



Transforming Joint Air Power The Journal of the JAPCC



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with Major General
Max A. L. T. Nielsen

Chief of Air Staff,
Defence Command Denmark

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Future Battlefield
Rotorcraft Capability

Part 1: Analysing the
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‘Hunter Killer – Inside America’s Unmanned Air War’



By Lt Col (ret.) T. Mark McCurley,
with Kevin Maurer,
Dutton, 2015

Reviewed by:

Lt Col Pål Kristensen, NOR AF, JAPCC

In *Hunter Killer*, US Air Force Lieutenant Colonel (ret.) T. Mark McCurley provides us his memoirs about the rise and use of Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA) within the US Air Force. He piloted the MQ-1 Predator as well as the MQ-9 Reaper reaching more than 1,000 flight hours. Prior to his retirement, he commanded the 60th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron in Djibouti.

McCurley's memoirs let the reader get into his mind as he and others develop innovative ways of utilising the Predator during the different types of RPA missions. He takes the reader into the operations room as RPA are employed for the first time against seaborne threats. He lets us experience the difficulties in setting up a Deployed Operating Base for the RPA in Djibouti and the stress on RPA personnel and equipment caused by continuous operations under harsh conditions. The book culminates with the author's report on the final phase of the tactical mission that resulted in the killing of Anwar al-Awlaki, one of the world's most wanted terrorists.

The easy-to-read book provides an unprecedented personal insight into an RPA pilot's career through education and training to the actual mission. It furthermore covers McCurley's experience as a squadron commander and the struggle to stay operational during critical phases of operations, including losses of several airframes. Readers with no or limited knowledge on RPA will learn a great deal about the capability of this still fairly new tool on the battlefield. ●

‘Russia’s Warplanes: Russian-made Military Aircraft and Helicopters Today (Volume 2)’

Ongoing worldwide geopolitical developments such as Russia's intervention in Syria are nurturing western analysts' interest in Russia's current and future military capabilities. Though Russia's economy is affected by sanctions following the Crimea invasion that could hamper ambitious military modernization programs, Russia appears to be back on the scene with most advanced military capabilities. The book *Russia's Warplanes* therefore seems to be arriving at just the right time. While Volume 2 is dedicated to long-range bombers, maritime patrol and anti-submarine aircraft, strategic airlift and trainers, it also includes an update on Volume 1, which detailed tactical combat aircraft, attack and transport helicopters, reconnaissance and surveillance aircraft, and special mission aircraft including airborne command posts and relay aircraft.

Altogether both volumes represent an excellent compendium and reference. Not only will the reader find detailed, accurate technical descriptions of each military aircraft, but also historical background and a projection on upgrades and future technology developments such as avionics and advance weapons. Already announced is an additional Volume to follow-up on air-launched weapons and carrier aviation in order to complete the overview of Russian air power means and capabilities. Again this book is most valuable for anyone interested in Russian military aviation. ●



By Piotr Butowski
Houston, TX,
Harpia Publishing L.L.C., 2016

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