

US Navy buys Linux to guide drone fleet

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The US Navy has signed off on a \$27,883,883 contract from military contractor Raytheon to install Linux ground control software for its fleet of vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) drones.

The contract covers the Naval Air Station at Patuxent River in Maryland, which has already spent \$5,175,075 beginning to install Linux systems. The no-bid contract was awarded to finish the work and get the Navy's drone fleet fully operational using a Linux backbone.

The Navy's only listed VTOL drone is the Northrup-Grumman MQ8B Fire Scout, which is designed to be carried by frigates and to provide electro-optical and infrared reconnaissance over a range of 110 miles, while allowing five hours on station.

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