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The Boeing Sikorsky RAH-66 Comanche Joint Program Office has delivered a \$3.1 billion proposal to the U.S. Army to initiate the engineering and manufacturing development phase of the Comanche program early next year, and to build 13 RAH-66s for Army testing and evaluation.

Upon completion of a successful Defense Acquisition Board Milestone II review in March 2000, the EMD phase will be performed through December 2006 and will continue the Pre-production Prototype program authorized in July by the Department of Defense Overarching Integrated Product Team. The Army and the Joint Program Office will incorporate final agreements for the program into the current Boeing Sikorsky Demonstration/Validation contract in November.

Boeing Sikorsky Joint Program Office Director Arthur Linden said, "This is a great day for the entire Comanche Team. Working in the true spirit of acquisition streamlining contracting with our Army customer, we have submitted a proposal that was delivered on schedule, within total available funding resources and meets all essential program objectives."

Deputy Program Director Bob Moore added, "Our on-time submittal allows us to shift our focus toward meeting critical Milestone II exit criteria by the end of this calendar year. Successful demonstrations of these criteria are essential for the DAB review next spring."

During the EMD phase, a Boeing Sikorsky and U.S. Army Combined Test Team will continue to expand the Comanche flight test envelope with prototype aircraft Nos. 1 and 2.

The 13 Pre-Production Prototype aircraft will be produced using virtual reality tools to production specifications, with first deliveries in 2004. Comanche Pre-Production Prototype Nos. 3 through 6 will perform development and qualification tests for the production-configured aircraft. Nos. 7 through 15 will be delivered to the Army for Initial Operational Test & Evaluation in preparation for low-rate initial production, with fielding of the first U.S. Army Comanche unit in fiscal year 2006.

The RAH-66 Comanche, the U.S. Army's 21st century combat helicopter, is being developed by U.S. Army Aviation and a team of leading aerospace companies headed by Boeing and Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, a subsidiary of United Technologies Corp.

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