



P-8A Poseidon

When the Australian Government sought to replace its aging fleet of AP-3C Orion maritime surveillance aircraft, Boeing's P-8, with its unrivalled long-range anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capability, was chosen as the successor.

In 2009, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the US Navy to collaborate on the P-8A program and, in February 2014, the Australian government formally announced it had approved the acquisition of eight P-8As. An option was included for four additional aircraft, and those aircraft were subsequently included in a March 2017 US Navy contract.

Built from scratch as a military aircraft, the P-8A is a derivative of the Boeing 737NG, which is modified to include a bomb bay and pylons for weapons, and two weapons stations on each wing. It can also carry 129 sonobuoys, which can be dropped from the aircraft to detect submarines, and features an in-flight refuelling system.

The P-8's fuselage is built in Wichita, Kansas, and then shipped to Boeing's final assembly facility in Renton, Washington, where all

aircraft structural features unique to the P-8A are incorporated. Testing takes place at Renton Field, adjacent to the final assembly facility, with the final installation and check of the mission systems and flight test instrumentation conducted at Boeing Field, Seattle prior to handover to the customer.

At the roll-out ceremony of the first Australian aircraft in September 2016, GPCAPT Roger McCutcheon, Director Maritime Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Response Transition Office, said the P-8A was a fundamental element of Australia's future maritime patrol and response strategy.

Australia's first P-8A arrived in November 2016 and since then Boeing has delivered 12 of the 12 contracted RAAF P-8As. In December 2020, the Commonwealth announced the acquisition of an additional two aircraft to join the fleet operated by No 92 Wing at RAAF Base Edinburgh. Boeing Defence Australia also undertakes sustainment work on the Australian fleet, working under a cooperative agreement with the US Navy.

Globally, the P-8 fleet has flown 300,000 hours to date – proving its capability not only for broad-area maritime and coastal defence missions, but also as a vital humanitarian and search and rescue platform.

TECHNICAL DATA: P8-A Poseidon

Power plant	Two CFM56-7 BE(27) engines each with 27,000 lb thrust
Span	37.6m (123.6 ft)
Length	39.5m (129.6 ft)
Height	12.8m (42 ft)
Max. takeoff weight	85,820kg (189,200 lb)
Maximum speed	907km/h (564 mi/h)
Range	7,500km (4,660mi)
Service ceiling	12,496m (41,000 feet)
Capacity	Sonobuoys, 11 weapons stations
Armament	Self-Protection Measures, Lightweight Anti-Submarine Torpedo, AGM-84 Harpoon Anti-Ship Missiles

