

Analysis Underway for E-6B Mercury Aircraft Replacement



A U.S. Navy E-6B Mercury airborne command post flies over Solomons Island, Maryland. An analysis is underway for a replacement for the E-6B. U.S. Navy photo.

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – An analysis of alternatives (AOA) is underway in the Office of the Secretary of Defense for a replacement for the Navy's E-6B Mercury strategic communications aircraft.

Speaking to

an audience at the Navy League's Sea-Air-Space conference here, Marine Maj. Gen

Greg Masiello, the Navy's program executive officer for Air, ASW, Assault and

Special Mission PEO (A), said that his office is supporting the AOA. PEO(A)'s

portfolio includes the E-6B aircraft.

The E-6B is

the legacy platform that relays strategic communications to and from the Navy's

ballistic-missile submarines and national command authority, a program called

TACAMO (Take Charge and Move Out). The E-6B also serves in the airborne command

post (ABNCP) role for U.S. Strategic Command, flying with a battle staff

onboard.

The AOA is for the NEAT

program, which is a simplification of the terms NAOC (National Airborne Operations

Center)/EA (ABNCP/TACAMO). The AOC mission is performed by the Air Force E-4B

aircraft.