

Study Needed Before Ending C-130 Program

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

Study Needed Before Ending C-130 Program

Ken Miller, Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) — A defense funding bill that would delay efforts to end a program at Oklahoma City's Boeing plant to upgrade the cockpits of U.S. Air Force C-130 transport planes was approved Thursday by the U.S. House Armed Services Committee.

The committee voted 56-5 for the National Defense Authorization Act, sending the bill to the full House where it was expected to be considered next week.

President Barack Obama's federal budget proposal for fiscal year 2013 called for an end to the C-130 program at an estimated saving of \$2.3 billion through 2017.

The funding bill would prohibit ending the C-130 Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) until 180 days after a cost-benefit analysis that compares the costs of upgrading the C-130 fleet to the cost of keeping the aircraft effective without the upgrade.

"We appreciate the committee's continued support of the C-130 Avionics Modernization Program and remain committed to the successful completion of the program," said Jennifer Hogan, spokeswoman for Illinois-based The Boeing Co.

"We understand the difficult decisions facing the U.S. Air Force in meeting its FY13 budget targets and Congress' responsibility to balance cost effectiveness with the needs of the warfighter," Hogan said.

U.S. Rep. Tom Cole, whose 4th Congressional District includes the Boeing plant, released a statement saying the bill provides for the involvement of Congress in developing the military's budget.

"By requiring a cost-benefit analysis, this legislation ensures that decisions about the future of the program will be made responsibly, with the input of Congress in conjunction with military leaders.

"The AMP program impacts jobs in Oklahoma and is vital to ensure greater reliability, simplified fleet-wide training, and a reduced crew size for our military. I will continue working with our military leaders to protect this key defense capability," Cole said.

Boeing announced in 2010 it would move about 550 employees from Long Beach, Calif., to Oklahoma City to work on upgrades to both the C-130 and to the weapons system on the B-1 bomber.

Boeing's initial contract called for upgrades to five C-130 aircraft for demonstration and testing. The last of the five is to be delivered later this month from Warner

Study Needed Before Ending C-130 Program

Published on Industrial Maintenance & Plant Operation (<http://www.impomag.com>)

Robbins Air Force Base, Ga., where the upgrades were installed, to Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark., where they are tested, Hogan said.

The program will then be placed on hold, according to Hogan.

"We're just waiting through the budget process this year," to learn whether the upgrades will resume, she said.

Initial plans called for Boeing to upgrade the entire fleet of 221 C-130s, which are used to transport military personnel and equipment, but the program will be suspended when the final aircraft for testing is delivered.

Hogan said no employees involved in the C-130 upgrades have been laid off, but some have been shifted to work on the B-1 program.

Hogan said the upgrade consolidates the three existing types of C-130's into one configuration, making it simpler to train personnel to operate and maintain the aircraft.

Source URL (retrieved on 12/29/2014 - 7:33am):

<http://www.impomag.com/news/2012/05/study-needed-ending-c-130-program>