# Moody A-10 pilots first to field target system downrange

*Posted 3/15/2013 Updated 3/15/2013* Email story Print story

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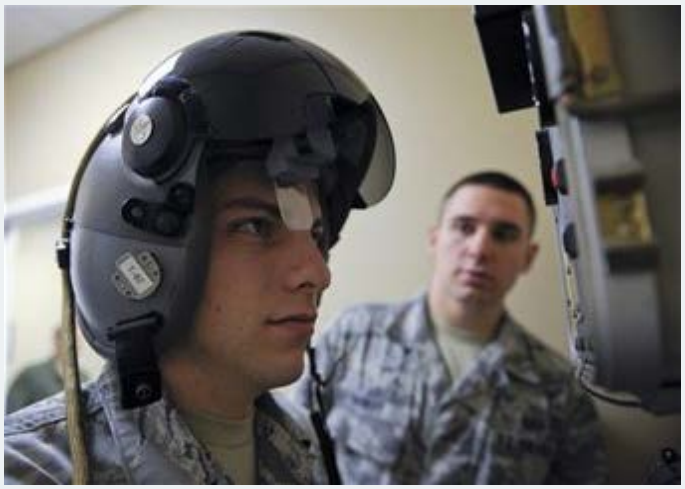

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Sean Crowell and Senior Airman David Hainley, 23d Operations Support Squadron aircrew flight equipment technicians, administer a preflight test for the Helmet Mounted Cueing System (HMCS) at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., Jan. 17, 2013. Airmen with the 74th Fighter Squadron are the first to field the HMCS for the A-10C Thunderbolt II at Moody and downrange. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Eileen Meier/Released)

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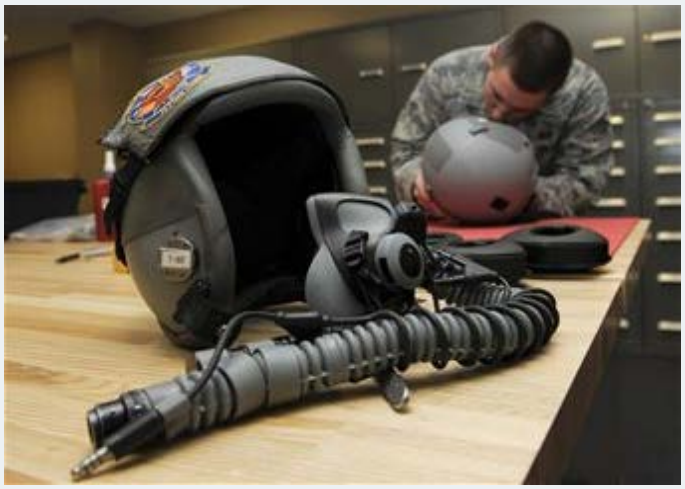

U.S. Air Force Senior Airman David Hainley, 23d Operations Support Squadron aircrew flight equipment technician, prepares pilots' helmets for the installation of the Helmet Mounted Cueing System (HMCS) at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., Jan. 17, 2013. The HMCS, which will be fielded for the first time by 74th Fighter Squadron Airmen, will provide the latest tactical capabilities in aerial combat for the A-10C Thunderbolt II. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Eileen Meier/Released)

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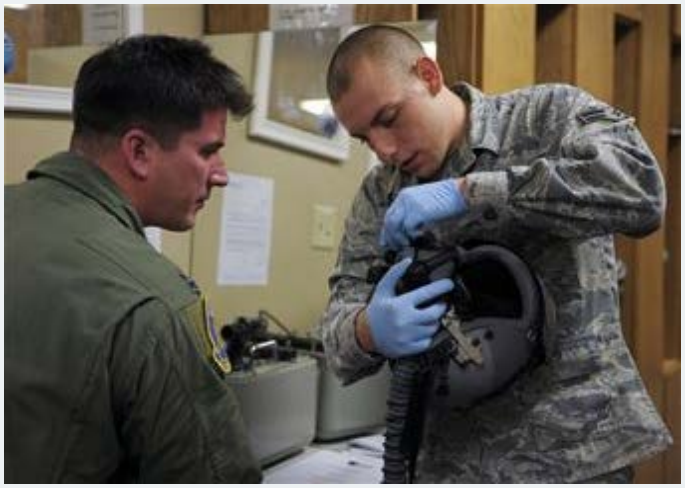

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Sean Crowell, 23d Operations Support Squadron aircrew flight equipment technician, works with Capt. James Schmidt, 81st Fighter Squadron at Spangdahlem, Germany, A-10C Thunderbolt II pilot, by preparing his helmet for the installation of the Helmet Mounted Cueing System, during a mass fitting for A-10 pilots in the Air Flight Equipment section at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., Jan. 17, 2013. Schmidt was here for a temporary duty assignment to fly with the 74th Fighter Squadron and to be certified and fitted for the HMCS, which will be used for the first time downrange by Moody Airmen. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Eileen Meier/Released)

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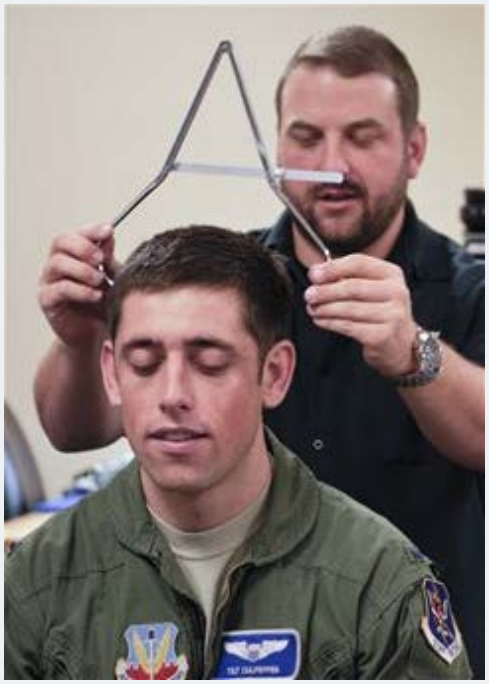

Scott Smither, GENTEX® Corporation technical specialist, retrieves head measurements from U.S. Air Force 1st Lt. Elijah Culpepper, 74th Fighter Squadron A-10C Thunderbolt II pilot, using a spreading caliper at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., Jan. 17, 2013. A mass fitting was held for 74th FS A-10C Thunderbolt II pilots who will be fielding the Helmet Mounted Cueing System for the first time downrange. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Eileen Meier/Released)

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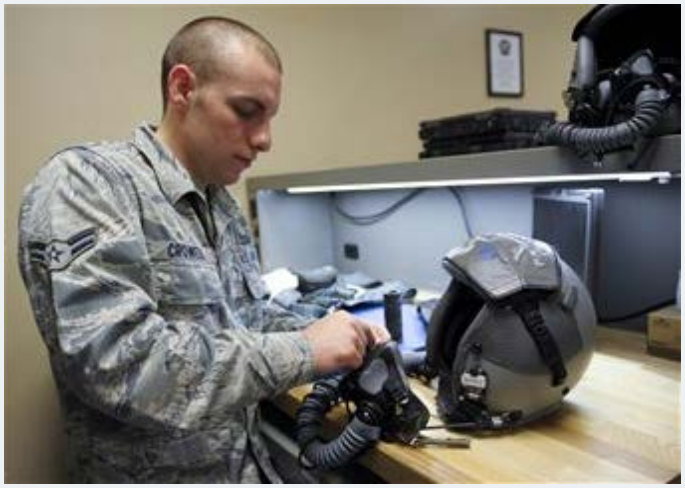

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Sean Crowell, aircrew flight equipment technician with the 23d Operations Support Squadron, uses waxed thread to secure an oxygen mask to a pilot's helmet during the certifying and fitting of the Helmet Mounted Cueing System (HMCS) at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., Jan. 17, 2013. The HMCS is the world's only full-color helmet display system, and it will be fielded downrange by Airmen from the 74th Fighter Squadron in the A-10C Thunderbolt II for the first time. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Eileen Meier/Released)

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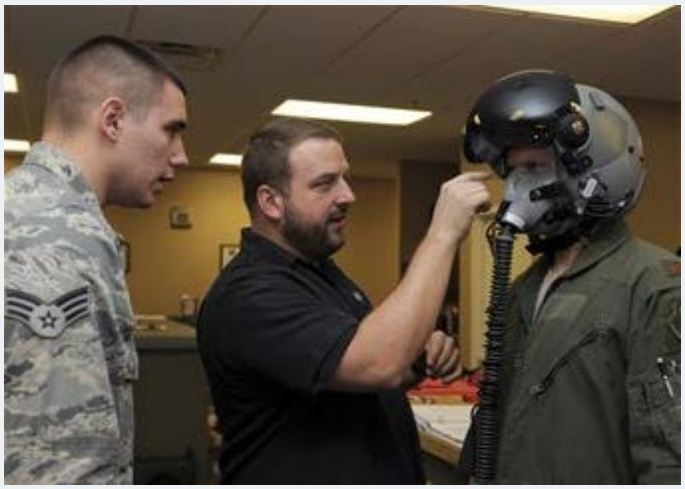

U.S. Air Force Senior Airman David Hainley (left), 23d Operations Support Squadron aircrew flight equipment technician , listens as Scott Smither (center), GENTEX® Corporation technical specialist, discusses features of the Helmet Mounted Cueing System as Maj. Gage Evert, 74th Fighter Squadron A-10C Thunderbolt II pilot, is fitted for one at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., Jan. 17, 2013. Smither, along with other advisors of the HMCS, came to the base to instruct the 23d OSS Airmen on how to individually fit and maintain the systems. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Eileen Meier/Released)

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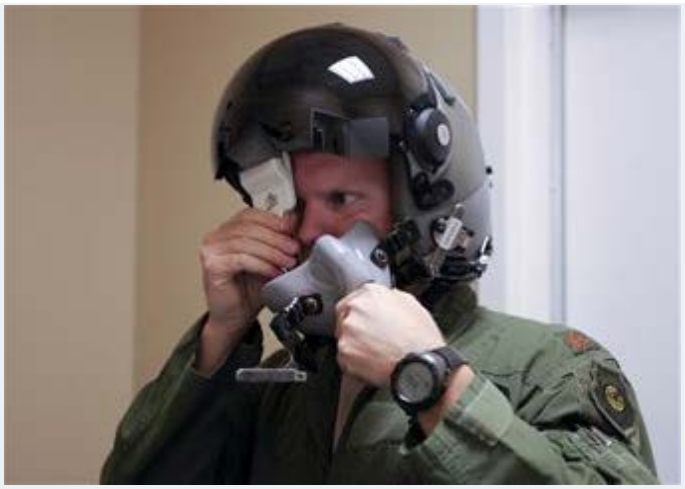

U.S. Air Force Maj. Gage Evert, 74th Fighter Squadron A-10C Thunderbolt II pilot , places a protective clip on the monocle of the Helmet Mounted Cueing System (HMCS) at Moody Air Force Base, Ga., Jan. 17, 2013. Airmen with the 23d Operations Support Squadron are being trained by GENTEX® Corporations technical specialists to individually fit and maintain the HMCS for the 74th FS pilots. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Eileen Meier/Released)

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by Senior Airman Eileen Meier
23d Wing Public Affairs

3/15/2013 - **MOODY AIR FORCE BASE, Ga.** -- Air Force pilots haven't exactly advanced into cyborg assassins with titanium endoskeletons, but the equipment they're using is along the lines of artificial intelligence. Advancements in technology have created what was once only confined to the imagination and virtual reality, to what is now genuinely in existence.

For several decades, pilots have relied on tracking equipment to locate and disable an enemy or precisely take out an area harboring terrorists in a civilian condensed village. To expedite the tactics required of pilots, they have been provided with equipment from the world's leading supplier of military aircrew helmets.

The 23d Operations Support Squadron aircrew flight equipment technicians have been working with members of a renowned corporation on the introduction of a one of a kind Helmet Mounted Cueing System to the unit. It is the only full-color helmet display system and includes optical motion tracking, head-steered weapons, 24 hour day/night capability and integrates with older flight helmets to avoid replacement costs.

"Airmen of the 74th Fighter Squadron are the first to field the HMCS for the A-10C Thunderbolt II, and first to bring it downrange," said Scott Smither, HMCS technical specialist. "It will be a great advantage for the pilots."

Step-by-step validation of the companies' written procedures for the system and a second visit imparted the skills needed for the 23d OSS AFE technicians to provide routine maintenance checks and the 72-hour certification training for pilots.

During their first temporary duty assignment with the HMCS to Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., a demonstration of what they were taught was given to support other bases utilizing the system. "This new A-10 weapons system is going to help take care of the bad guys," said U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Sean Crowell, 23d OSS AFE technician. "The pilots will be able to go up in the air to

perform the mission more efficiently and effectively than we do now."

During operations with lives at stake, time is a sensitive matter with little to spare. If a group of coalition troops are traveling by foot through a rural mountain village downrange and are suddenly fired upon from multiple locations, it is likely that they will call for air support.

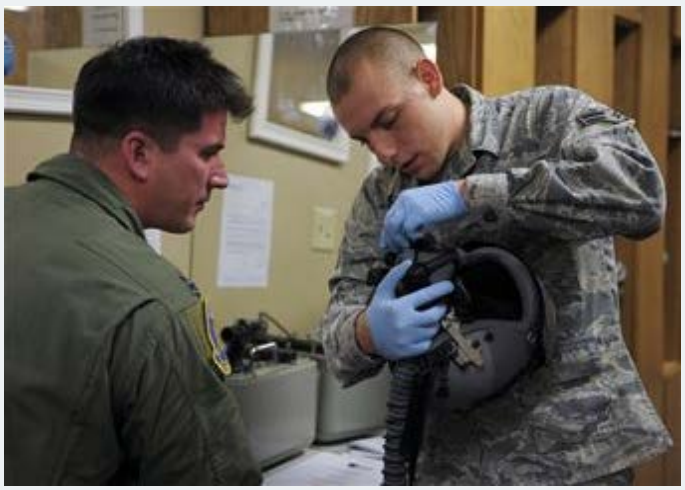
By the time he arrives the new targeting system will have already positively identified most of the environment. Even with vague landmark descriptions given to help locate the adversaries below, it won't be a complicated task.

"If you're downrange looking at a convoy, and an improvised explosive device goes off, you can look to that area and automatically see the symbology for it in your monocle," said Capt. Ian Whiteman, 74th FS A-10 pilot. "Then you press a button and all the data you had will slew to your targeting pod, allowing new grids to be created. This minimizes additional time it takes to find what it is you're looking for outside."

For now, only the A-10s and the F-16 Fighting Falcons with Air National Guard and Reserve units are using the HMCS.

The F-16s and F-15 Eagle's had been using a similar helmet model called the Joint Helmet-Mounted Cueing System, which projected the symbology display into a heavy 3/4 inch crystal. The new model generates the display into a low head-borne weight monocle rather than projecting the images from another source in the system. It is also more user-friendly compared to previously fielded models with it being Hands on Throttle-and-Stick (HOTAS) controlled.

The HMCS is now the latest tactical feature for A-10 pilots, furthering the aircrafts distinguished reputation in close-air support and improving enemy deterrence.



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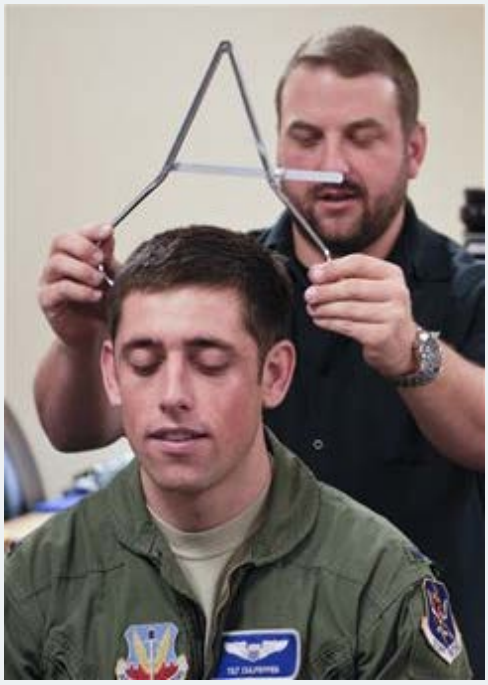

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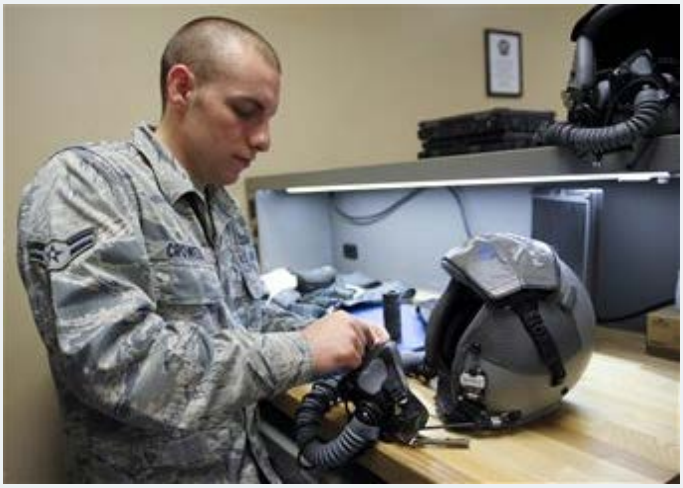

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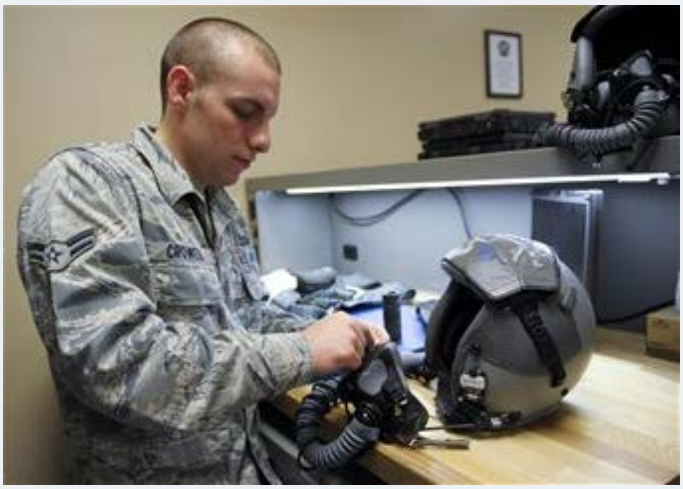

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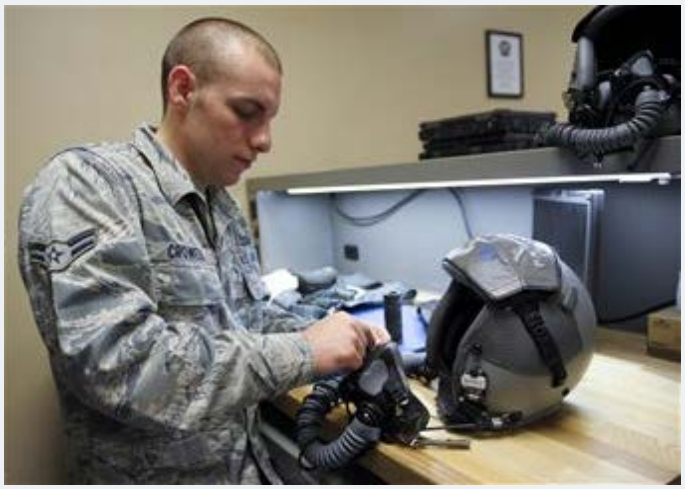

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