

Interest in Boeing Apache Longbow Continues to Grow Worldwide

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World military leaders from around the world will get a fresh look at the AH-64D Apache Longbow at the 1998 Farnborough Air Show.

A production AH-64D Apache will make its first appearance at the Farnborough Air Show and will be available for demonstrations to key government and military leaders from around the world who have expressed interest in the Apache Longbow.

The AH-64D Apache Longbow is recognized worldwide as the most advanced, most capable multi-mission combat helicopter in the world. More than 1,300 domestic and international AH-64Ds could be in service over the next two decades.

Bob Mitchell, director of Apache Business Development at The Boeing Company in Mesa, Ariz., said, "Nothing compares to Apache Longbow. We have no competition. We have a lot of competitors, but nothing comes close to matching the fully integrated weapon system we build here in Mesa."

With the U.S. Army now fielding its aircraft, two international AH-64D production programs under way, and several new programs on the horizon, Mitchell sees a prosperous future for Apache Longbow. In fact, the company anticipates a world market for at least 600 AH-64D Apaches, not including the U.S. Army, which has nearly 750 AH-64As in its fleet.

The Boeing Apache business development team is responding to numerous requests from potential customers worldwide -- from Europe and the Middle East, to the Asia Pacific region and Latin America.

While some customers remain unnamed, the defense world is aware that countries like Australia, Spain and Turkey, among others, are serious about defense modernization programs, according to Tom Weir, manager of International Business Development. Weir said successes in The Netherlands and the United Kingdom netted two important victories and made Apache Longbow the helicopter to beat. A pending order in Kuwait and another in the Middle East add to the AH-64Ds winning track record, he said.

One reason the Apache Longbow continues to be so desirable is the U.S. Army's long-term efforts to keep it at the forefront of technology.

"From the very beginning," Mitchell said, "the U.S. Army has carried out plans to constantly modernize the AH-64A Apache, which for years has been widely recognized as the world's best combat helicopter."

The explosion in Apache activity also will mean lower costs for customers, Mitchell said, adding, "The more aircraft under contract each year, means lower acquisition costs for our customers."

Although the company doesn't release aircraft pricing, Mitchell said Apache Longbows are "competitively priced with other helicopters when compared to mission requirements and capabilities."

"We're constantly battling other manufacturers who say that their products cost less," he said. "What customers aren't hearing is the one-on-one comparison between their aircraft and ours. Face to face, mission to mission, there's no comparison. Army tests demonstrated that AH-64Ds are 28 times more effective than our A-models. That's impressive. The aircraft itself is our most powerful sales tool."

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