

C4ISR PROCUREMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN KUWAIT



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The Middle East currently faces a wide range of both symmetrical and asymmetrical threats ranging from active and potential conflicts to terrorist and criminal enterprise activities, civil unrest and others. Given the severity and diversity of this evolving threat landscape, it's essential that GCC government and military institutions have the means to track, identify and respond to such threats in a strategic and timely manner.

Like many of its fellow GCC member states, Kuwait is currently pushing the rapid expansion and modernisation of its armed forces. Critical to these efforts is the procurement and integration of C4ISR technologies and solutions that will provide Kuwait's army, navy, air force, national guard and government agencies with the means to achieve an early warning against myriad threats and then respond to them accordingly, armed with all the data necessary to gain a clear and accurate tactical overview of any developing situation.

The following list of C4ISR procurements are by no means exhaustive, they are merely representative of the heightened investment drive Kuwait is undertaking in C4ISR to secure the edge it needs in today's complex and uncertain threat landscape.

Upcoming and recently announced C4ISR procurement deals for Kuwait

INTEGRATED DEFENSIVE ELECTRONIC COUNTERMEASURES SYSTEMS FOR KUWAITI AIRCRAFT

Procurement deal value: \$24.5 million

Technology/solutions provider: Harris Corp

Due delivery date: May 2021

Procurement deal overview: US-based Harris Corp will be providing the Kuwaiti Government with 14 full-rate production lot 15 Integrated Defensive Electronic Countermeasures AN/ALQ-214 A(V)4/5 onboard jammer systems.¹ The ALQ-214 system is designed to protect fighter aircraft by shielding them from both radar-guided surface-to-air and air-to-air missiles with a suite of electronic countermeasures that jam the incoming enemy missile's guidance systems.²

SUPER HORNET PRODUCTION CONTRACT

Procurement deal value: \$1.17 billion

Technology/solutions provider: Boeing

Due delivery date: September 2022

Procurement deal overview: Boeing has agreed to produce and deliver 22 single-seat F/A-18Es and six twin-seat F/A-18Fs for the Kuwait Air Force (KAF). This deal is a major element of Kuwait's ongoing efforts to upgrade the capabilities of its air arm, eventually looking to replace its "legacy" wing of 39 Boeing F/A-18C/D Hornets, which have been in service since October 1991.³

In addition to the Super Hornet fighters, the contract also provides for the inclusion of Raytheon APG-79 AESA long-lead radar warning receivers.⁴

KAF HORNETS UPGRADED WITH SNIPER ADVANCED TARGETING PODS

Procurement deal value: \$485 million

Technology/solutions provider: Lockheed Martin

Due delivery date: Late 2018

Procurement deal overview: While KAF awaits the delivery of its new Super Hornets, its existing Hornet fighters are being given a significant upgrade in the form of 14 Sniper Advanced Targeting Pods (ATPs), ordered from Lockheed Martin, complete with all necessary support tools, spares and integration support.⁵

The Sniper ATP system will provide this workhorse of the KAF fighting strength with critical targeting and non-traditional intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities. It is capable of detecting, identifying, automatically tracking and laser-designating small tactical targets at long ranges, while also supporting the use of all laser-guided and GPS-guided weapons against multiple fixed and moving targets.⁶

1 Executive Business, Harris to Produce IDECM Jammer Systems for Kuwait, 27/03/2018

2 United Press International, Harris Corp. to provide electronic warfare technology to Kuwait, 27/03/2018

3 Jane's 360, Boeing awarded Super Hornet production contract for Kuwait, 03/04/2018

4 AIN Online, Kuwait Signs Up Super Hornet Deal, 03/04/2018

5 Lockheed Martin, Lockheed Martin to deliver sniper pods for Kuwait Hornet Aircraft, 15/05/2017

6 Arabian Aerospace, New Hornets carry a huge sting, 06/02/2018

KAF CONSIDERS INTEGRATION OF UAVS

Procurement deal value: TBD

Technology/solutions provider: TBD

Due delivery date: TBD

Procurement deal overview: Alongside the expansion and upgrading of its conventional aircraft, the KAF is also considering adding unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or drones to its roster. Having seen the tactical flexibility and risk-lessening benefits of utilising drones in the field, the KAF has already approached several solutions providers for potential offers regarding the procurement of UAVs. As Major General Abdullah al-Foudari explained at the 2017 Dubai Airshow, drones could fit seamlessly into a wide range of tactical and strategic roles that the KAF requires undertaking, particularly regarding border security and reconnaissance:⁷

“The Kuwaiti Air Force is studying currently some US and European offers to purchase UAVs that will be used in reconnaissance missions, borders surveillance, and to provide operations rooms with real time images.”

KAF AND KUWAIT NATIONAL GUARD PROCURE H225M CARACAL MULTI-ROLE UTILITY HELICOPTERS

Procurement deal value: \$1.1 billion

Technology/solutions provider: Airbus Helicopters

Due delivery date: Early 2019 (Pending investigation)

Procurement deal overview: In August 2016, 30 H225M Caracal multi-role utility helicopters (as well as an associated support and services package) were ordered by the KAF and Kuwait National Guard. The Caracal, the latest evolution of the successful Super Puma/Cougar family of military helicopters, was chosen for its versatility and ability to fulfil a wide range of missions such as combat search-and-rescue, naval operations, medical evacuation and military transportation.⁸ With its combat-proven record, long operational endurance, high troop-carrying capacity of 28 (besides the crew), exceptional payload and world-class automatic flight control system, the H225M Caracal was a fitting choice to support Kuwait’s military and national guard forces in their expanding roles.⁹

However, while the procurement deal is still ongoing, in December 2017 it was reported that it had been referred to Kuwait’s National Anti-Corruption (NAZHA) and the State Audit Bureau (SAB) for evaluation at the request of the country’s prime minister, Sheikh Jaber al-Mubarak al-Hamad al-Sabah. At the time of writing, the investigation is ongoing.¹⁰

⁷ Jane’s 360, Dubai Airshow 2017: Kuwait to procure UAVs, 14/11/2017

⁸ Airbus, Kuwait Ministry of Defence orders 30 H225M Caracal helicopters, 09/08/2016

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Gulf Business, Kuwait’s anti-corruption body begins investigation into \$1.1bn helicopter deal, 18/01/2018

¹¹ The Defense Post, Kuwait request for 15 fast patrol boats approved by US, 21/02/2018

¹² USNI, Kuwait Receives Initial Approval to Buy Fast Patrol Boats, 21/02/2018



15 FAST PATROL BOAT PROCUREMENT

Procurement deal value: \$100 million

Technology/solutions provider: Vigor (prime contractor among others)

Due delivery date: TBC (Pending confirmation of deal from US Congress)

Procurement deal overview: As well as its airborne military strength, Kuwait is expanding its maritime forces inline with its aims to upgrade the navy's patrol, interdiction and maritime protection capabilities. Vigor is the prime contractor for a procurement deal for 15 fast patrol boats, each installed with a pair of .50 calibre machine guns, alongside requests for US government and contractor engineers, support services and other logistical and program support elements.¹¹

The deal was given initial approval from the US Department of State in late February 2018, yet it will not be finalised until given Congressional approval, which is still pending.¹²

AIR 350ER ISR AIRCRAFT PROCUREMENT

Procurement deal value: \$259 million

Technology/solutions provider: Sierra Nevada Corporation

Due delivery date: TBC

Procurement deal overview: The sale of four King Air 350ER Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance aircraft represents the establishment of Kuwait's first dedicated airborne ISR fleet. Each aircraft will be enhanced with a suite of Infrared Imaging Sensor Turrets, Electronically Scanned Array Radars and AN/AAR-47 Missile Warning Systems (MWS).¹³

This deal is emblematic of Kuwait's desire to quickly and significantly expand its ability to conduct its own ISR operations, supported by the most advanced military hardware and support systems currently available.

Achieving a clearer view of the bigger picture

From border patrols, to aerial reconnaissance, search and rescue, maritime interdiction/protection and more, Kuwait's armed forces are being expected to undertake a much larger and more complex set of tactical and strategic roles. Accordingly, the integration of C4ISR elements into each part of the armed services will give them the means to successfully undertake and carry out such roles effectively.

As their involvement in the region's wider threat landscape evolves, Kuwait is likely to continue in its current trend of rising investment and expenditure in C4ISR solutions, particularly as new procurements are delivered and begin to make their mark on the Kuwaiti armed forces, and their strategic mindset as a whole.

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¹¹ The Defense Post, Kuwait request for 15 fast patrol boats approved by US, 21/02/2018

¹² USNI, Kuwait Receives Initial Approval to Buy Fast Patrol Boats, 21/02/2018

¹³ Defense World, US Approves \$259M Sierra Nevada King Air 350ER ISR Aircraft Sale To Kuwait, 22/02/2018



C4ISR SUMMIT MIDDLE EAST

24 - 25 September, 2018 | Radisson Blu Hotel , Salwa, Kuwait

The **6th Annual C4ISR Summit**, taking place from 24-25 September in Kuwait, will address best practices in airborne ISR, command and control, information technology, communications, GIS and mapping to optimise interoperability in the Middle East.

Don't miss this opportunity to hear from top Middle East defense officials as well as global experts and gain insight on the future of C4ISR in the region to learn how technology can help you overcome challenges.

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