Boeing Receives U.S. Navy Contract to Modernize F/A-18 Super Hornet Fleet

ARLINGTON, Va., March 1, 2018 – Boeing [NYSE: BA] has been awarded a contract to modernize the U.S. Navy F/A-18 fleet, extending the life of existing Super Hornets from 6,000 to 9,000+ flight hours. In the early 2020s, Boeing will begin installing initial updates to the aircraft that will convert existing Block II Super Hornets to a new Block III configuration.

The Block III conversion will include enhanced network capability, longer range with conformal fuel tanks, an advanced cockpit system, signature improvements and an enhanced communication system. The updates are expected to keep the F/A-18 in active service for decades to come.

“The initial focus of this program will extend the life of the fleet from 6,000 to 9,000 flight hours,” said Mark Sears, SLM program director. “But SLM will expand to include Block II to Block III conversion, systems grooming and reset and O-level maintenance tasks designed to deliver a more maintainable aircraft with an extended life and more capability. Each of these jets will fly another 10 to 15 years, so making them next-generation aircraft is critical.”

The indefinite-delivery contract is for up to $73 million. Work begins in April on an initial lot of four aircraft at Boeing’s St. Louis production center. An additional production line will be established in San Antonio, Texas in 2019. Additional follow-on contracts could be awarded over the next 10 years. The U.S. Navy fleet consists of 568 Super Hornets.

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