



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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DRDO's Netra AEW&C System Achieves Final Operational Clearance

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The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has achieved a major milestone in India's defence self-reliance with the Final Operational Clearance (FOC) of the indigenous Netra Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) System. ?

The clearance certifies that the system is fully combat-ready for operational deployment by the Indian Air Force (IAF) after successfully meeting all operational and performance requirements.

The development strengthens India's indigenous defence capabilities under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative by reducing dependence on imported airborne surveillance platforms.

The system acts as an "Eye in the Sky", capable of detecting, tracking, and monitoring enemy aircraft, missiles, drones, and other aerial threats from long distances. It also provides real-time intelligence, command, and battle management support to air defence operations.

Developed by DRDO's Centre for Airborne Systems (CABS), Bengaluru, the Netra AEW&C integrates advanced radar, electronic intelligence, secure communication systems, and mission control technologies, significantly enhancing India's air defence capabilities.

About Netra AEW&C System

AEW&C stands for Airborne Early Warning and Control.

It is an airborne surveillance platform that detects aerial threats beyond the range of ground-based radars and provides real-time battlefield information to military commanders.

Major Features

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Indigenous airborne surveillance system.

Developed by DRDO's Centre for Airborne Systems (CABS).

Operated by the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Equipped with Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) Radar.

Provides 360° situational awareness.

Supports command, control, surveillance, and battle management.

Tracks multiple airborne and maritime targets simultaneously.

Functions of AEW&C Systems

Long-range air surveillance.

Early detection of enemy aircraft and missiles.

Tracking of multiple aerial targets.

Airspace management.

Guidance to fighter aircraft.

Network-centric warfare support.

Real-time intelligence sharing.

About DRDO:

Full Form: Defence Research and Development Organisation

Established: 1958

Headquarters: New Delhi

Chairman: Samir V. Kamat

Objective: Develop indigenous defence technologies and systems for India's Armed Forces.

About Centre for Airborne Systems (CABS)

A premier DRDO laboratory.

Located in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

Specializes in airborne surveillance and command systems.

Developer of India's indigenous AEW&C programmes.

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AEW&C vs AWACS

AEW&CAWACS

Smaller airborne surveillance platform Larger strategic airborne warning aircraft

Tactical surveillance and battle management Strategic command and control

Moderate radar coverage Longer radar range and wider coverage

Lower operational cost Higher operational cost

Network-Centric Warfare

A military concept where all sensors, aircraft, radars, satellites, and command centres are interconnected through secure communication networks, enabling faster decision-making and coordinated military operations.

Airborne Early Warning Systems

Countries operating AEW&C/AWACS systems include:

India

United States

Russia

China

Israel

United Kingdom

France

Exam Focus Points (Quick Revision Notes)

Organisation in News: DRDO

System: Netra AEW&C

Full Form: Airborne Early Warning and Control

Developer: DRDO – Centre for Airborne Systems (CABS)

User: Indian Air Force (IAF)

Status: Final Operational Clearance (FOC)

Key Technology: AESA Radar

Objective: Airborne surveillance, early warning, command and control

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Headquarters of DRDO: New Delhi

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