Boeing Celebrates Delivery of 1,000TH Apache

The Boeing Company is celebrating the delivery of its 1,000th AH-64 Apache helicopter -- an AH-64D Apache Longbow destined for service with the U.S. Army. The company also announced the potential to build another 1,000 Apaches over the next 15 years.

Boeing marked the milestone delivery today in a brief ceremony at its Mesa, Ariz., facility, where the company has produced Apaches since 1984. The 1,000 Apache helicopters represent a combination of new AH-64A Apaches and remanufactured and new-build AH-64Ds produced by Boeing.

Apaches have played major roles for the U.S. Army during the past 15 years. Apaches were used in Panama during Operation Just Cause and fired the first shots during Operation Desert Storm. Today, Apaches are serving in Bosnia and Korea, where the aircraft's powerful combat capabilities are helping to keep the peace.

To commemorate the milestone, Boeing invited all 5,300 of its Mesa employees, and Army and industry Apache teammates to sign a large banner that was displayed near the helicopter throughout the past week. The banner eventually will be displayed in the main Apache assembly area.

"While delivery of this Apache Longbow to our number one customer closes an important chapter in our company's history, it sets the stage for our new goal -- delivery of the next 1,000 Apaches," said Martin Stieglitz, vice president and general manager of the Boeing facility in Mesa. "We're excited about our future and the new capabilities the Apache Longbow is providing our soldiers in defense of our freedom."

Boeing produced 937 AH-64A Apaches for the U.S. Army and five international customers. The remaining deliveries leading to the 1,000th Apache included remanufactured and new-build AH-64D Apaches for the U.S. Army, The Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

Boeing is under contract to build 232 AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopters for the U.S. Army through 2001. The company also is under contract to produce 30 AH-64D Apaches for The Netherlands and 67 WAH-64 Apache Longbows with GKN Westland, Ltd., for the United Kingdom.

Singapore also recently announced plans to purchase eight AH-64Ds from the U.S. Army through a foreign military sales contract.

Other nations have expressed interest in purchasing Apache Longbows, upgrading their AH-64As to the AH-64D configuration, or modernizing their combat helicopter fleets.

Over the next two decades, Boeing envisions an international market for at least 600 AH-64D Apaches, and an additional 518 for the U.S. Army. Negotiations have started for a second order for nearly 300 Apache Longbows for the Army.

Apache Longbow fulfills a wide range of reconnaissance and combat missions, most without the need to reconfigure ordnance loads and electronic systems between missions.

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 air and ground forces. The AH-64D incorporates a series of enhancements that make it more survivable in combat, and more easily deployable and easier to maintain.

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