Radar Improvements By Boeing Completed On NATO AWACS Fleet

Boeing [NYSE: BA] today announced that installation of Radar System Improvement Program (RSIP) kits has been completed on NATO's fleet of 17 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft. NATO now has the first AWACS fleet to be fully equipped with this advanced radar capability. Retrofit was accomplished on schedule and on budget.

Daimler-Chrysler Aerospace, under subcontract to Boeing, installed the kits at its facility in Manching, Germany.

The $515 million, multi-national contract includes 18 RSIP kits to NATO, eight to the United Kingdom and four to the U.S. Air Force, with options for 11 more.

The RSIP kit, built by Boeing and Northrop Grumman's Electronic Sensors and Systems Sector, consists of a new radar computer, a radar control maintenance panel, electrical and mechanical hardware and new radar software.

RSIP improves the E-3's radar by increasing the sensitivity of the pulse Doppler radar so the aircraft can detect and track a given target at a much increased range. It also improves the radar's counter-countermeasures capability. RSIP upgrades the radar's existing computer with a new high-reliability multi-processor and rewrites the software to make it easier to maintain and enhance in the future.

RSIP-equipped AWACS participated in last year's Allied Air campaign over Kosovo with outstanding results. The radar surveillance coverage area was substantially increased. More aircraft were spotted and tracked and the radar's reliability improved significantly.

"Working together with our customer and supplier team, we have provided the NATO fleet with a quantum leap in performance," said Kathryn Whiting, Boeing NATO AWACS program manager.

AWACS is the world's standard for Airborne Early Warning systems. Currently carried on-board militarized 707 and 767 aircraft, it fills the need of both airborne surveillance, and command, control and communications functions for tactical and air defense forces.

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