

The Department of the Air Force has awarded a nearly \$1.2 billion contract for its first lot of eight F-15EX fighter aircraft.

Washington, 13th July 2020 - The contract, awarded to Boeing, provides for the design, development, integration, manufacturing, test, verification, certification, delivery, sustainment and modification of F-15EX aircraft, including spares, support equipment, training materials, technical data and technical support.

The F-15EX will replace the oldest F-15C/Ds in the service's inventory. Eight F-15EX aircraft were approved in the fiscal year 2020 budget and 12 were requested in the FY21 budget. The Air Force plans to purchase a total of 76 F-15EX aircraft over the five-year Future Years Defense Program.

"The F-15EX is the most affordable and immediate way to refresh the capacity and update the capabilities provided by our aging F-15C/D fleets," said Gen. Mike Holmes, commander of Air Combat Command. "The F-15EX is ready to fight as soon as it comes off the line."

The F-15EX is a two-seat fighter with U.S.-only capabilities. It features a deep magazine that can carry a load of advanced weapons. The platform also requires minimal transitional training or additional manpower and little to no infrastructure changes, ensuring the continuation of the mission.

"When delivered, we expect bases currently operating the F-15 to transition to the new EX platform in a matter of months versus years," Holmes said.

The most significant difference between the F-15EX and legacy F-15s lies in its Open Mission Systems (OMS) architecture. The OMS architecture will enable the rapid insertion of the latest aircraft technologies. The F-15EX will also have fly-by-wire flight controls, a new electronic warfare system, advanced cockpit systems, and the latest mission systems and software capabilities available for legacy F-15s.

"The F-15EX's digital backbone, open mission systems, and generous payload capacity fit well with our vision for future net-enabled warfare," said Dr. Will Roper, assistant secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. "Continually upgrading systems, and how they share data across the Joint Force, is critical for defeating advanced threats. F-15EX is designed to evolve from day one."

The first eight F-15EX aircraft will be fielded at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida, to support testing efforts. The delivery of the first two aircraft is scheduled for the second quarter of FY21. The remaining six aircraft are scheduled to deliver in FY23. The Air Force is using the Strategic Basing Process to determine the fielding locations for subsequent aircraft lots.