

Marine One

Marine One is the call sign of any United States Marine Corps aircraft carrying the President of the United States. *[I didn't even know there was a Marine One]*. It usually denotes a helicopter operated by Marine Helicopter Squadron One (HMX-1 "Nighthawks"), either the large VH-3D Sea King or the newer, smaller VH-60N "WhiteHawk".

The first use of helicopters for presidential transport was in 1957, when President Eisenhower traveled on a Bell UH-13J Sioux. The President needed a quick way to reach his summer home in Pennsylvania, as Air Force One could land at neither the White House nor the summer home. Eisenhower instructed his staff to look into alternative modes of transportation and a Sikorsky UH-34 Seahorse helicopter was commissioned. The early aircraft lacked the "creature comforts" found on its modern successors, such as air conditioning and toilets for in-flight use.

In 1958, the H-13 was replaced by the Sikorsky H-34, and in 1961 by the VH-3A. Not long after, presidential aides asked the Marine Corps to look into the White House South Lawn as a helicopter landing zone. Ample room was present, and the protocol was established. Until 1976, the Marine Corps shared the responsibility of helicopter transportation for the President with the United States Army. Army helicopters used the call sign **Army One** while the president was on board.

By 2009, there were 11 VH-3Ds and eight VH-60Ns in service as Presidential/VIP helicopters. On 16 July 2009, Marine One flew with an all-female crew for the first time. This was also the final flight of Major Jennifer Grieves, who was the first woman pilot to fly the President.

Marine One has not been the subject of any accident or attack through 2009. However, in 2006, President George W. Bush boarded Marine One with his departing press secretary, and the ignition on Marine One's engines failed. The president was forced to exit the helicopter and depart the White House in an automobile.

Marine One is transported via C-17 Globemaster or C-5 Galaxy military transport planes (as is the president's limousine) wherever the President travels, within the U.S. as well as overseas. *[wikipedia]*

