Northrop Grumman Supports Testing of MQ-8C Fire Scout's Radar

The U.S. Navy and Northrop Grumman have started flight testing of the MQ-8C Fire Scout equipped with the Leonardo AN/ZPY-8 radar. Northrop Grumman Corp.

PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The U.S. Navy, with support from Northrop Grumman Corp., started flight testing of the MQ-8C Fire Scout equipped with the Leonardo AN/ZPY-8 radar, the company announced in a release.

"The AN/ZPY-8 radar significantly increases Fire Scout's detection and tracking of targets. The ability to simultaneously employ multiple modes supports U.S. Navy intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance requirements," said Melissa Packwood, program manager of tactical autonomous systems for Northrop Grumman. "This increased capability enables Fire Scout to extend ranges to meet emerging requirements."

Operating out of Webster Outlying Field near Patuxent River, the MQ-8C's first flight with the radar occurred on Feb. 27. Testing began with several weeks of ground test prior to the first flight and continues to progress as the Navy and Northrop Grumman consider mission expansion opportunities for the platform.

To date, Northrop Grumman has delivered 32 of 38 MQ-8Cs to the Navy, all of which will be retrofit with the AN/ZPY-8 radar. The MQ-8C achieved initial operational capability last June and is set for its first deployment next year.