SECOND BATCH OF FOUR P-8S FOR THE RAAF APPROVED

News / Airlines

The government has approved the acquisition of a second batch of four P-8A Poseidon maritime surveillance aircraft.

Acquisition of eight Boeing P-8As was approved in 2014 (and the first aircraft are now under assembly), but the recently released Defence White Paper's accompanying Integrated Investment Program (IIP) revealed that, "Eight Poseidon aircraft will be introduced in the early 2020s, with seven additional aircraft to be acquired in two tranches to bring the total to 15 aircraft by the late 2020s."

Approval of the first of those additional tranches of P-8s was subsequently announced by Defence Minister Senator Marise Payne at the RAAF's Air Power Conference in Canberra on Tuesday.

"As foreshadowed in the White Paper, I can indicate today that the Government has approved the acquisition of four additional P-8A Poseidon maritime surveillance and response aircraft, bringing the total number of P-8As on order to 12," the Minister said in a speech that also confirmed the entry into service date of the MQ-4C Triton maritime surveillance unmanned aircraft system. Both the P-8A and MQ-4C are being acquired to replace the RAAF's current AP-3C Orion aircraft.

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“The first of the Poseidons is expected to be delivered late this year and 12 aircraft will be in service by 2022,” Senator Payne said.

“Pending government approval a further three aircraft are planned to enter service late in the 2020s and the Triton is planned to be introduced into service in 2023.”

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