Astronics Awarded Boeing Contracts to Support Navy's MQ-25 Unmanned Tanker



The MQ-25 unmanned aerial refueling tanker. Boeing

EAST AURORA, N.Y. – Astronics Corp. has been awarded contracts by Boeing to supply CorePower aircraft power distribution units and custom-engineered exterior lighting for the MQ-25 unmanned aerial refueling program, Astronics said in a Feb. 17 release.

"Our CorePower Electronic Circuit Breaker Unit (ECBU) technology is ideally suited for use in unmanned aircraft. This COTS [commercial off the shelf] power distribution technology will support the success of the MQ-25 program by providing intelligent control and visibility of the on-board power systems," said Pete Gundermann, president and CEO of Astronics. "Additionally, we are proud to bring our exterior lighting expertise for military programs to Boeing on this

project.”

The CorePower system replaces pilot-operated, thermal mechanical breaker systems with intelligently controlled, solid-state switches to provide safe, reliable performance remotely. The system planned for the MQ-25 incorporates the use of Astronics’ latest generation ECBU products to create an evenly distributed system at a fraction of the wire weight and increased reliability compared with traditional systems.

Astronics is also currently working with Boeing to design custom lighting for the MQ-25 that to provide for safe operations for flight deck personnel and aid in the aerial refueling process.

The MQ-25 is the U.S. Navy’s first operational carrier-based unmanned aircraft and is designed to provide a much-needed refueling capability. The contract supports Boeing’s engineering and manufacturing development program.

“The MQ-25 program is vital because it will help the U.S. Navy to extend the range of the carrier air wing and Boeing and our industry team is all-in on delivering this capability,” said Dave Bujold, Boeing’s MQ-25 program director. “The work we’re doing is also foundational for the future of Boeing – where we’re building autonomous systems from seabed to space.”