

# **US Army Declares IOC for CIRCM**

**By Richard Scott**

**The US Army's Common Infrared Countermeasures (CIRCM) system has achieved Initial Operational Capability (IOC) with the US Army, system developer Northrop Grumman announced last month.**

**A next-generation lightweight directed infrared countermeasures system (DIRCM), CIRCM is designed to protect rotary-wing, tilt-rotor, and small fixed wing**

**aircraft against infrared-guided man-portable air defense systems. The dual-head CIRCM system features dual compact pointer-tracker units (provided by Leonardo in the UK), dual lasers (using Quantum Cascade Laser technology), and a system processor unit.**

**Northrop Grumman said the IOC milestone followed thousands of hours of rigorous testing in laboratory, flight and live-fire test conditions. The company has delivered over 250 CIRCM systems to the**

**Army to date, with over 100 aircraft now equipped.**

**Installations are planned on more than 1,500 Army aircraft. According to Northrop Grumman, CIRCM has met the IOC requirements for UH-60M Black Hawk, HH-60M Black Hawk, CH-47F Chinook and AH-64E Apache helicopters. Approximately 100 CH-47F helios were previously fitted with the ALQ-212 Advanced Threat IR Countermeasures (ATIRCM) system. The smaller and lighter CIRCM will replace**

**those systems on the Chinooks, as well as providing DIRCM protection on the Army's Black Hawk's and Apaches for the first time.**

**The DIRCM program received a Milestone C acquisition approval in September 2018 after completing all engineering and manufacturing development activities. US Army Contracting Command in April 2021 awarded Northrop Grumman a five-year, indefinite delivery/indefinite quantity full-rate production contract**

**valued at \$959.1 million.**

**Work is continuing to develop and improve CIRCM to counter current and future threats. One upgrade currently in test is an enhanced laser Line Replaceable Unit intended to increase capability against near-peer threats.**