U.S. Navy Awards Boeing MA-31 Quantity Procurement Contract

The U.S. Navy has awarded an $18.8 million contract to The Boeing Company for procurement of 34 MA-31 target vehicles.

Concern about anti-ship missiles prompted the U.S. Navy to ask U.S. industry for a system to simulate anti-ship missiles to test its defenses. To maximize realism and minimize development and production costs, the Boeing Phantom Works proposed the MA-31 Target System in a concept exploration and definition study and subsequently in a highly successful foreign comparative test.

"We wanted to provide the most realistic target possible at the lowest possible cost," said John Reilly, MA-31 program manager. "And that's just what we've done."

In negotiations completed last August, Russia agreed to convert 34 of their X-31 supersonic anti-ship missiles. Prior to delivery to Boeing, Zvezda-Strela, makers of the X-31 and partners with Boeing on the MA-31 project, will remove the warhead and other military components. The MA-31 target conversion is complete when flight termination systems, range tracking beacons and telemetry systems are integrated into the target at the Boeing facility in St. Louis.

Since 1995, Boeing has converted 13 MA-31s into target vehicles and has demonstrated their performance as a target system. The MA-31 target is capable of preprogrammed, sea-skimming and high altitude flight profiles at speeds up to mach 3.5. The MA-31 is 15 feet long, 14 inches in diameter and weighs 1,300 pounds. Deliveries to the U.S. Navy are scheduled to begin in 2001.

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