

Navy Orders 17 Block III Super Hornets Plus Data Package



PHILIPPINE SEA (Dec. 4, 2023) An F/A-18E Super Hornet from the “Stingers” of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 113 prepares to launch from the flight deck of the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70). (USN photo by MC3 Joshua Sapien)

By Richard R. Burgess, Senior Editor

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy has ordered 17 more Block III F/A-18E/F Super Hornet strike fighters for the fleet, with the contract action also providing for the initial phase of delivery of the aircraft’s data package.

In a March 19 Defense Department contract announcement, the Naval Air Systems awarded to Boeing a not-to-exceed \$1.14 firm-fixed-price, undefinitized contract modification to

procure "10 F/A-18F Lot 46 aircraft, as well as two F/A-18F and five F/A-18E Lot 47 aircraft."

The contract also shows progress in resolution with Boeing over the rights to the aircraft's data package, important to the sustainment of the Super Hornet fleet.

"This modification also provides for Phase One of the F/A-18E/F and EA-18G technical data package including the operation, maintenance, installation and training data in support of F/A-18 and EA-18G sustainment efforts for the Navy," the release said.

"The technical data package was a crucial part of this negotiation; it is necessary for naval aviation's operational readiness and post-production sustainment," said Rear Adm. John Lemmon, program executive officer for Tactical Aircraft Programs, in a March 19 Navy release. "The Super Hornet remains a predominant aircraft in the carrier air wing and will continue to provide significant combat capability into the 2040s. The Navy received appropriated funds from Congress to purchase these Super Hornets to help mitigate the strike fighter shortfall. The award is an Unfinitized Contract Action with the intent to definitize within the next few months."

Delivery of the new Super Hornets is scheduled from late 2026 through to begin in the winter of 2026, with final delivery no later than April 2027.

The Block III version of the Super Hornet completed its first carrier deployment last month with the return of the USS Carl Vinson from the Western Pacific Ocean. Strike Fighter Squadron 113 took the Block IIIs on the deployment.