

## **AH-64D Apache Production, Testing and Training Testing and Training Gain Momentum**

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Production, testing and training activities on the AH-64D Apache, the world's most advanced multi-mission combat helicopter, are in full swing at The Boeing Company in Mesa, Ariz. Boeing is producing the next-generation Apache Longbow aircraft at a rate of more than three a month for the U.S. Army, and also has begun producing ships for The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Boeing has delivered 26 of 232 aircraft purchased by the U.S. Army through a five-year, multi-year agreement. Seven of the first production aircraft began operations earlier this month as members of the first U.S. Army Apache Longbow unit, the 1-227th, 1st Cavalry Division at Ft. Hood, Texas.

The Army plans to remanufacture its entire fleet of more than 750 AH-64A Apaches through the first decade of the 21st century.

In addition, more than 250 U.S. Army Apache Longbow aviators, instructor pilots, maintenance test pilots and maintainers have come through the Boeing Mesa facility for training within the past 12 months. It is the first time the U.S. government has turned to a program's prime contractor to provide comprehensive training outside a military-operated training center. Maj. Pat Garman, commander of A Company, 1st Battalion, 14th Aviation Regiment, is leading the Army's Apache Longbow training program.

International interest in the AH-64D Apache also continues to grow. The company has begun full-scale production of the first of 30 AH-64D helicopters for the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAf). The Netherlands will become the first international customer to take delivery of the AH-64D Apache during an official rollout scheduled for May 15.

The Netherlands' Apaches, the first new-build AH-64Ds to roll off the manufacturing line in Mesa, will incorporate a new state-of-the-art VHF-FM radio, and an emergency underwater location transmitter.

The first AH-64D squadron for The Netherlands will become operational around the turn of the century. The RNLAf will use its Apaches for armed escort, reconnaissance duties and NATO support.

The United Kingdom, the second international customer for the AH-64D Apache, has ordered 67 WAH-64 Apaches with the Longbow fire control radar and Rolls-Royce-Turbomeca RTM 322 engines.

Boeing is teamed with GKN Westland Helicopters Ltd. on the co-production program. Boeing will build eight complete aircraft at its Mesa plant. Final assembly of the remaining 59 ships will then be transferred to Westland's Yeovil, England, facility.

Ground run testing of the RTM 322 engine on a WAH-64 Apache is under way in Mesa. First production flight of a WAH-64 Apache with RTM 322 engines is expected to take place in late August or early September, with first deliveries to GKN Westland beginning in September. First deliveries from Westland to the Ministry of Defence will then follow beginning in 2000.

The WAH-64 Apache is a derivative of the U.S. Army's AH-64D Apache Longbow, the next-generation version of the combat-proven AH-64A Apache, which is in service by defense forces around the world.

The advanced, multi-mission 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.

The AH-64D incorporates a series of enhancements that make it more effective in combat, and 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 helicopters and will enable it to dominate the 21st century battlefield.

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