The US Air Force has awarded Boeing a US$285-million contract to build the first 13 MH-139A Grey Wolf helicopters to replace the venerable Bell UH-1N Huey multi-role helicopter fleet that guards America's land-based nuclear ballistic missiles.

Entering service in 1970, the UH-1N Huey was originally designed as a multi-role medium military helicopter. Over the decades, it's fulfilled many missions and seen service with nations all over the world.

Today, its chief job is search and rescue, in addition to carrying out security patrols and providing transport for the US arsenal of land-based ICBMs and the bases that support the missile-laden silos.

With the new contract, the Huey fleet will be replaced by the MH-139A Grey Wolf, which is being built by Boeing as the primary contractor and Leonardo as an original equipment manufacturer that will also provide the manufacturing facilities in northeast Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The Grey Wolf is based on Boeing's commercial AW139 helicopter. By using off-the-shelf components and a proven design, Boeing expects the helicopter to have reduced manufacturing and operating costs that will save the Air Force $1 billion over the fleet's lifetime. Despite this penny pinching, the Grey will have 50% greater range than the Huey, be able to lift 5,000 lb (2,300 kg) more payload, fly 50% faster, and have 30% more cabin space.

Inside, the Grey Wolf has an advanced flight deck with state-of-the-art avionics for greater situational awareness, and full autopilot capability for reduced crew workload. It also requires less maintenance with only 1.3 hours of hangar work required for every hour of flight.

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**__ https://newatlas.com/military/mh-139a-grey-wolf-helicopter-replace-huey/?utm_source=New+Atlas+Subscribers&utm_campaign=61c645ecc7-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_03_10_06_35&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_65b67362bd-61c645ecc7-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D