First AH-64D Apache Pilots From the Netherlands Complete Training at Boeing

The first group of AH-64A Apache pilots from the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAF) has completed training on the AH-64D Apache, readying the air crews for advanced combat training with U.S. Army units in Texas.

Six pilots completed their ground and flight training program this month at The Boeing Company in Mesa, Ariz., home of the AH-64D Apache. The pilots began their classes Jan. 25. Seven Apache maintainers from The Netherlands completed their training in February. These are the first international pilots and maintainers to be trained on the next-generation AH-64D. All are from the RNLAF's 302 Squadron.

The pilots now move on to Fort Hood, Texas, where they will undergo additional battalion-level training. Four of the pilots will remain in Mesa for advanced training. Three will undergo instructor pilot training and one will attend maintenance test pilot school. All four will move to Fort Hood in April to train with the U.S. Army's 21st Cavalry Brigade.

Boeing, the prime contractor on the AH-64D Apache will provide training for 64 Dutch personnel over the next two years. The RNLAF purchased 30 AH-64Ds.

The Netherlands became the first international customer to take delivery of an AH-64D in May 1998. To date, five new RNLAF AH-64Ds have been delivered.

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 survivable in combat, and easily deployable and maintainable in the field.

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