



## Northrop Grumman to Supply Additional Airborne Mine Hunting Systems to Japan

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ANNAPOLIS, Md., July 11, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- Northrop Grumman Corporation (NYSE:NOC) has been awarded a series of follow-on contracts by the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) to supply three additional AQS-24A airborne mine hunting systems.

The contracts, which also include airborne electronics and ground-based support equipment, follow an initial contract awarded in October 2011 for Northrop Grumman to deliver Japan's first AQS-24A. The JMSDF will use all four complete AQS-24A airborne mine hunting sonar systems on its new MCH-101 helicopters.

The award of the airborne electronics work marks the culmination of a technology transition with Japan, which allows for certain components of the airborne electronics to be manufactured in Japan. The equipment support effort represents the initial establishment of in-country support capability and infrastructure for the AQS-24A, which will eventually enable the JMSDF to provide full logistics support for the AQS-24A systems. Additional follow-on efforts for more systems, electronics and support equipment are anticipated in 2013 and will continue until the JMSDF reaches its full operational inventory objective.

"These additional contracts further strengthen our relationship with the JMSDF," said Tom Jones, vice president of Northrop Grumman's Undersea Systems business unit.

The AQS-24A and its predecessors, the AQS-24 and the AQS-14, all built by Northrop Grumman, have been the only operational airborne mine hunting search systems used by the U.S. Navy for the past 27 years. The AQS-24A is a high speed mine-hunting system that is primarily towed from the MH-53E helicopter, but has been easily adapted to the JMSDF version of the EH-101 aircraft. With a track record of proven reliability and performance across the globe, the system's high-resolution side-scan sonar detects, localizes and classifies both bottom and moored mines in real-time at high area coverage rates.

The AQS-24A contains a laser line scanner that provides precision optical identification of underwater mines and other objects of interest. The AQS-24A allows for simultaneous operation of the sonar and laser, which significantly improves area coverage rate, shortens the mine clearance timeline and alleviates unnecessary maintenance cycles. Advanced navigation controls and processing provide highly accurate target positioning.

Northrop Grumman earlier this year contracted with the JMSDF to provide helicopter-mountable, laser mine detection systems. This was the first direct commercial sale of Northrop Grumman's Airborne Laser Mine Detection System to an international navy.

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