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Nation Gets Sneak Peek of Air Force One, Marine One Stamps Stamps to Go on Sale June 13

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Two of the world's most recognizable aircraft that fly as icons of freedom and democracy will appear on postage mid-June when the U.S. Postal Service issues the Air Force One \$4.60 Priority Mail and Marine One \$16.25 Express Mail stamps. The stamps were previewed today during opening ceremonies to launch one of the world's most spectacular air shows — the Joint Service Open House located outside of Washington, D.C., at Andrews Air Force Base in Camp Springs, Md.

“The United States Postal Service is proud to salute Air Force One and Marine One — two soaring symbols of America’s global leadership — and the extraordinary military forces that safeguard it,” said U.S. Postal Service Executive Director, Stamp Services, David Failor.

Joining Failor in unveiling the stamps were Major General Robert Smolen, Commander, Air Force District of Washington, Brigadier General Select Colonel Margaret Woodward, Commander, 89th Airlift Wing of the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Marine Brigadier General Select Andrew O'Donnell, Commander, HMX-1.

“The 89th Airlift wing has a long tradition of service to the President. The first aircraft that became known as Air Force One, tail number 26000, was delivered in 1962,” said USAF Brigadier General Select Colonel Margaret Woodward. “Today our Presidential Airlift Group is proud to carry on the tradition of excellence instilled long ago. They know that Air Force One has become more than an airplane; it is a traveling monument to freedom.”

"The Marines, Sailors and civilians of HMX-1 are honored to be recognized through the release of the 'Marine One' stamp," said Brigadier General Select Andrew O'Donnell, Commander, HMX-1. "We are glad to partner with the Postal Service to recognize the efforts all current and past members of HMX-1 in making the image of the VH-3D synonymous with attention to detail and dedicated Presidential service."

Air Force One

Although the name Air Force One suggests that only one aircraft transports the President throughout the nation and the world, the current presidential fleet consists of two nearly identical and specially configured 747-200B series planes put into service in 1990. These planes — VC-25A aircraft with tail numbers 28000 and 29000 — are maintained and operated by the Presidential Airlift Group and based just outside the nation's capital at Andrews. When the president is aboard either aircraft, or any other Air Force aircraft, the radio call signal for that plane is “Air Force One.”

Probably the most famous jetliner in the world, Air Force One looks like any commercial jumbo jet except for its distinctive exterior. Painted shades of blue and white, the plane's design — by noted industrial designer Raymond Loewy — includes the U.S. flag painted on the tail, the words “United States of America” emblazoned on the fuselage, and the Presidential Seal. Inside, it is clear that this is no ordinary plane. In addition to private quarters for the President and First Lady, there are two galleys where food is prepared, a conference/dining room, office space for senior staff members, and work and rest areas for the presidential staff, Air Force crews, and media representatives traveling with the President.

Presidential air transport began in 1944 when a C-54 dubbed the “Sacred Cow” was used to transport President Franklin D. Roosevelt. That plane was replaced by President Harry S. Truman's DC-6, known as “Independence.” President Dwight D. Eisenhower flew on Super Constellations named “Columbine II” and “Columbine III” from 1953 until mid-1959 when the first jet aircraft (three C-137As) were added to the presidential fleet.

Although the call sign “Air Force One” has been used to designate the President's plane since the 1950s, it was President Kennedy's 707 that became known to the nation and the world as “Air

Force One” in 1963 at the time of his assassination. In 1972, President Richard M. Nixon made historic visits to the People’s Republic of China and the Soviet Union aboard this plane, which today is on display at the U.S. Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB near Dayton, Ohio.

Marine One

As the President’s helicopter often photographed on the South Lawn at the White House, Marine One not only transports the President on short trips — for example, from the White House to Andrews Air Force Base to board Air Force One and on visits to Camp David — but regularly accompanies the President on nationwide and worldwide travel. Wherever Marine One might be, it is always met on the ground by at least one Marine in full dress uniform. As with Air Force One, “Marine One” is the radio call sign for the U.S. Marine Corps helicopter, or any other aircraft belonging to the Marine Corps, that transports the President.

Marine Helicopter Squadron One, HMX-1, was established in 1947 as an experimental unit to test and evaluate helicopters. Today this squadron and its fleet of 19 helicopters provide all helicopter transport for the President, the Vice President, and members of the Cabinet. The unit also provides helicopter emergency evacuation and other support as directed by the Commandant of the Marine Corps. More than 800 Marines supervise the operation of the fleet based in Quantico, Va.

In 1957 President Dwight D. Eisenhower became the first president to fly in a helicopter — a single-engine, three-passenger craft. Today’s Marine One is a twin-engine, eight-passenger craft.

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An independent federal agency, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that visits 146 million homes and businesses, six days a week. It has 37,000 retail locations and relies on the sale of postage, products, and services to cover its operating expenses. The Postal Service has annual revenues of \$73 billion and delivers nearly half the world’s mail.

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