

Two more ISR King Airs for Saudi Arabia

THE US Department of Defense (DoD) has awarded a contract for two additional Beechcraft King Air 350 Extended Range intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) aircraft for Saudi Arabia. The \$14m deal for Sierra Nevada Corporation (SNC) was revealed by the Pentagon on April 6 and is a modification to a previously agreed contract worth up to \$71.4m.

This provides for the conversion of two King Air 350 ERs with ISR and synthetic aperture radar capability, one transportable ground station, one fixed ground station and one mission system trainer.

The latest deal brings the total value of the contract to \$85.7m. Work will be performed in Hagerstown, Maryland, and is expected to be complete by April 2020.

A pair of 2010-built King Air 350 ISR aircraft were delivered to Saudi Arabia in August 2011 and a follow-on order for 14 more aircraft was fulfilled by 2016.

Iraq attacks IS in Syria

IQAF F-16C serial 1616, armed with GBU-12 Paveway II LGBs, taxis out for take-off from Balad on April 19. IQAF



IRAQ HAS carried out air strikes against so-called Islamic State (IS) in Syria. Iraqi Air Force (IQAF) F-16C Block 52s from 9 (Fighter) Squadron at Balad Air Base carried out the mission on April 19, targeting terrorists operating close to the Iraq-Syria border near Hajin,

Syria. Two F-16s were used, reportedly dropping eight GBU-12 Paveway II laser-guided bombs (LGBs). Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve (CJTF-OIR) officials said the mission was planned and executed by Iraqi Joint Operations

Command, with intelligence support from the coalition.

The strike was approved by Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, who is also commander-in-chief of Iraq's armed forces, who said in a statement three days later that it was carried out "because of

the danger they pose to Iraqi territory," and showed Iraq's commitment to destroy the remnants of IS.

An Iraqi military spokesman said the same day that the sortie had killed 36 militants, including several of its leaders in Syria. **Dave Allport**

Fourth Saudi Persuader delivered



Ruben Zammit

THE SAUDI Arabia Ministry of Interior has received its fourth and final C295W Persuader, MOI-C4 (c/n S-179, temporary Spanish civil registration EC-005), which passed through Malta International Airport on its delivery flight on April 27. Previous deliveries were MOI-C1 (c/n S-143, EC-003) in December 2015, MOI-C2 (c/n 165, EC-007) in November 2017 and MOI-C3 (c/n S-174, EC-005) on February 2.

Boeing awarded Kuwaiti Super Hornet contract



Above: The new Super Hornets will initially supplement and eventually replace the Kuwait Air Force's ageing F/A-18C/D Hornets, an example of which is seen at the inaugural Kuwait Aviation Show earlier this year. *Stefan Goossens and Arnold ten Pas*

BOEING HAS been awarded a contract worth up to \$1.16bn to produce and deliver 22 F/A-18E and six F/A-18F Super Hornets for Kuwait by 2022, the US Department of Defense

announced on March 30. The deal covers the long-lead non-recurring engineering required to develop a baseline configuration for the Kuwait jets. In addition,

the contract provides for long-lead items including radar warning receivers and aircraft armament.

Foreign Military Sales funds of \$275.8m were included at the

time of the award.

The US Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) announced US State Department approval for the Kuwaiti F/A-18E/F deal in November 2016. At

the time, it was to be worth around \$10.1bn for up to 32 F/A-18Es and eight F/A-18Fs, including 12 options, as well as avionics, weapons, support, equipment and training.