

NEW SAR TRAINING CENTRE ANNOUNCED FOR 19 WING COMOX



BUILDING LINKS

CLARICE COTY

19 Wing Comox and the Comox Valley will benefit from the significant economic impact from a recent decision that has named 19 Wing as the officially designated location for the highly-advanced training and simulation Centre. The contract for the Fixed Wing Search and Rescue Replacement (FWSAR) Project has been awarded to Airbus Defence & Space for its C-295 turboprop military transport plane.

Airbus Defence & Space publicly indicated 19 Wing Comox as the preferred location for the new FWSAR Training Centre, based on the region's many attributes including topography, open water and coastal



mountains, reflecting the required training specifications in the Replacement Project RFP documents.

The replacement project is a federal initiative to replace the aging planes currently being used in search and rescue ops and also to integrate to a single nationwide fleet. Currently,

there are two types of SAR planes being used: the CC-115 Buffalo and CC-130 legacy Hercules.

As part of the contract, Airbus will provide 16 of the planes, and has partnered with Newfoundland-based PAL Aerospace for maintenance and support services.

Coulson Aviation, based out of Port Alberni, signed a memorandum of understanding to provide the tanking system for the Airbus C-295 back in late 2015. Coulson Group CEO Wayne Coulson has said that the announcement was great news for Vancouver Island.

The initial contract for 11 years is valued at \$2.4 billion. Should the federal government choose to exercise an option to extend the maintenance and support services for an

additional 15 years, the contract value would increase to \$4.7 billion.

Construction of the new centre is expected to take about 18 months and the base could see a ground breaking ceremony take place in 2017.

Clarice Coty is the editor of Building Links. Contact: clarice@buildinglinks.ca or find Building Links on Facebook at www.facebook.com/BuildingLinks

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