

Boeing Delivers Final Upgraded E6-B to U.S. Navy

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The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] Thursday celebrated the upcoming delivery of the 16th and final upgraded E6-B Mercury to the U.S. Navy during a ceremony at Cecil Field in Jacksonville, Fla.

The upgrades include a new, modernized cockpit similar to the glass cockpit installed in the Boeing 737 Next Generation aircraft and an advanced communications package that provides faster data processing, communications capabilities and better situational awareness for the crew. The E6-B is a communications relay for the Navy's fleet of submarines and a strategic airborne command post aircraft. The 16 airplanes are commercial-derivative Boeing 707s originally delivered from 1989 to 1992.

"This modification program is a good example of taking an in-service aircraft fleet and using modern and established technology to improve its effectiveness at a reasonable cost," said John Fraser, Boeing E-6 program manager. "I'm proud of the work our Boeing team has done to upgrade the Mercury fleet in support of this critical national security asset."

Boeing replaced more than 100 analog cockpit instruments with six state-of-the-art flat-panel digital displays and dual flight management systems. The cockpit improvements were taken from the more modern Boeing 777 and 737 commercial airliners. Boeing also integrated new battle management command and control communications equipment that link the aircraft to the Navy's airborne strategic command and control system.

The upgrades, covered by two contracts totaling more than \$180 million, reduce the aircraft's overall weight, improve its maintainability and make it compliant with Global Air Traffic Management requirements that allow the aircraft to fly in preferred airspace around the world.

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