

Wedgetail Aircraft Delivered to Boeing Australia for Airborne Early Warning and Control Modifications

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The next chapter in the history of Project Wedgetail began yesterday with the delivery of a 737-700 aircraft to Boeing [NYSE: BA] Australia for modifications that will provide a new airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) capability for the Australian Defence Force.

Project Wedgetail is the largest and most complex commercial-to-military aircraft modification program ever undertaken in Australia. Six 737 AEW&C aircraft have been acquired with the first two being modified at a Boeing facility in Seattle. The other four will be modified at the Boeing Australia facility in Amberley, Queensland.

Patrick Gill, Boeing vice president of Airborne Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance programs, said, "This project demonstrates that Boeing Australia is a regional leader in aircraft modifications. It will generate new jobs and expand the company's in-country technical capability for future large-scale projects."

Workers will install a reinforced upper section where the aircraft's main Multi-role Electronically Scanned Array radar will be attached. Other extensive installations and modifications include new power and cooling systems, mission consoles and modifications to the environmental control and hydraulic systems.

Delivery of the six AEW&C aircraft is scheduled for 2008.

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