Comanche Program Prepares For Engineering And Manufacturing Development

The Boeing Sikorsky RAH-66 Comanche Joint Program Office and the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command have modified the current Comanche program contract to allow preparation of a proposal for the next major program phase, engineering and manufacturing development (EMD). The approximate value of the EMD contract when awarded early next year will be $3.1 billion.

The modification also provides further guidance based on December 1998 recommendations of the Department of Defense (DoD) Overarching Integrated Product Team to establish a Pre-production Prototype Program (PPP) for Comanche. The PPP calls for:

- design and fabrication of 13 new Comanche helicopters with production Mission Equipment Package capability in FY 2003 and FY 2004 for the Army's Force XXI Corps '04 digitization experiments and further operational test and evaluation;
- accelerated Comanche fire control radar development from RAH-66 production Lot 6 in FY 2010 to initial operational capability aircraft, fielded in FY 2006;
- a Defense Department Milestone II EMD decision accelerated to March 2000;
- simulation tools suitable for analysis of the Comanche's full capabilities and development of operational tactics, techniques and procedures based on full functionality;
- and, risk reduction in such developmental areas as the aircraft's helmet, software and Electro-Optical Sensor System to optimize program efforts within available funding levels.

"This contract modification sets in motion a very important year for the RAH-66 Comanche program," said Arthur W. Linden, vice president and director, Boeing Sikorsky Joint Program Office." We have a great team and are looking forward to moving into Comanche's EMD phase.

"We will improve program efficiency by developing production aircraft configurations, tooling and testing," said Linden. "The modification focuses our resources on Mission Equipment Package and radar development while providing far more capable Comanches for the Corps '04 experiments.

"Boeing Sikorsky and the Army have worked together for months to optimize our program within acceptable funding profiles," Linden continued. "We have utilized the newly adopted DoD Alpha Contracting process, ensuring that all issues are addressed before we submit our EMD proposal this summer to simplify contract negotiations. This process yields a better program and a better product for our Army customer."

During 1999, the U.S. Army has established several milestones or "exit criteria" that the Boeing Sikorsky Team must satisfy to begin the program's EMD phase. Among these criteria are a vertical rate of climb of 350 feet per minute, invulnerability to certain ballistic damage, low radar cross-section and infra-red signatures, readiness and support capabilities and moving target acquisition with radar on a test range.

The RAH-66 Comanche armed reconnaissance helicopter is under development for the U.S. Army by a team headed by The Boeing Company and Sikorsky Aircraft Corp., a unit of United Technologies.

###

99-59

For further information:
Jack Satterfield
The Boeing Company
(610) 591-8399
Bill Tuttle
Sikorsky Aircraft
(203) 386-3829