

Boeing Delivers First F/A-18 Service-Life Modification Jet to Navy



Aviation Boatswain's Mate (Equipment) Mason Green guides an F/A-18 Super Hornet to a catapult on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt on Feb. 1. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Olympia O. McCoy

ARLINGTON, Va. – Boeing has given the F/A-18 a new lease on life after delivering the first Super Hornet under Service Life Modification (SLM) to the U.S. Navy, the company said Feb. 6. The second SLM jet will deliver by the end of the month, and Boeing will deliver the third F/A-18 in April.

The initial Super Hornets delivered will extend their service lives from 6,000 to 7,500 flight hours. Future modification plans in the early 2020s will enable the jets to fly 10,000 hours and incorporate the new Block III capabilities.

"SLM is going to provide a critical resource for the Navy to recapitalize on long-serving aircraft to return them to the fleet in a near new condition," said Capt. Stephen May, PMA-265 co-lead for E/F/G Air Vehicles. "It will reduce burden on our maintainers, our supply system and our depot-level assets within the enterprise."

A total of 15 Super Hornets are in SLM on production lines in St. Louis and San Antonio. It takes 18 months to complete modifications on an F/A-18, although that time will be driven down to one year as the modifications progress. Boeing will deliver five more Super Hornets this year.

The Block III conversion will include enhanced network capability, conformal fuel tanks, an advanced cockpit system, signature improvements and an enhanced communications system.

The updates are expected to keep the F/A-18 in active service for decades.