

Boeing Receives Contract To Upgrade French AWACS Fleet

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Boeing has received a contract worth \$26.5 million to install electronic support measures (ESM) on the French Air Force's fleet of four E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft.

The contract was awarded by the Electronic Systems Center, Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass., under a Foreign Military Sale agreement. This follows a \$32 million contract awarded to Boeing in January 1997 for production of the ESM hardware.

ESM is a passive surveillance system, which enables AWACS to detect, identify and track electronic transmissions from ground, airborne and maritime sources. Using the ESM system, mission operators can determine radar and weapons system type. Installing ESM on the French fleet will improve interoperability with other AWACS fleets like those in the U.S. and NATO, which have ESM installed.

Air France Industries (AFI), under subcontract to Boeing, will install the ESM hardware at its facility in Le Bourget, France. In addition, AFI will support Boeing in the testing and checkout of the ESM system at the main French AWACS operating base in Avord, France. Modification of the first aircraft will begin in January 1999 and completion of the fourth aircraft modification is scheduled for December 2000.

France contracted with Boeing to buy four E-3 AWACS aircraft in 1987. They were delivered between 1991 and 1992.

AWACS is the world's standard for airborne early warning and control systems (AEW&C). Currently carried on-board militarized 707 and 767 aircraft, it fills the need of both airborne surveillance and command and control functions for tactical and air defense forces.

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For further information:
Dave Sloan
(253) 657-3046
