QUICKSTEP EXPECTS TO BEGIN DELIVERIES OF F-35 VERTICAL TAILS SKINS AND SPARS BY END OF 2015/16

News / Manufacturer

Quickstep Holdings says it expects to commence deliveries of vertical tails skins and spars for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter project before the end of the 2015/16 financial year.

The Bankstown Airport-based manufacturer says it is currently working on the qualification process for those components.

“Qualification of vertical tail skins and spars continues and, subject to client approval, initial deliveries are expected to commence in Q4 FY16,” Quickstep said in its second quarter financial results.

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.

In the three months to December 31 2015, Quickstep completed 132 parts, compared with 155 parts in the first quarter of 2015/16.

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“Production is expected to increase three?fold over the next three years,” Quickstep said.

“The company continues to progress discussions with current customers and targeted aerospace original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) regarding new contracts and mandates.”

Quickstep also has a long-term agreement with Marand for the supply of about 700 sets carbon fibre composite parts for the F-35 vertical tails, which was signed in April 2014.

“Qualification of vertical tail fairings components was completed in Q1, enabling commencement of production, and the first vertical tail fairings were delivered in December 2015,” Quickstep said.

“Four vertical tail fairings were delivered in Q2. The fairings are one of three fundamental components, which will be manufactured by Quickstep for JSF vertical tails.”

Quickstep said it had sales of $11.6 million in the three months to March 31, with total sales for the full 2015/16 year expected to rise about 20 per cent to $48 million, compared with the prior corresponding period.

The company’s order book was valued at about $120 million at December 31, covering committed orders for the C?130J F-35 program. Manufacturing for both these orders would extend to the 2018/19 financial year.

“Production of parts for the F?35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) and C?130J Hercules continues to increase,” it said.

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