

Work Begins on First WAH-64 Apache for the United Kingdom

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Full-scale production of the first WAH-64 Apache multi-mission combat helicopter for the United Kingdom is under way at the Boeing facility in Mesa, Ariz.

Introduction of the WAH-64 Apache to the assembly line late last month signals the beginning of the second international production program for the advanced Apache, a derivative of the U.S. Army's AH-64D Apache Longbow, which also is in production in Mesa. The Netherlands, which ordered 30 AH-64D Apaches, will be the first international AH-64D customer to receive the advanced helicopters. The first delivery will be in mid-May.

The British Ministry of Defence has ordered 67 new WAH-64 Apaches with Longbow fire control radars and RTM 322 engines. GKN Westland Helicopters, Ltd., of Yeovil, England, is the prime contractor. Boeing and Rolls-Royce-Turbomeca are major subcontractors on the program.

While assemblers work on the newest member of the Apache family, testing is continuing on the WAH-64's new engine, the RTM 322, produced by Rolls-Royce and Turbomeca. Ground run-up testing is demonstrating the compatibility of the RTM 322 engine with the AH-64D Apache. To date, approximately five hours of ground testing have been completed.

Other integration work under way in Mesa includes the addition of a new GEC Marconi Defensive Aids Suite (DAS) for the WAH-64. The GEC DAS will replace much of the current U.S. Army's aircraft survivability equipment on board the Apache.

As a subcontractor to GKN Westland, Boeing is building eight aircraft and will partially assemble the remaining 59 WAH-64 Apache aircraft at its Mesa facility. Final assembly, flight test, delivery and support for these aircraft will take place at GKN Westland's Yeovil facility.

First production flight of the WAH-64 Apache is expected to take place this year in late August or early September, with first deliveries to GKN Westland beginning in late September. First deliveries from GKN Westland to the Ministry of Defence will begin 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. The WAH-64 incorporates a series of enhancements that make it more effective in combat, and more survivable, deployable and maintainable in the field. The WAH-64's fire control radar and advanced avionics suite give combat pilots the ability to rapidly detect, classify, prioritize and engage stationary or moving enemy targets at standoff ranges in nearly all weather environments.

The WAH-64's ability to communicate digitally with other aircraft and ground forces, and to share that information almost instantly, also gives it a significant warfighting advantage over current combat helicopters.

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Note to journalists: Photos are available by contacting Hal Klopper or www.boeing.com

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