

# Navy Studying Arming P-8A Aircraft with the AARGM-ER Missile



\*\*\*\*\*

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. – The Navy is conducting an integration study for arming its P-8A maritime patrol aircraft with the AGM-88G Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile – Extended Range (AARGM-ER), a Navy program official said.

Capt. Alex Dutko, program manager for Direct and Time-Sensitive Strike, speaking April 3 to reporters in person and remotely at the Navy League’s Sea-Air-Space Expo in National Harbor, said the integration of AARGM-ER on the P-8A would be for external carriage on the aircraft’s wing stations.

The AARGM-ER, the latest version of the anti-radar missile designed to neutralize or destroy enemy air-defense radar stations, is an upgrade of the AGM-88E AARGM and is designed for internal or external carriage. The ER version integrates the AGM-88E sensors and electronics with a new solid-fuel rocket motor and tail control. The ER has a diameter of 11.5 inches, compared with the baseline’s 10-inch diameter.

The new version is designed to be carried internally in a weapons bay as well as externally. The AARGM-ER will be carried internally on the F-35A and F-35C versions of the Lightning II strike fighter and externally on those aircraft plus the F-35B, F/A-18E/F Super Hornet strike fighter, and the EA-18G electronic attack aircraft.

The AARGM-ER entered Low-Rate Initial Production (LRIP) during the fourth quarter of fiscal 2021 and has completed three of four Developmental Test firings. The fourth is scheduled for

April. The second LRIP contract was awarded during the first quarter of fiscal 2022. LRIP 3 currently is in negotiation with Northrop Grumman, Dutko said.

Operational Test of the AARGM-ER is scheduled for completion during fiscal 2024, with Initial Operational Capability slated for the first quarter of that year. Full-Rate Production is expected to begin in fiscal 2025.

The missile will be available for Foreign Military Sales with LRIP 4, with deliveries occurring in fiscal 2026. Dutko said that the Navy is working to expand a cooperative agreement with the Italian Air Force – which carries the AARGM on its Toronado strike fighters – to include the AARGM-ER version. He said that multiple countries have expressed interest in the AARGM-ER.