

U.S. Navy Delivers First P-8A Poseidon Aircraft for Increment 3 Block 2 Modifications



The U.S. Navy delivered the first P-8A Poseidon aircraft to be modified with Increment 3 Block 2 capabilities to Boeing on March 27. Modifications are expected to be complete in late 2025.

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. – The U.S. Navy delivered the first P-8A Poseidon aircraft to be modified with Increment 3 Block 2 capabilities to Boeing on March 27, enabling the fleet to be outfitted with the full anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASuW), and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities outlined in the P-8A program's evolutionary acquisition strategy.

The P-8A is the Department of Defense's only long-range full-spectrum ASW, cue-to-kill platform, with substantial armed ASuW and networked ISR capabilities. Increment 3 Block 2 provides a significant upgrade to the P-8A airframe and avionics systems, and includes new airframe racks, radomes, antennas, sensors, and wiring. The modification incorporates a new combat systems suite with an improved computer processing and higher security architecture capability, a wide band 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.

“Increment 3 Block 2 brings the capability that the P-8A was made for. These modifications will allow aircrews to search, locate and track the most advanced submarines in the world,

enabling the fleet to pace the threat with the required capability and capacity to win the fight,” said Capt. Erik Thomas, program manager for the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft program office, PMA-290. “This delivery demonstrates the PMA-290 team’s outstanding work ethic, professionalism and dedication to the fleet.”

Increment 3 Block 2 related modifications will begin at Boeing’s Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul hangar at Cecil Airport in Jacksonville, Florida. The first fleet aircraft modification is expected to be complete in January 2025.

“P-8A Increment 3 is the next step in the spiral evolution of Poseidon. By design, and through the efforts of NAVAIR and industry teaming, Increment 3 Block 2 represents the baseline configuration the Navy needs to address tomorrow’s high-end threat,” said Rear Adm. Adam Kijek, Commander, Patrol and Reconnaissance Group/Patrol and Reconnaissance Group Pacific.

In response to evolving threats around the world, future P-8A modifications will be implemented via a sequence of rapid capability insertion efforts that build upon this new Increment 3 Block 2 baseline.

As of March 2024, U.S. Navy fleet squadrons have taken delivery of 119 P-8A aircraft. P-8A active duty and reserve squadron transition training is complete for all 14 fleet squadrons and one fleet replacement squadron. In addition, the P-8A fleet has flown for more than 503,783 flight hours and recorded more than 440,558 landings.

PMA-290 manages the acquisition, development, support and delivery of the U.S. Navy’s maritime patrol and reconnaissance aircraft.