

F-111 Industry Support Team Formed

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A group of Australian aerospace companies, led by Boeing Australia Limited, have signed a teaming agreement allowing the group to combine their efforts in bidding for the forthcoming commercialization of the F-111 Deeper Maintenance Support business units at Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base Amberley, Queensland in Australia.

The Australian companies involved are:

- Rosebank Engineering Pty Limited;
- Harris Australia Pty Limited;
- Honeywell Limited Australia;
- British Aerospace, Australia Limited;
- Wormald Technology;
- QANTAS Airways Limited; and
- Boeing Australia Limited.

Each of these companies has specific skills that support current F-111 activities and, when combined, will provide the Australian commonwealth value for money solutions for the support of the F-111 Weapon System through until the planned withdrawal date of 2020.

Colin Giles, general manager of Boeing Australia's Aircraft Systems Division, said that "The team -- to be known as the Australian Industry Team -- is ideally placed to offer support to the F-111 program.

"I believe that the Australian Industry Team is a unique combination of the best aerospace skills in this country, together with access to worldwide resources and commercial opportunities. We see this team as offering a comprehensive Australian solution to the planned industry support program for the F-111.

"The complementary existing F-111 capabilities of the team members will allow for an integrated, low-cost approach to the tasks as well as exploring commercialization-in-place opportunities. In addition, our intention is to seek the support of as many small to medium establishments as possible," Giles said.

In detail, the team members are:

- Wormald Technology, responsible for the development of the new F-111 simulator, reflecting new systems and equipment introduced by the Avionics Upgrade Program (AUP). Wormald has Design Approved Contractor (DAC) status for the simulator. They also are responsible for maintenance and support of the new simulator.
- Rosebank Engineering Pty Limited currently support and have DAC status for the hydraulic systems and components on the F-111 weapons platform. Techniques introduced by the company have resulted in improved operating performance of a number of hydraulic components and reduced maintenance costs for the RAAF.
- Harris Australia Pty Limited has developed the hardware and software for use on the Harris Intermediate Level Automatic Test Stations, supplied as part of the F-111 project to diagnose faulty avionics equipment and also to provide total support for the F-111 systems and test equipment.
- Honeywell Limited Australia developed the Interactive Computer Aided Training systems for the RAAF to train technicians on the operations of the new equipment and systems introduced by the AUP. Since 1981 Honeywell has held the contract for the maintenance and repair of the TF30 engine fuel accessory test rigs, engine test cells and associated miscellaneous ground support equipment at RAAF base Amberley.
- British Aerospace Australia Limited currently has expertise on electronic warfare systems that will be introduced onto the aircraft platform. The company has expertise in the electro-optic arena and can provide support to the Pavetack tracking system fitted to the aircraft.
- QANTAS Airways Limited has contracts with the RAAF for the repair and maintenance of engines and has strong links with Pratt and Whitney, the original manufacturer of F-111 engines.
- Boeing Australia Limited, with more than 60 years of experience in Australia, currently is carrying out the AUP program with the F-111 aircraft, involving the removal of analog avionics and an upgrade to full digital avionics. Boeing also has DAC status for the AUP system and currently supports the RAAF at the Weapons System Support Facility, Amberley, with system enhancements.

At a signing ceremony in Sydney recently, managing directors of all the partner companies re-stated their commitment to the Australian Industry Team concept and the need to approach the customer as a partnership concept that will offer the RAAF expertise and capabilities within strict cost constraints.

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