

BOEING PITCHES SUPER HORNETS FOR INDIAN NAVY

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Pitching its F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet fighter as the best solution for the Indian Navy to operate from its aircraft carriers, aircraft manufacturer Boeing on Wednesday announced a road map to significantly expand its investments in line with the 'Make in India' initiative and also to transfer advanced technologies to Indian industry if its jet is selected. The Navy is expected to choose between the F-18 and the French Rafale for procurement of around 26 jets in the next few months.

"As part of this effort, Boeing anticipates \$3.6 billion in economic impact to the Indian aerospace and defence industry over the next 10 years, with the F/A-18 Super Hornet as India's next carrier-based fighter.

The economic impact would be over and above Boeing's current offset obligations and plans in the country," said Alain Garcia, vice-president, India Business Development, Boeing Defence, Space, Security and Global Services on Wednesday.

He noted that the F/A-18 E/F has been designed from its inception as a carrier-based fighter for high-stress operations, and the Block-III will bring advanced, next-generation capabilities that will help the Indian Navy meet emerging and future threats. "The particular threats the Indian Navy started looking at, guess who is also developing capabilities against those type of threats, the U.S. Navy... Its something the Indian Navy would benefit from," Mr. Garcia said.

Earlier this year, both the F/A-18 and the Rafale conducted demonstrations from the Shore Based Test Facility in Goa to showcase their compatibility with Indian carriers.

Stating that they exceeded all requirements put forth by the Navy, Mr. Garcia said post the demonstration they gave classified briefings on the capabilities of the aircraft. Based on the data collected, we submitted them to the Navy based on their request and also a paper on the F/A-18 indigenisation road map, he stated.

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