Boeing Completes Installation Of First ESM Kit On French AWACS

Boeing has completed installation of electronic support measures (ESM) on the first of four French Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft.

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, NATO and the United Kingdom, which have ESM installed. This system also was used extensively by AWACS aircraft during the air campaign in Kosovo.

Air France Industries (AFI), under subcontract to Boeing, installed the hardware at its facility in Le Bourget, France. Boeing completed testing of the ESM system at the main French AWACS operating base in Avord, France. Completion of the fourth aircraft modification is scheduled for December 2000.

"We are pleased to provide ESM capability to the French government for their E-3 AWACS aircraft." said Mike Brewer, Boeing French AWACS program manager. "Working together with the U.S. Air Force, French Air Force and Air France industries, we have completed the ESM modification on time and on budget."

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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