

Boeing Opens New EA-18G Growler Support Center

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ST. LOUIS, May 16, 2008 -- The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] held a grand opening for its new EA-18G Growler Support Center (GSC) at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Wash., Tuesday in preparation for the delivery of the first EA-18G Growler to the U.S. Navy fleet. The center will provide technical and logistics support for the Navy's premier airborne electronic attack aircraft. The Navy will accept the first fleet Growler at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, the aircraft's home base, in early June.

"This is not just a building. It is the culmination of the efforts of a lot of people," said Capt. Brad Russell, commander, Electronic Attack Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet. "We are excited to have Boeing aboard as part of the Whidbey team."

The GSC will house approximately 24 representatives from the Navy and the Hornet/Growler industry team of Boeing, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon and General Electric. The center, along with the base's existing supply chain management facility, will ensure that logistics support for new Growlers is readily available.

"It is crucial to have the GSC up and running now so that we can be prepared to support the Growler as soon as it arrives at Whidbey Island," said Mark Fruits, program manager for F/A-18E/F Integrated Readiness Support Teaming (FIRST) for Boeing. "It's exciting to see the partnership between industry and the Navy continue to grow with the Growler entering service, and we look forward to working together for years to come."

FIRST is a performance-based logistics (PBL) program in which Boeing oversees inventories, forecasts demand and procures spare parts for the Navy F/A-18E/F Super Hornet and EA-18G Growler fleet. (The EA-18G is derived from the combat-proven F/A-18F.) Boeing also provides technical information, on-site engineering services and field services. Through a PBL program, the customer pays for a set level of performance, not individual spare parts and services.

The Hornet/Growler Support Network also operates centers at Naval Air Stations Lemoore, Calif., and Oceana, Va. The centers, part of a Navy-industry logistics support plan, help lower total ownership costs for the F/A-18E/F and EA-18G.

Boeing, acting as the weapon system integrator and prime contractor for the EA-18G, leads the Growler industry team. Northrop Grumman is the principal subcontractor and airborne electronic attack subsystem integrator. The Hornet/Growler industry team divides EA-18G production across Boeing, Northrop Grumman, General Electric and Raytheon manufacturing facilities. Naval Air Systems Command PMA-265 is the U.S. Navy acquisition office for the EA-18G.

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