First WAH-64 Apache Longbow Arrives in the United Kingdom

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The WAH-64, one of 67 ordered by the United Kingdom, is the third of eight WAH-64s that will be produced by The Boeing Company in Mesa.

Boeing will ship the remaining 59 aircraft as kits to Westland where they will be completed, flight tested and delivered from Westland's Yeovil rotorcraft facility through 2003.

GKN Westland will use the first WAH-64 in England over the next several months for a variety of logistics demonstrations that will validate maintenance procedures and manuals for the world's only fourth-generation combat helicopter.

GKN Westland will deliver the aircraft to the British Ministry of Defence in March 2000.

GKN Westland prepared the WAH-64 for shipping to England aboard a commercial cargo plane, which flew from Phoenix, Ariz., to the Yeovil area, about 100 miles west of London on May 27.

The first two WAH-64s are undergoing a wide range of flight tests and pilot training efforts in Mesa designed to qualify WAH-64 and British pilots for military assignments. Boeing is training GKN Westland and British military pilots to fly the

WAH-64. Both WAH-64s will be shipped to England once flight training is completed.

GKN Westland is the prime contractor on the U.K. Apache program. In addition to Boeing, major subcontractors on the program include Rolls-Royce-Turbomeca, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Longbow International and several leading aerospace companies from the United Kingdom.

The British Army will be the first defense force to field an all-Longbow-equipped Apache fleet, and the first to field Apaches powered by Rolls-Royce-Turbomeca RTM322 engines.

Boeing is building 232 AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopters for the U.S. Army over the next three years. Production also is under way for 30 AH-64D Apaches for the Royal Netherlands Air Force.

The WAH-64 Apache is a derivative of the U.S. Army's AH-64D Apache Longbow, the next-generation version of the combat-proven AH-64A Apache. The Apache Longbow incorporates a series of enhancements that make it more effective in combat, and more survivable, deployable and maintainable in the field. The WAH-64's fire control radar and advanced avionics suite give combat pilots the ability to rapidly detect, classify, prioritize and engage stationary or moving enemy targets at standoff ranges in nearly all weather conditions.

The WAH-64's ability to communicate digitally with other aircraft and ground forces, and to share that information almost instantly, also gives it a significant warfighting advantage over current combat helicopters.

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