



Northrop Grumman KC-45: Why We Won - Survivability

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Highlighting reasons the U.S. Air Force selected the KC-45 Tanker as best for our men and women in uniform.

WASHINGTON, May 14 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- The U.S. Air Force found Northrop Grumman Corporation's (NYSE: NOC) bid to build the next generation of aerial refueling tankers superior to Boeing's in four of the five most important selection criteria. Despite this fact, the losing bidder wants the Government Accountability Office to overturn the Air Force decision to award the contract to Northrop Grumman even though the Air Force conducted what even Boeing described as a fair, open and transparent bidding process. Here is another reason Northrop Grumman won, drawn from a list of facts included in a redacted version of a protected Air Force selection document.

Survivability

Survivability is one of the nine key performance criteria established in the Request For Proposal, and the Air Force established a set of over 200 survivability requirements spanning a wide range of threats. Among the requirements: Armor to protect crew members from small arms fire, systems to reduce the risk of fuel tank explosions, long-range threat warning systems with integrated displays, and anti-missile systems designed to thwart surface-to-air missile attacks.

Both the KC-45 and the KC-767 will be much more survivable than the KC-135, which today has no self-protection systems. Boeing claims that its proposed aircraft is more survivable, but the fact of the matter is that the Air Force found that Northrop Grumman's KC-45 satisfied the Air Force's overarching survivability Key Performance Parameter requirements and had NO assessed weaknesses. Moreover, additional protective equipment and systems could be added at low risk and cost without reducing the amount of fuel or cargo the KC-45 can deliver.

Survivability was not the only criteria, but one of many. The Air Force had to balance survivability against other capabilities, criteria and cost to ensure that our warfighters got the best overall aircraft to execute the mobility mission.

The KC-45's unique combination of increased capabilities adds to aircraft survivability and crew safety in other ways. The KC-45's greater range means that it can efficiently and effectively refuel aircraft further from threats to forward bases. Its increased capability means it can accomplish refueling and airlift missions with fewer aircraft in the battle theater. The KC-45's capability to execute tasks more efficiently using fewer aircraft means fewer crewmembers will be placed in harm's way.

About the KC-45

The KC-45 Tanker aircraft will be assembled in Mobile, Ala., and the KC-45 team will employ 48,000 American workers at 230 U.S. companies in 49 states. It will be built by a world-class industrial team led by Northrop Grumman, and includes EADS North America, General Electric Aviation and Sargent Fletcher.

Northrop Grumman Corporation is a global defense and technology company whose 120,000 employees provide innovative systems, products, and solutions in information and services, electronics, aerospace and shipbuilding to government and commercial customers worldwide.

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