

Feature Story

Boeing commences first P-8A deeper maintenance in Australia

- Local maintenance boosts Australian capability and ensures enhanced mission-readiness

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Boeing Defence Australia has celebrated an Australian-first with the commencement of major maintenance, repair, and overhaul work on the Royal Australian Air Force's fleet of P-8A Poseidon aircraft this month.

Known as deeper maintenance, the program of works occurs after around 72 months of service, when aircraft are typically returned to the original equipment manufacturer's facilities for in-depth, complex and specialised maintenance services.

In a major coup for Boeing Defence Australia, the RAAF's P-8A fleet will undergo deeper maintenance at RAAF Base Edinburgh in South Australia, bypassing the need to be sent back to the United States.

"Boeing Defence Australia has proven credentials in delivering deeper maintenance in Australia on the E-7A Wedgetail, F/A-18A/B Classic Hornet and F-111," said Darryn Fletcher, Boeing Defence Australia director of commercial derivative aircraft. "We have also provided through-life sustainment services for RAAF's P-8A fleet since their introduction into service in 2016.

"Taking on the planned deeper maintenance program is a considerable extension of BDA's local P-8A credentials, a boost to Australian capability, and ensures enhanced mission readiness for the ADF's high-demand P-8A fleet.

"It also has positive implications for other P-8 operators in the region," said Fletcher.

Core to the commencement of the deeper maintenance program was the rapid modification of an existing hangar at RAAF Edinburgh, the home of the P-8A fleet.

"A new purpose-built hangar will be commissioned in 2025 but, with deeper maintenance scheduled to commence this year, we were part of a group led by Defence and including RAAF and local industry, to modify a hangar on base to accommodate the extended facilities required for deeper maintenance. This enables us to meet our contractual obligations without sending the aircraft interstate and keeps all P-8A servicing under one roof," said Fletcher.

Boeing Defence Australia signed an initial \$60 million agreement to provide deeper maintenance for the life of the P-8A fleet in September 2021.

There are currently 150 P-8 aircraft in service with the U.S. Navy, the Royal Australian Air Force, the Indian Navy, the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force and the Royal Norwegian Air Force, with deliveries to New Zealand, Korea and Germany scheduled for 2022, 2023 and 2024 respectively.