P-8A Poseidon Reaches IOC with Increment 3 Block 2 Modifications



P-8A Poseidon Increment 3 Block 2 system reached initial operating capability. Increment 3 Block 2 provides a significant upgrade to the P-8A airframe and avionics systems, and includes new airframe racks, radome, antennas, sensors, and wiring. Photo courtesy of Boeing.

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NAS PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The U.S. Navy declared Initial Operational Capability (IOC) for the P-8A Poseidon Increment 3 Block 2 (Inc 3 Blk 2) system. This significant milestone was achieved after the initial phase of Initial Operational Test performed by Air Test and Evaluation Squadron One (VX-1) with support from the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft Program Office (PMA-290).

“The P-8A Inc 3 Blk 2 modifications enhance Naval Aviation’s Maritime Intelligence, Surveillance, Reconnaissance, and Targeting (ISR&T) capabilities – the eyes of the Fleet,” said Rear Adm. Michael Wosje, Director of Air Warfare (OPNAV N98). “This capability enhancement is in line with the CNO Fighting Instructions and the Golden Fleet Initiative, which shifts the paradigm from platform-centric thinking to a warfighting system. We are delivering the P-8A Inc 3 Blk 2 as a high-end, networked, and rapidly adaptable platform.”

The P-8A is the Department of War’s only long-range full-spectrum anti-submarine warfare (ASW), cue-to-kill platform, with substantial armed anti-surface warfare (ASuW) and networked intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities. Inc 3 Blk 2 provides a significant upgrade to the P-8A airframe and avionics systems, and includes new airframe racks, radome, antennas, sensors, and wiring. The modification incorporates a new combat systems suite with improved computer processing, higher security architecture, a wideband satellite communication system, an ASW signals intelligence capability, a track management system, and additional communications and acoustics systems to enhance search, detection and targeting capabilities.

“The recent deployment of P-8A Increment 3 Block 2 marks the culmination of a spiral development strategy that delivers winning capability to the Fleet and ensures that the P-8A will remain agile, relevant, and lethal for decades to come,” said Rear Adm. Craig Mattingly, Commander Patrol and Reconnaissance Group (CPRG), responsible for the manning, training, and equipping of the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance fleet of aircraft for the U.S. Navy.

PMA-290 has advanced P-8A’s capabilities through a phased, incremental acquisition strategy using Engineering Change Proposals (ECPs). This approach began with Increment 1, which reconstituted the capabilities of the legacy P-3C Orion, and continued with further upgrades in Increment 2.

“I am extremely proud of the dedicated and focused acquisition team that is delivering this capability to the fleet,” said Capt. Erik Thomas, PMA-290 program manager. “The P-8A Increment 3 Block 2 modifications could not have come at a better time in our current state of evolving threats. The Poseidon is the cornerstone of sophisticated and lethal global maritime patrol and reconnaissance forces, and this enhanced capability ensures we sustain the core pillar of world-class maritime intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and targeting (ISR&T) and remain ready for our current and future fights.”

PMA-290 is responsible for the acquisition, sustainment, and continuous modernization of the P-8A Poseidon, ensuring it remains the world’s premier multi-mission maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft.

CPRG works with the Joint Force, Allies, and Partners to find things beneath or on the sea and destroy them. Everything else is in support.