Lockheed Martin Receives $95M Contract To Extend Service Life Of Norway's P-3 Orion Maritime Patrol Aircraft

Lockheed Martin has entered into a contract with the Government of Norway to build new production service life extension kits for six Royal Norwegian Air Force P-3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft. This Lockheed Martin Service Life Extension Program (SLEP) will add more than 15,000 flying hours to each aircraft, representing 20 to 25 additional years of service for this critical maritime patrol and reconnaissance resource.

The contract, which includes the life extension kit, engineering support, and other components, is valued at approximately $95 million. The life extension kit provides a low-risk, cost-effective solution by replacing all fatigue life limiting structure on the aircraft with enhanced design components and new, improved corrosion resistant materials.

"The P-3 Orion remains the world standard in maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft, and this work will extend the service life of this critical strategic asset for many years," said Ralph Heath, president of Lockheed Martin Aeronautics. "We appreciate Norway's confidence in our unique ability as the Original Equipment Manufacturer to deliver this capability, and we're committed to supporting our customers' long-term needs."

Lockheed Martin has installed the required production tooling to build P-3 Service Life Extension outer wings at its Marietta, Ga., plant. The Norwegian life extension kit includes the outer wings, the center wing lower surface, horizontal stabilizer, horizontal stabilizer leading edges, and nacelle components. These kits will incorporate design enhancements and new materials with increased corrosion resistance, essentially refreshing the fatigue critical components on the aircraft. This provides operators with another aircraft service life with significantly reduced maintenance costs, reduced down time, and increased aircraft availability. It also removes operational restrictions currently imposed on the global Orion fleet due to aging problems. Production of the Norwegian kits is scheduled to begin immediately.

"This contract is a great example of the long term commitment our company has made to sustain, refresh and support our maritime surveillance systems," said Rick Kirkland, vice president of Lockheed Martin's Maritime Surveillance Enterprise. "Our goal is to bring new technologies to our customer and ensure continued operational effectiveness for these resources well into the 21st Century."

Setting the world standard for maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft for over four decades, the P-3 Orion is world-renowned as a true force multiplier. At any given moment, day or night, P-3 Orions are on patrol, performing vital missions such as antisubmarine and anti-surface warfare, economic zone surveillance, humanitarian support, homeland security, littoral defense, intelligence gathering, fire fighting, drug interdiction, counter- piracy, immigration control and hurricane hunting. More than 350 P-3s are in service with 19 international and domestic operators.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 140,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2006 sales of $39.6 billion.

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