Major Milestones Achieved on United Kingdom and French AWACS Fleets

The Boeing Company has completed major upgrades on the United Kingdom and French Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) fleets. They were finished within budget and ahead of schedule.

Contract value of the upgrades is $274 million.

The seven United Kingdom AWACS aircraft were retrofitted with Radar System Improvement Program (RSIP) kits. Along with the RSIP upgrade was installation of the Global Positioning System/Inertial Navigation Systems (GINS) which dramatically improve positioning accuracy.

BAE Systems, under subcontract to Boeing, installed the RSIP and GINS kits at the Royal Air Force Base in Waddington, England.

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

RSIP improves the AWACS radar by increasing the sensitivity of the pulse Doppler radar allowing the aircraft to detect and track smaller targets. It also improves the radar's counter-countermeasures capability.

The four French AWACS aircraft were upgraded with Electronic Support Measures (ESM), a passive surveillance system which enables AWACS to detect, identify and track electronic transmissions from ground, airborne and maritime sources.

Air France Industries, (AFI) under subcontract to Boeing, installed the ESM hardware at its facility in Le Bourget, France. Additionally, AFI supported Boeing in the testing and checkout of the ESM system at the French AWACS main operating base in Avord, France.

"We are proud to provide the United Kingdom and French AWACS fleets with significantly increased performance capability," said Mike Brewer, Boeing U.K. and French AWACS program manager.

"Working closely with our defense customers and industry partners allowed us to complete these upgrades well ahead of schedule," Brewer said.

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