

The prospects for sale of aerospace equipment to the military can be found in the overview of the military sector.

Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia

The post in Bangkok is also responsible for Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Economic reform in the three Indochinese countries has drawn attention to the need for the countries' rudimentary aviation infrastructures to be upgraded. Financing in these markets will remain a serious problem, however, particularly while the USA imposed economic embargo remains in place for Vietnam, the largest potential market.

Military - Thailand

Thailand remains a substantial purchaser of military equipment because of its strategic location and the traditionally strong military role in the government. While exact figures are very difficult to obtain, military equipment purchases are thought to be around \$700 million per year. In the late 1980s, the Thai military began sourcing a good deal of equipment from China, but the United States and European countries have regained much of their dominant role in this market.

The Royal Thai Navy (RTN) took delivery in 1991 of the first of six Chinese-built Jiangsu class frigates, some of which may require significant amounts of equipment after their arrival in Thailand. At the same time, there have been indications the RTN may be interested in purchasing several used frigates and minesweepers from the USA. The used ships would likely be refitted with modern communications equipment and weapons systems. The RTN has also announced its intention to procure a small helicopter carrier. Three used maritime patrol aircraft are on order, and the RTN may be interested in purchasing more. All could be expected to require at least some upgrading.

The Royal Thai Army (RTA) began taking delivery in 1991 of 53 used M-60 A3 tanks from the USA. These may require some refitting. The RTA may also be interested in purchasing many more main battle tanks, along with artillery. Discussions are also underway for the purchase of 250 armoured personnel carriers. The RTA is also expected to purchase a significant number of helicopters in the next few years.

The Royal Thai Air Force (RTAF) currently has 18 F-16s on order in addition to the squadron it already has. 20 trainer aircraft have also been ordered and it is expected that more aircraft will be ordered in the near future, including ground support transport and early warning and command. There may also be a need to upgrade the country's early warning radar system over the next few years.