Boeing Submits Bid to Upgrade New Zealand's Maritime Patrol Aircraft

Boeing today submitted a bid to become the prime contractor to upgrade the mission avionics system on the Royal New Zealand Air Force's (RNZAF) fleet of six P-3K maritime patrol aircraft.

A contract for the upgrade, known as Project Sirius, is expected to be awarded in the last quarter of 1999. The first aircraft is scheduled to be delivered in the next three or four years.

The Boeing proposal features an open system architecture for the tactical command system including commercial-off-the-shelf high-resolution displays and controls for the operators, as well as computer processors to integrate the data. This system will support cost-effective, future insertion of upgraded commercial hardware and software. The plan also provides for new radar, electronic support measures (ESM), an electro-optical (EO) system, communications, navigation and acoustics.

ESM is a sensor that detects, classifies and provides direction to emissions from airborne, shipborne and land-based radars.

The EO system supplies video images to the operator. Its sensor operates in the visual and infrared wavelength bands and is used for classifying surface targets.

"This will be a state-of-the-art mission suite providing the Royal New Zealand Air Force with upgraded capabilities to meet their mission requirements," said Larry Stamper, Boeing Maritime Patrol business development manager.

Boeing has more than 20 years of experience designing and developing advanced maritime mission systems. In the early 1980s, the company upgraded the RNZAF's fleet of P-3's with a distributed processing architecture and universal display and control system.

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