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French Air Force Renews AWACS Support Contract with AFI KLM E&M

The contract for through life support for the French Air Force's fleet of AWACS aircraft has been renewed for a further five years.

Paris, Amstelveen, 12 September 2011 – Air France and SIMMAD, the French Defense Ministry's Aircraft Through Life Support Organization, have renewed the through life support contract for the fleet of four AWACS surveillance aircraft operated by the French Air Force for a further five years, effective 1 September 2011.

Guaranteeing all-round aircraft support during Mid-Life Upgrade (MLU) operations

Through life support covers the complete array of AWACS engineering support services. AFI KLM E&M will accordingly be responsible for technical and documentary support for the aircraft and its mission-specific systems, painting, and heavy maintenance concurrently with Mid-Life Upgrade work, maintaining the related engineering resources, and providing IT and logistics support services. Two related projects will also be continued under the terms of the contract, namely the digitization of all technical documentation, and the integration of airworthiness monitoring into the AWACS computer systems.

Olivier Dugast, SIMMAD Fleet Manager for Operational Support Aircraft highlighted the importance of "having, thanks to the contract with Air France, a single approved operator responsible for one-stop support for both the AWACS fleet's aircraft and their on-board systems by carrying out the modifications required by the MLU."

Expanded expertise for AWACS product

This is because, during the lifespan of the contract, AFI KLM E&M will also continue to carry out MLU work on the aircraft assigned to it by the manufacturer, Boeing, consisting in fitting more up-to-date equipment. Modification work will be carried out concurrently with heavy maintenance on the aircraft, and will begin in spring 2012. The grouping of worksopes will help optimize operational availability of the French Air Force's AWACS aircraft.

The contract confirms AFI KLM E&M's proven know-how and experience with military assets, and especially on AWACS aircraft. Franck Ternier, Air France Industries President, said: "For the past 20 years or so, Air France Industries has been contributing to the availability and performance of the French Air Force's AWACS by providing through life support services. The contract's renewal illustrates our capabilities and experience in this area, and also underscores the bond of trust that exists between our own organization, SIMMAD, and the end-customer, the French Air Force."

About AFI KLM E&M

Air France Industries and KLM Engineering & Maintenance, which joined forces following the AIR FRANCE KLM merger, are world-leading multi-product MRO (Maintenance, Repair, Overhaul) providers with a joint workforce of over 14,000, offering comprehensive technical support for airlines, ranging from engineering and line maintenance to engine overhaul, as well as the management, repair and supply of aircraft components, structured around a powerful logistics network. AFI KLM E&M supports almost 1,300 aircraft operated by 150 major international airlines.

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