Boeing Delivers Final LRIP 1 Super Hornet Two Months Early

Boeing completed delivery of the first low-rate initial production F/A-18E/F Super Hornets to the U.S. Navy Nov. 9 -- almost two months ahead of schedule. The single-seat E model aircraft's contractual delivery date was Dec. 31. All 12 of the LRIP 1 aircraft were delivered by Boeing on or ahead of their contractual delivery date.

The aircraft is undergoing additional tests at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., before it ferries to Naval Air Station Lemoore, Calif. Lemoore is the home of VFA-122 - the nation's first Super Hornet squadron. VFA-122 is a fleet readiness squadron responsible for aircrew and maintenance training.

The Navy is currently conducting an operational evaluation of the Super Hornet at Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division China Lake, Calif. When testing is completed, a full evaluation of the Super Hornet's performance will be forwarded to Navy leadership. The final report is similar to a report card and the best possible grade the Super Hornet can receive is operationally effective and operationally suitable.

Thirteen E models -- including five engineering and manufacturing development Super Hornets -- have been built by the Hornet industry team of Boeing, Northrop Grumman, General Electric and Raytheon. Boeing builds the forward fuselage and wings, and conducts final assembly. Northrop Grumman Corp. is the principal airframe subcontractor, supplying the center and aft fuselage. General Electric Co. produces the engines, and Raytheon Co. provides the radar.

Production on the second lot of 20 low-rate initial production Super Hornets is underway at Boeing and Northrop Grumman facilities. The aircraft were funded in the fiscal year 1998 defense budget. The Navy has ordered 62 Super Hornets and plans to buy a minimum of 548 of the aircraft.

Last month, President Clinton signed the FY '00 Defense Appropriations Bill granting the Navy authority for multiyear procurement of 222 Super Hornets over five years -- fiscal years 2000 through 2004. The multi-year contract will save U.S. taxpayers about $700 million.

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