Navy Orders 79 Net-Enabled Harpoons from Boeing

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Navy has exercised a contract option to order 79 Block II+ kits for Harpoon cruise missiles, the Defense Department said in a Jan. 30 release.

The $16 million order by the Naval Air Systems Command comprises the second production order of Block II+ kits for the air-launched AGM-84 Harpoon, which is deployed on the F/A-18 strike fighter and P-3 and P-8 maritime patrol aircraft. The order follows a batch of 15 kits delivered in 2018.

The Block II+ version of the Harpoon is a net-enabled weapon that can receive target updates via data link to more refine the missile's radar acquisition. Jim Bryan, director of Cruise Missile Systems for Boeing Missile and Weapon Systems, in a Jan. 16 conversation at the Surface Navy Association symposium, said a Block II+ kit runs in the range of a couple hundred thousand dollars, much cheaper than delivering a new missile.

The Block II+ kits are being delivered to Naval Air Systems Command for air-launched weapons. Bryan said Boeing stands ready to build kits for the surface-launched and submarine-launched versions of the Harpoon should the Navy determine a requirement.

The Harpoon is now fielded by more than 30 nations. The Block II, version which is not net-enabled, is marketed to international customers. Bryan said Boeing has the largest order backlog in the Harpoon program's history and will be meeting demand by expanding its manufacturing facilities.