Bell Boeing Begins CV-22 Modifications

The Bell Boeing Tiltrotor Team flew Engineering and Manufacturing Development aircraft No. 9 to the Bell Helicopter Textron Inc. Flight Research Center in Arlington, Texas, under a U.S. Naval Air Systems Command contract to modify it into a production representative Special Operations Forces variant, or CV-22. This is part of the CV-22 EMD contract that will modify two MV-22 EMD aircraft for use in development and operational testing.

The contract calls for the design, integration, installation and test of a number of special operations-unique systems into the baseline V-22, including terrain following/terrain avoidance radar, an enhanced electronic warfare suite, additional communications and navigation equipment, and additional fuel tanks in the Osprey's wings.

Bell Boeing Program Director at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., John Buyers, said, "Since its inception, the Osprey has been a leading example of a truly joint service program. This is an important next step in executing an affordable program that meets multi-service needs."

During EMD flight testing, four developmental Ospreys have flown more than 1,300 hours. This includes envelope expansion and operational testing. In all, V-22s have flown about 2,500 hours, including the full-scale development aircraft.

The remanufacture of MV-22 EMD aircraft #9 into a CV-22 production representative configuration begins this month. The aircraft will be used to validate

CV-22 unique equipment and later for operational evaluations by the Multi-service Operational Test Team personnel. MV-22 EMD aircraft #7 will begin CV-22 modifications in July and will be used for the initial development and testing of the radar and additional fuel tanks.

The CV-22 will fulfill special operations command requirements for long-range insertion and extraction of special operations teams. The aircraft will have a mission radius of 500 nautical miles and carry 18 team members. The special operations command is planning to purchase 50 CV-22 aircraft with deliveries scheduled for 2003 and initial operating capability expected by 2004.

The MV-22 is currently in low rate initial production. The first production aircraft was delivered to the Marine Corps in May. Four production aircraft will be delivered this year. These will be used for Operational Evaluations that begin in October 1999 and be completed in May 2000. Successful completion of OPEVAL will lead to a full-rate production decision in the fall of 2000.

The Bell Boeing Tiltrotor Team comprises Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc., of Fort Worth, Texas, a wholly owned subsidiary of Textron, Inc., and The Boeing Company in Philadelphia.

###

99-112

Contact the V-22 Integrated Product Team

For further information:
Doug Kinneard
(610) 591-2956
Bob Leder
Bell Helicopter Textron, Inc.
(817) 280-6440