Boeing Changes Wingtip Design on U.S. Navy's P-8A Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft

The Boeing-led [NYSE:BA] team currently developing the U.S. Navy's P-8A Multi-mission Maritime Aircraft (MMA) has made a minor design change better suiting the Navy's unique requirements. The move involved changing the wing extension from a blended winglet™ to a commercially proven raked or backswept wingtip.

A configuration control board composed of Boeing personnel and representatives from the Naval Air Systems Command PMA-290 procurement team approved the change after determining the new design provides the same efficiencies as the blended winglet, but increases overall performance for maritime patrol missions.

"It's indicative of the teamwork developed between the Navy and our industry team that we were able to identify a way to enhance the 737's performance in the maritime patrol environment," said Jack Zerr, vice president of the MMA program for Boeing. "This kind of design improvement explains why we have a system development and demonstration phase in procurement programs."

The P-8A MMA, based on Boeing's Next-Generation 737-800 commercial airframe, will replace the Navy's aging fleet of P-3C aircraft. Its mission will comprise anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface ship warfare, and both land and sea-surface intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance. The Navy plans to purchase 108 of the aircraft, scheduled to enter service in 2013.

The Boeing-led industry team, which includes CFM International, Northrop Grumman [NYSE: NOC], Raytheon [NYSE: RTN] and Smiths Aerospace [LSE: SMIN.L], will produce five test aircraft during the program's system development and demonstration phase.

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