

The Indian Navy's long reach



It was in January 2011 that Boeing Defense, Space & Security received the Low-Rate Initial Production (LRIP)-I award from United States Navy (USN) for six P-8A Poseidon Multimission Maritime Aircraft (MMA). Overall, the USN plans to purchase 122 Boeing 737-based P-8A MMAs as replacement for its 196 P-3C Orion fleet.

In February 2012, the P-8A made its mission debut during *'Bold Alligator 2012'* annual littoral warfare exercise. The Indian Navy was the first international customer as on 1 January 2009 the Indian Government and Boeing signed a \$2.1 billion contract for the delivery of eight P-8I MMAs, essentially Long Range Maritime Patrol/Anti-Submarine Warfare (LRMP/ASW) platforms with further options for more platforms. A further four P-8Is have subsequently been ordered pushing up the contract to \$ 3.1 billion. More acquisitions for the IN are likely as IN reportedly an optimum requirement of thirty MMAs.

On 19 December 2012, the first P-8I was handed over to an Indian naval team at Boeing's Seattle facility, the Indian Navy inducting its first P-8I on 15 May 2013. The second and third P-8Is were received on 16 and 22 November 2013 respectively.

The aircraft with INAS 312 are based at INS *Rajali*, in Tamil Nadu. The fourth, fifth and sixth aircraft were delivered in May, September and November 2014 respectively, the seventh and eighth aircraft in February and November 2015 respectively.

The P-8 is based on Boeing's 737-800 commercial jet with the wings of the 737-900ER (Extended Range), with the design of the P-8 wingtips changed from the

blended winglet to a backswept wingtip to improve performance for low-level flight.

Designed to operate in designated areas within the Network Centric Warfare (NCW) concept in addition to its formidable ASW suite, the P-8I is equipped with upgraded Raytheon APS-137D(V)5 maritime surveillance radar redesignated AN/APY-10 used to facilitate advanced reconnaissance missions over

