Components of Northrop Grumman AQS-24B Mine-Hunting System Now Made in Australia

CANBERRA, Australia – Northrop Grumman Corp. has started to manufacture components of the AQS-24B towed mine-hunting system with Marand Precision Engineering in Australia, at the company's Moorabbin, Victoria, facility.

The AQS-24 mine-hunting system includes an operational high-speed synthetic aperture sonar (HSSAS) and an optical laser line-scan sensor. The system performs high-resolution detection, localization, classification and identification of mine-like objects from helicopter and unmanned surface vessel platforms at speeds of up to 18 knots. A total of 31 systems are deployed worldwide.

"Northrop Grumman is committed to providing our customers worldwide with a sustainable and affordable mine-hunting system," said Alan Lytle, vice president of undersea systems at Northrop Grumman. "Our partnership with Australian industry enables us to source key components from local manufacturers."

Marand designs and manufactures products for the aerospace, defense, automotive, rail and renewable-energy industries. The towed vehicle shell assemblies and sonar array housings being manufactured in Australia for the AQS-24B will benefit from Marand's experience on other successful programs such as the F-35 Lightning II strike fighter. Assemblies will be delivered this summer to satisfy existing spares contracts Northrop Grumman has to support fielded and operational AQS-24 systems.

"We are thrilled to be selected by Northrop Grumman as their partner for the AQS-24B program," said Steve Mellor, general

manager of Marand Defence Partnerships. “Having received our very first order from Northrop Grumman was an important step towards a long-term relationship.”

Northrop Grumman has also expanded its current partnership with Sydney-based Electrotech Australia Pty Ltd, which performs post-delivery support of Northrop Grumman navigation and radar systems operating in Australia, to include future sustainment of the AQS-24B mine-hunting sensor systems.