Australia's Request for More MH-60R Helicopters Approved By State Dept.

An MH-60R Seahawk helicopter assigned to the Swamp Foxes of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 74 flies in front of the guided-missile cruiser USS San Jacinto (CG 56). The U.S. State Department has approved a possible Foreign Military Sale of 12 MH-60Rs. *U.S. NAVY / Chief Petty Officer Bruno Gaudry*

WASHINGTON – The U.S. State Department has approved a possible Foreign Military Sale to Australia of MH-60R Seahawk multi-mission helicopters and related services and equipment, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency said Oct. 8.

The deal has an estimated cost of $985 million. Australia has requested 12 MH-60Rs along with their engines, mission systems, guns, space parts, technical documentation, logistics support and others, the release said.

"This proposed sale will improve Australia's capability to perform antisurface and antisubmarine warfare missions along with the ability to perform secondary missions including vertical replenishment, search and rescue, and communications relay," said a release announcing the approval. "Australia will use the enhanced capability as a deterrent to regional threats and to strengthen its homeland defense. Australia will have no difficulty absorbing this equipment into its armed forces."

Australia previously ordered 24 MH-60Rs, the last of which was delivered to the Royal Australian Navy in July 2016.

The principal U.S. contractor will be Lockheed Martin Rotary and Mission Systems, Owego, New York.