Boeing Begins Assembly On United Kingdom C-17

During a ceremony here today, Boeing began assembly of the first C-17 Globemaster III for lease to the U.K. Royal Air Force. Attending the ceremony on the C-17 production line were officials from the U.K. Ministry of Defence, the U.S. Air Force, the City of Long Beach and Boeing.

The United Kingdom announced in May its intention to lease four C-17s to meet its near-term strategic mobility requirements. The aircraft will be identical to C-17s currently being built for the U.S. Air Force. This is the first international agreement for a strategic airlift airplane in U.S. history.

The first C-17 for the Royal Air Force will be delivered in spring 2001. The lease agreement between Boeing and the United Kingdom is still being negotiated. A signed agreement is expected by September.

In addition, U.S. Air Force and U.K. officials have signed a Letter of Agreement for support the U.S. Air Force will provide the United Kingdom for aircrew training and maintenance. The agreement is governed by a separate Foreign Military Sales contract, under which Boeing also will provide maintenance support for the Royal Air Force aircraft under its C-17 Flexible Sustainment contract with the U.S. Air Force.

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