QUICKSTEP DELIVERIES OF F-35 VERTICAL TAILS COMPONENTS EXPECTED TO START BY JUNE

News / Manufacturer



Quickstep Holdings says deliveries of vertical tail components for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter project are expected to begin by the end of June.

The Australian manufacturer says the qualification process for the vertical tail fairings components, vertical tail spars and vertical tail skins have been approved.

“Following completion of qualification for vertical tail fairings components in Q1, qualification of vertical tail spars was completed in Q2. Qualification of vertical tail skins was also approved on 14 April,” Quickstep said in its quarterly sales update dated April 22.

“JSF vertical tail deliveries are expected to begin in Q4 FY16.”

Quickstep has agreements with several original equipment manufacturers to supply F-35 parts for the next 20 years valued at about US$700 million. This included being the sole supplier for Northrop Grumman for 21 F-35 parts, including doors, panels, lower skins and other composite parts. The company said it completed 128 parts during the three months to March 31, with production “forecast to increase over the next three years”.

Quickstep also has a long-term agreement with Marand for the supply of about 700 sets of carbon fibre composite parts for the F-35, including skins, spars and fairings, which was signed in April

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2014.

The manufacturer reported sales of $11.3 million in the three months to March 31, which was “in line with management expectations”. Total sales for the company’s 2015/16 fiscal year to date totalled $35.6 million, up 25 per cent from the prior corresponding period.

The order book was valued at about $110 million at March 31.

The company said it spent $1.2 million on capital expenditure at its Bankstown manufacturing facility in the three months to March 31, compared with $800,000 in the previous three months.

“Quickstep continued its capital expenditure program at Bankstown where preparations are being made to accommodate higher levels of contracted production for the JSF,” it said.

Meanwhile, Quickstep said it completed eight shipsets of composite wing flaps for the C-130J in the quarter, for a year-to-date total of 26 shipsets so far in 2015/16. The company is the sole global supplier of wing flaps for the C?130J Super Hercules after signing a five-year memorandum of agreement in December 2013.

Current C-130J orders extended through to 2019, Quickstep said.

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