Bell-Boeing Tiltrotor Ready For Survivability

A Bell Boeing V-22 Osprey tiltrotor was flown from Patuxent River, Md., to China Lake, Calif., inside a Boeing-built U.S. Air Force C-17 Globemaster III cargo plane for ballistic survivability testing at the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division recently.

The U.S. Navy plans to perform penetration tests on the fuselage using live ordnance. Engineers want to determine the vulnerability of the aircraft in simulated combat conditions.

"This is another example of the Navy's commitment to support live fire testing," said Al Wearner, head of the China Lake Systems Vulnerability Branch. "The objective is to improve aircrews' chances of surviving combat, and to insure our aircraft are built to be as survivable in combat as possible."

Joe Manchor, lead V-22 live fire test engineer added, "The purpose of live fire testing is to determine the vulnerability of the existing design and help refine that design to improve its survivability in a combat environment. Although we'll be putting a lot of holes in this airplane, the end result will save a lot of lives and aircraft in the future."

The V-22 will undergo live fire testing at China Lake's Weapons Survivability Laboratory.

The V-22 Osprey has a crew of three and is designed to carry up to 24 combat-equipped Marines. Boeing is teamed with Bell Helicopter Textron to manufacture 360 MV-22 aircraft for the U.S. Marine Corps and 50 CV-22s for the U.S. Air Force. Deliveries of the first low-rate initial production airplane begin in May, with full-rate production beginning in 2001 through 2012.

Boeing Information Services supports the U.S. Navy at China Lake with more than 260 employees.

###

99-63

For further information:
Victor Ross
Boeing Information Services
(760) 499-5902