Third Boeing 767 AWACS Makes First Flight

The third Boeing 767 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft has successfully completed its first flight with the distinctive 30-foot rotodome mounted atop its fuselage.

The aircraft lifted off from Boeing Field in Seattle at 3:10 p.m. yesterday and returned at 6 p.m. after flying above the Puget Sound region.

The flight marks the beginning of a Production Acceptance Test program to evaluate whether the aircraft's radar, identification friend-or-foe electronics, navigation, computers/displays, mission systems and communication systems perform as designed.

Air vehicle number three is one of four 767 AWACS that have been sold to the government of Japan. The first two aircraft were delivered in March 1998; the second two will be delivered in early 1999.

"We now are in a production-like environment with a certified design and proven test procedures," said Jack Sperry, Boeing Japan 767 AWACS program manager. "So, we anticipate a very smooth series of acceptance flights and on-schedule completion of these last two airplanes."

AWACS is the world's standard for Airborne Early Warning (AEW) systems. Currently carried on-board militarized 707 aircraft, it fills the need of both airborne surveillance, and command, control and communications functions for tactical and air defense forces.

Production of the 707 airframe ended in 1991, with the 767 platform chosen as one alternative replacement platform. The 767 AWACS offers countries self-defense capability well beyond the range of current ground-based systems.

###

For further information:
Dave Sloan
(253) 657-3046