

Breaking News

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Revealed: Trump's \$110 billion weapons list for the SaudisBy: **Aaron Mehta** (/author/aaron-mehta) 📅 June 8

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WASHINGTON – The administration's much touted \$110 billion arms proposal to Saudi Arabia, previously slim on specifics, includes seven THAAD missile defense batteries, over 100,000 air-to-ground munitions and billions of dollars' worth of new aircraft, according to a White House document obtained by Defense News and authenticated by a second source.

President Donald Trump's visit to Saudi Arabia on May 20 drew headlines for what was billed as a \$110 billion arms agreement. However, experts quickly pointed out that much of the deal was speculative, as any arms sale has to go through the process of being cleared by the State Department, then Congress, before going through an often lengthy negotiating period with industry.

The document does, however, reveal the different buckets that make up the \$110 billion figure, including "LOAs to be offered at visit," or letters of agreement that the Kingdom has already requested and the Trump administration supports, totaling \$12.5 billion as well as the ten-year sustainment estimates on those programs, totaling \$1.18 billion.

Of course, these totals are best-guess estimations and likely represent the ceiling for what could be spent. The figures may well come down, and the timeframes listed may well change, based on final negotiations around the equipment.

The largest pot of money involves the "MOIs to be offered at visit" section, totaling \$84.8 billion. That section represents potential sales, or memos of intent, that the Trump team offered to the Saudis while in Riyadh.

Among those listed as potential sales are:

- \$13.5 billion for seven THAAD batteries, with an estimated delivery time of 2023-2026.
- \$4.46 billion for 104,000 air-to-ground munitions, divided amongst five types (GBU 31v3, GBU-10, GBU-12, GBU-31v1, GBU-38).
- \$6.65 billion for enhancements to Saudis' Patriot anti-missile system, with a scope of work from 2018-2027.
- \$2 billion for "light close air support" aircraft, with the aircraft and delivery date still unknown. It is possible that the winner of this contract could be related to the U.S. Air Force's OA-X close-air support study.
- \$2 billion for four new aircraft, of a to-be-determined variety, for "TASS & Strategic ISC." TASS stands for "tactical airborne surveillance system," similar in concept to the U.S. Air Force JSTARS system. It's possible the replacement could be the same as the JSTARS replacement currently being considered by the Pentagon. Those would be delivered in 2024.
- \$5.8 billion for three KC-130J and 20 C-130J new aircraft, along with sustainment through 2026. Those planes would start delivery in 2022.
- \$6.25 billion for an eight-year sustainment deal for Saudi Arabia's fleet of F-15 fighters, with another \$20 million for an F-15 C/D recapitalization program study.
- \$2 billion for an unknown number of MK-VI Patrol Boats, with an unknown delivery date.
- \$6 billion for four Lockheed Martin-built frigates, based on the company's littoral combat ship design. That order falls under the Saudi Naval Expansion Program II (SNEP II) heading, with planned delivery in the 2025-2028 timeframe.
- \$2.35 billion to modify 400 existing Bradley fighting vehicles, along with another \$1.35 billion for 213 new vehicles.
- \$1.5 billion for 180 Howitzers, with an estimated delivery time of 2019-2022.
- \$18 billion for C4I System and integration, with no further details given on what that means, nor with a delivery date offered.

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The document also shows a focus on space capabilities for the Kingdom, with two "Remote Sensing Satellites" estimated at \$800 million and two satellite communications & Space Based Early Warning Systems estimated at \$4 billion. It also includes a notably high \$40 million mark for a "SATCOM Definitization" meeting with the Office of the Secretary of Defense-Space policy team.

The list also includes two types of Lockheed Martin Black Hawk variants: 14 MH-60R Seahawk rotorcraft (\$2 billion) and 30 UH-60 rescue helicopters (\$1.8 billion). It is possible the rescue helicopters could be the same design as the Air Force's new combat rescue helicopter, the HH-60W.

A Lockheed Martin press release, issued after Trump's meeting in Riyadh, said the world's largest defense firm was forming a joint venture with Saudi company Taqnia to "support final assembly and completion of an estimated 150 S-70 Black Hawk utility helicopters for the Saudi government."

Sustainment estimates for the MOI list comes in around \$930 million.

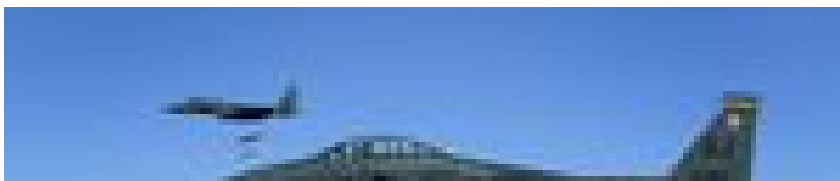
Meanwhile, a planned vote in the Senate that would challenge parts of the Saudi package was postponed until next week, per Connecticut Democratic Sen. Chris Murphy (<https://twitter.com/ChrisMurphyCT/status/872871528257474560>).

Just this week, two more orders were announced as having cleared the State Department, deals for 26 AN/TPQ-53(V) Radar Systems (\$662 million) and a blanket order training program for the Royal Saudi Air Force (\$750 million). Both of those count against the \$110 billion figure, a source with knowledge of the agreements said.

A White House spokesman deferred comment to the Pentagon. Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Roger Cabiness said in a statement that the "arms sale announced between the U.S. and Saudi Arabia is a broad agreement in principle," adding that "steps include letters of intent, letters of offer, letters of approval, awarding of contract, and delivery. As the terms of these sales are finalized, we will notify Congress and make public the specifics of each transaction."

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