.) each with RGM-84C *Harpoon* tactical SSM, 2 triple ASTT (6 eff.), 1 Type 71/ 4 tube Mitsubishi 375 mm Bofors (4 eff.), 1 76mm gun

PATROL AND COASTAL COMBATANTS 9

PFM 6 *Hayabusa* each with 4 tactical SSM-1B, 1 76mm gun

PHM 3 *Ichigo* each with 4 tactical SSM-1B

MINE WARFARE/MINE COUNTERMEASURES 30

MCM SPT 4:

2 *Nijma*

2 *Uraga* each with 1 hel landing platform (for MH-53E)

MSO 3 *Yaeama*

MSC 23:2 *Hatsushima*; 12 *Sugashima*; 9 *Uwajima*

AMPHIBIOUS

LS/LST 5:

3 *Osumi* each with 1 hel landing platform (for 2xCH-47) (capacity 10 Type-90 MBTs; 2 LCAC) ACV; 330 troops)

2 *Yura* (capacity 70 troops)

LANDING CRAFT 20

LCU 2 *Yusotei*

LCM 12

ACV 6 **LCA (L)** (capacity either 1 MBT or 60 troops)

LOGISTICS AND SUPPORT 74:

AOE 5:2 *Mashuu*; 3 *Towada*

AS 1 *Chiyoda* (submarine rescue facilities)

ASR 1 *Chihaya*

ARC 1 *Muroto*

AG 2:1 *Kurihama*; 1 *Asuka* (wpn trials)

AGOS 2 *Hibiki*

AGS 4:2 *Futami*; 1 *Suma*; 1 *Nichinan*

AGB 1 *Shirase*

ATF 22

TRG 6: *Kashima*; 1 *Shimayuki*; 2 *Yamagiri* TV35 with 2 triple ASTT (6eff.) each with Mk 46 LWT, 1 Mk 112 octuple (8eff.) with tactical ASROC, 1 Type 71/4 tube Mitsubishi 375mm Bofors (4eff.), 4 76mm gun; 1 *Tenryu* (trg spt ship); 1 *Kurobe* (trg spt ship)

SPT 3 *Hiuchi*

YDT 6

YTM 20

FACILITIES

Bases Located at Kure, Saebo, Yokosuka, Maizuru, Ominato

Naval Aviation 9,800

FORCES BY ROLE

7 Air Groups

ASW 7 sqn (shipboard/trg) with SH-60J/K *Seahawk*;

MR 6 sqn (1trg) with P-3C Orion

EW 1 sqn with EP-3 *Orion*; OP-3C

MCM 1 sqn with MH-53E *Sea Dragon*

SAR 2 sqn with UH-60J *Black Hawk*; 1 sqn with *Shin Meiwa* US-1A

Tpt 1 sqn with YS-11M; LC-90

Trg 1 sqn with OH-6D (MD-500MD); OH-6DA (MD-500ME); 3 sqn with T-5; TC-90; YS-11T

EQUIPMENT BY TYPE

AIRCRAFT 80 combat capable

MP 80 P-3C *Orion*

SAR 7:5 *Shin Meiwa* US-1A; 2 *Shin Meiwa* US-2

TPT 9:4 YS-11M; 5 LC-90

TRG 63:33 T-5;24 TC-90; 6 YS-11T

HELICOPTERS 91 combat capable

ASW 91: 69 SH-60J *Seahawk*; 22 SH-60K

MCM 9 MH-53E *Sea Dragon*

SAR 18 UH-60J *Black Hawk*

SPT 3: 2 MCH-101; 1 CH-101 (additional ac being delivered)

UTL 4: 3 S-61A *Black Hawk*; 1 USH-60K

TRG 9: 4 OH-6D (MD-500MD); 5 OH-6DA (MD-500ME)

Source: The Military Balance 2009, International Institute for Strategic Studies, pp. 392-3