Boeing Inducts First EA-18G Growler for U.S. Navy Modification Program

A variant of the F/A-18F Super Hornet, the Growler will receive several capabilities common with the Block III upgrades

The first production EA-18G aircraft delivered in 2007 is the first Growler to receive this capability upgrade

WHIDBEY ISLAND, Wash., March 19, 2021 — Boeing [NYSE: BA] has started a five-year modification program for the U.S. Navy's EA-18G Growler fleet with the induction of the first jet at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island.

The modifications are focused on updating the jets' structural and mission systems architecture, enabling future capability growth for the Navy's 160 Growler aircraft. Growlers serve a critical role in jamming radar and communications signals of threat forces, disabling their ability to detect and track U.S. and allied military forces.

"We're excited to have the Growler industry team here working on capabilities that will bring the fleet enhanced electronic surveillance, enhanced data link and the ability to carry the Next Generation Jammer pod," said Capt. Chris "Needles" Bahner, commander, Electronic Attack Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet. "We look forward to being a cooperative partner with PMA-265 and PMA-234 at Naval Air Systems Command and the Growler industry team on this exciting work."

Following contract awards in October 2020 and February 2021 for materials and labor, the modification work includes various upgrades for Growler mission systems. The aircraft's ALQ-218 receiver system will receive the Airborne Electronic Attack System Enhancements modification, enabling the Growler to operate in increasingly complex electromagnetic environments.

Additional modifications will expand the Growler's information pipeline for more rapid and secure data transfer to other aircraft and platforms as well as substantially improve the speed of data processing. Boeing also will prepare the Growler for the Next Generation Jammer, which greatly improves the Growler's electronic attack capability.

"As the world's premier electronic attack platform, we're starting this program for the EA-18G Growler in solid partnership with the Navy," said Mark Sears, Boeing vice president of Fighters & Strike Product Support. "These modifications will position it to meet the threats of today and those in the future."

The program schedule forecasts that all Navy Growlers will be modified in five years. Full rate modification is expected to start in June 2021. Boeing has positioned people on-site at Whidbey, following state, local, customer and corporate COVID protocols, to ensure the program is fully staffed to support the work flow.

Boeing is the world's largest aerospace company and leading provider of commercial airplanes, defense, space and security systems, and global services. As a top U.S. exporter, the company supports commercial and government customers in more than 150 countries. Building on a legacy of aerospace leadership, Boeing continues to lead in technology and innovation, deliver for its customers and invest in its people and future growth.

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