Boeing Delivers 24th AH-64D Apache Longbow; Completes First Lot of Multi-Year Contract with U.S. Army 98-28

The Boeing Company has delivered its 24th AH-64D Apache Longbow, marking completion of the first production lot of a $1.9 billion multi-year contract with the U.S. Army for the world's most advanced combat helicopter.

The 24 helicopters are the first of 232 Apache Longbows the Army has ordered from Boeing through a five-year multi-year agreement. The Army plans to remanufacture its entire fleet of more than 750 AH-64A Apaches through the first decade of the 21st century.

"Apache Longbow aircraft will defend our freedom, protect our soldiers, and help keep peace around the world for many years to come," said Chuck Vehlow, vice president of Apache programs. "We promised to deliver an unmatched system, and we're making good on our promise."

Seven of the first 24 production aircraft will begin operation in early April as the first U.S. Army Apache Longbow unit, the 1-227th, 1st Cavalry Division at Ft. Hood, Texas.

Boeing is producing the advanced Apache Longbow aircraft at a rate of three a month. The company also has started full-scale production of the first of 30 new AH-64D Apache multi-mission combat helicopters for the Royal Netherlands Air Force. In addition, integration work has begun on the RTM322 engines, which will power the 67 new Apache Longbow aircraft ordered by the United Kingdom.

The AH-64D Apache is the next-generation version of the combat-proven AH-64A Apache, which is in service with defense forces around the world. An advanced, multi-mission helicopter, the AH-64D features fully integrated avionics and weapons plus a state-of-the-art modem that transmits real-time, secure digitized battlefield information to a wide range of air and ground forces. It also incorporates a series of enhancements that make it more survivable, deployable and maintainable in the field. Its ability to communicate digitally with other aircraft and ground forces, and to share that information almost instantly, gives the AH-64D a significant advantage over current combat.

The Boeing Company builds the Apache in Mesa, Ariz. The company also is involved in the development of the Army's RAH-66 Comanche. Together, the two helicopters will provide the Army with unprecedented reconnaissance and attack capabilities on the battlefields of the 21st century.

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