

## **Boeing Marks 25th Anniversary of Apache First Flight Sept. 30**

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With more than 1 million combined flight hours under its wing and a quarter century of technological advances behind it, the AH-64 Apache continues to be the world's most versatile multi-role combat helicopter.

And as The Boeing Company marks the 25th anniversary of Apache's first flight, Apache helicopters remain on duty around the globe, protecting the peace.

Since that first flight on Sept. 30, 1975, The Boeing Company in Mesa, Ariz., has delivered more than 1,100 Apaches for the U.S. Army and seven international defense forces. Several other nations are considering adding the newest member of the Apache family - the AH-64D Apache Longbow - to their arsenals. Boeing has a goal of delivering 1,000 more Apaches in this decade.

In addition to producing six YAH-64 prototypes in the early 1970s, Boeing delivered more than 900 AH-64As between 1984-1997 before producing its first Apache Longbows in 1997.

"We're proud that we have been developing and modernizing the Apache since 1975, but this definitely is not a 25-year-old helicopter," said Martin Stieglitz, vice president and general manager of Boeing in Mesa. "The Apache of today integrates the latest technologies, and we've been following a roadmap for technological growth that is designed to let us incorporate new systems as they emerge."

For example, the Apache is about to get new-generation forward-looking-infrared and image-intensification television sensors that will provide Apache pilots with significantly greater night vision and targeting capabilities over the current on-board system.

"And other enhancements are in the works that will allow us to continue to improve this outstanding aircraft," he added.

When called into action over the years, Apaches have performed with distinction, Stieglitz said, noting that during Operation Desert Storm, Apaches logged thousands of combat hours while maintaining a readiness rate in excess of 85 percent. The Apache's advanced sensors proved effective in removing the cover of darkness from opposing forces.

"From Panama to Kuwait, the evolving capabilities of the Apache have given aircrews the ability to perform their missions with increasing precision," he said.

More recently, AH-64A Apaches have helped keep the peace in Bosnia and Kosovo. Units from several U.S. and international defense forces have flown their Apaches in allied combat and defense roles.

AH-64A units have been fielded around the world since the mid-1980s. Today, pilots and support teams already are learning how to fly and maintain the next-generation Apache Longbow and soon will be given international assignments. Two U.S. Army Apache Longbow battalions are certified as combat ready, a third unit is in training and a fourth unit is preparing to enter the training process and return to duty in Korea in 2001.

The U.S. Army and Boeing also are expected to sign a contract for the option to remanufacture 269 additional U.S. Army AH-64A Apaches into next-generation AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopters. The five-year, multi-year contract, worth approximately \$2.3 billion, would bring to 501 the total number of Apaches the Army has contracted with Boeing to upgrade.

Several other nations have expressed interest in purchasing new Apache Longbows or upgrading existing Apache AH-64A helicopters. A world market for some 500 international Apaches is anticipated.

Note: Historical and current photos and video of the Apache are available by calling the numbers below.

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For further information:

Thomas Herrmann

(480) 891-2119

Hal Klopper

(480) 891-5519

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