‘AIRBORNE GATEWAY’ PROVIDES AIR-LAND INTEGRATION FOR JERICHO DAWN FIREPOWER DEMONSTRATION

News / Airlines, Business aviation



A firepower demonstration conducted at Puckapunyal on Friday as part of the RAAF’s Exercise Jericho Dawn series has successfully validated the use of Northrop Grumman’s ‘airborne gateway’ technology, carried on a Gulfstream II demonstrator aircraft, to allow data to be shared between various ADF platforms including F/A-18F Super Hornets, Tiger ARH helicopters and the Wedgetail AEW&C platform.

The Northrop Grumman-developed airborne gateway technology is based on that used in the US Air Force’s Battlefield Airborne Command Node (BACN) program and allows information to be shared across different otherwise incompatible datalink systems, like the Link 16 datalink used by the Wedegetail and F/A-18F and the Tiger ARH’s Eurogrid.

The firepower demonstration at the Puckapunyal Military Area in central Victoria saw Super Hornets, Tigers, artillery and armour ‘engage’ an adversary force comprising both air defence and armoured assets, a RAAF booklet produced for attendees of the firepower demonstration explains. The adversary threat was identified and tracked by ARH Tigers and AUSLAV armoured vehicles, while a Wedgetail and Giraffe air defence radar provided a correlated air picture. A joint fires and effects coordination cell and JTACs (joint terminal attack controllers) passed targeting information to the Super Hornets, Tigers and artillery, the adversary was engaged by artillery, armour, the

© 2015-2026 50SKYSHADES.COM — Reproduction, copying, or redistribution for commercial purposes is prohibited.

Tigers and Super Hornets, and the Tigers provided battle damage assessments.

“The specific objective is to assess the ability for a gateway to effectively translate and relay information between the ARH and other ADF platforms,” the RAAF booklet reads.

“In order to meet these objectives, the demonstration will utilise an airborne gateway provided by the same Northrop Grumman team that provides the USAF BACN solution. The gateway features a custom payload which translates the necessary data formats to ensure interoperability between their respective formats: JTACs (AFATDS), ARHs (Eurogrid) and F/A-18s (Link 16).”

Chief of Air Force Air Marshal Leo Davies said in a statement that the firepower demonstration showed the operational gains available through better integration of systems and information.

“Demonstrations such as today are an important means of testing and displaying joint effects,” AIRMSHL Davies said.

“If this kind of training exercise shows us something we can do that would help Air Force, Army and Navy fight better as a team, then that’s what we will pursue.”

In the same statement, Northrop Grumman Australia chief executive Ian Irving noted: “As demonstrated during the Jericho Dawn exercise, the ability to share information and situational awareness from various sources across diverse platforms and domains is critically important in facilitating joint and coalition operations.”

The airborne gateway technology can be integrated on a range of aircraft platforms. In USAF service the BACN system is fitted to Bombardier E-11s – modified Global Express business jets – and EQ-4B Global Hawk unmanned aircraft, but the system (essentially a computer called a ‘Resilient Network Controller’) could be carried on almost any existing RAAF transport or surveillance aircraft, from the King Air to the KC-30 tanker transport.

Interestingly, the Commander of the RAAF’s Air Mobility Group, Air Commodore Richard Lennon, separately noted in an article in the latest issue of Air Force News: “A KC-30A flying in the battlespace could do more than just provide fuel for strike and ISR aircraft – it could also enable more precise delivery of strikes.

“It’s presence in the battlespace might allow the KC-30A to serve as a datalink node, connecting land and air assets that would be otherwise isolated from each other.”

© 2015-2026 50SKYSHADES.COM — Reproduction, copying, or redistribution for commercial purposes is prohibited.



21 MARCH 2016

SOURCE: AUSTRALIAN AVIATION
ARTICLE LINK:
https://ut.50skyshades.com/news/airlines/airborne-gateway-provides-air-land-integration-for-jericho-dawn-firepower-demonstration

© 2015-2026 50SKYSHADES.COM — Reproduction, copying, or redistribution for commercial purposes is prohibited.