Last Italian-Assembled Harrier II Plus Delivered to Italian Navy

In a simple ceremony attended by the Chief of Staff of the Italian Navy, Admiral Angelo Mariani, the Italian navy Nov. 25 accepted the 13th and final AV-8B Harrier II Plus assembled at Alenia's Aeronautics Division here.

This brings to 16 the total number of Harrier II Plus aircraft and two TAV-8B two-seat trainers flown by the Italian navy.

Italy, Spain and the United States collaborated to develop and produce the radar-equipped Harrier II Plus, which also features night-attack capabilities. AV-8B prime contractor Boeing worked with Alenia in Turin and with Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A. (CASA) in Seville, Spain, to set up final assembly lines for their nations' respective aircraft.

In July, the Spanish navy took delivery of its eighth and last CASA-assembled Harrier II Plus. The Spanish navy also flies 10 AV-8B Harrier II day-attack aircraft and is considering remanufacturing them to the II Plus configuration.

At the Italian ceremony, Jerry Daniels, Boeing vice president of Navy and Marine Corps programs for McDonnell Aircraft and Missile Systems, noted, "This program not only produced a world-class weapon system for the defense of these three countries; it also produced a world-class team. By working together as a multinational team we have strengthened each other, we have understood the true value of cooperation, and we have made many friends. Our paths will continue to cross."

Also representing Boeing at the Italian delivery ceremony were Darryl Davis, general manager of the AV-8B program, and Jim Korte, AV-8B program manager for Italy and Spain.

Through the remanufacturing program, Boeing is converting 72 day-attack Harriers into II Plus aircraft for the U.S. Marine Corps.

McDonnell Douglas (which merged with Boeing in August) and British Aerospace jointly developed the Harrier II in the early 1980s for the U.S. Marine Corps and the British Royal Air Force.

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