

Boeing Australia celebrates major Classic Hornet sustainment milestone



July 9, 2020

Boeing is today honouring the last deeper maintenance to be performed on the Royal Australian Air Force's (RAAF) fleet of 71 F/A-18A/B Classic Hornets at RAAF Base Williamtown.

For the Boeing Defence Australia team, the completion of the final service and commitment to keep the Hornet fleet flying has totalled 815,000 hours of work performing detailed inspections, overhauls and repairs.

“Our deeper maintenance milestone is a testament to the integrated and trusted partnership between Boeing and the Commonwealth, as platform stewards, to provide vital sustainment support services to the RAAF Classic Hornet fleet,” said Daniel Reid, F/A-18 Classic Hornet Program Manager.

“Completion of our 163rd deeper maintenance is a momentous achievement for the team.”

Boeing has partnered with the RAAF to ensure Australia's Classic Hornet fleet has remained a relevant and formidable multi-role fighter through to the planned withdrawal date of December 2021.

“Boeing's deeper maintenance services have supported 150 jobs in the Hunter region, contributed \$200 million to the Australian economy and ensured operational and fleet-life success,” said Amy List, Boeing Defence Australia's director of Sustainment Operations.

“Our servicings have also generated an additional 140,000 flying hours for the Classic Hornet fleet.”

The routine service has been performed on each F/A-18 Hornet each time they reach 440 flying hours, which is approximately every two years. It involves a meticulous check-up of all major

aircraft sub-systems such as the undercarriage, hydraulic actuators, major wiring looms, computer systems and flight control surfaces, such as the wings and rudders.

“This significant milestone has been reached through the dedicated effort of Boeing technicians, engineers and support staff, said Officer Commanding Tactical Fighter Systems Program Office, Group Captain David Abraham.

“That effort has been underpinned by exceptionally strong and trusted relationships that Boeing has built over many years with Defence and across the defence industry support base. Those efforts and relationships have ensured the continued availability of Classic Hornet aircraft as an important element of Australia’s air combat capability.”

The Australian Defence Force operates the F/A-18A/B Hornets out of RAAF Base Williamtown and RAAF Base Tindal, which are sustained under the Classic Hornet Sustainment Services contract.

The contract sees Boeing provide ongoing logistics, maintenance, engineering, and operational and capability upgrade management services.

“As the country’s most experienced sustainment provider, we are continuing to build Australia’s sovereign defence capability to deliver the best outcomes for defence,” said Reid.

“Our professional and highly experienced workforce continued to complete deeper maintenance for our customer while maintaining COVID-19 safe work practices through this period.”

Major DM milestones

- April 2013: Boeing Defence Australia is awarded the Deeper Maintenance Contract for the provision of maintenance services to the F/A-18A/B Classic Hornet fleet.
- July 2013: Boeing completes first deeper maintenance.
- June 2015: Boeing completes 50th deeper maintenance.
- December 2016: Boeing completes 100th deeper maintenance.
- March 2019: Boeing completes 150th deeper maintenance.
- July 2020: Boeing completes final deeper maintenance.

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