Lockheed Martin Delivers First Update II.5 P-3C Aircraft With AIP Upgrades

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Lockheed Martin has delivered to the U.S. Navy the first Update II.5 P-3C aircraft modified under the Anti-Surface Warfare Improvement Program (AIP). Under contracts received in 2004 and 2005, Lockheed Martin will install the AIP upgrade kits on five of the service's Update II.5 aircraft.

Update II.5 aircraft are older P-3C models which, in many cases, have seen less operational use than subsequent production aircraft. The AIP update program first concentrated on the Update III model P-3C aircraft, and are now focusing on the earlier aircraft. This Update II.5 P-3C aircraft initially will be an additional asset for the U.S. Navy's Air Test and Evaluation Squadron 20 (VX-20) and will be the sea trial demonstration aircraft. In addition to the AIP modifications, this aircraft will receive various networked communication upgrades and planned Anti-Submarine Warfare Maritime Improvement Program (AMIP) enhancements that satisfy Sea Power 21 and FORCEnet constructs. The first sea trial demonstration is planned for November 2005 during the Trident Warrior exercise.

"We are pleased to continue providing the Navy with these essential upgrades to ensure that the P-3 aircraft remain an integral part of our nation's defense systems," said Richard F. Ambrose, president of the Lockheed Martin Maritime Systems & Sensors' (MS2) Tactical Systems line of business. "Extending the upgrades to the Update II.5 aircraft further improves their surveillance role in military and humanitarian missions."

Lockheed Martin has been the prime contractor and systems integrator for the aircraft's avionics, including non-acoustic sensors, communications, survivability and displays and controls since 1994. To date, Lockheed Martin has upgraded 66 P-3C aircraft with AIP upgrade kits; the U.S. Navy plans to upgrade a total of 73 aircraft. The AIP upgrade draws on commercial-off-the- shelf and non-developmental technology to provide the next generation of mission capability for the U.S. Navy P-3C.

The P-3 is the primary maritime surveillance aircraft operated by the U.S. Navy and 15 allied nations. Its roles include anti-submarine warfare; anti- surface warfare; command, control communications, computers and intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance; search and rescue, drug interdiction, and exclusive economic zone protection.

New workstations, satellite communication capabilities, enhanced radar, and electro-optics and infrared sensors significantly increase the aircraft's surveillance role over land as well as over water. The new acoustic processing suite enables greater ASW capabilities in blue water and littoral regions. The capabilities provided enable the aircraft to be used extensively in all major U.S. combined forces operations, including those overland in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Bosnia, and others associated with the global war on terrorism.

Lockheed Martin MS2 Tactical Systems performs engineering, integration, and major contract work in Eagan, MN; MS2 Undersea Systems in Manassas, VA, provides the acoustic processing suite and Lockheed Martin Aircraft and Logistics Center in Greenville, SC, completes the aircraft installation.

Headquartered in Bethesda, MD, Lockheed Martin employs about 130,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology systems, products and services.

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