Third U.S. Army Apache Longbow Battalion Certified Combat-Ready

The third U.S. Army AH-64D Apache Longbow attack helicopter battalion to be certified combat-ready has returned to its home base at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.

The Apache Longbow battalion, which completed eight months of intensive training at Fort Hood, Texas, is equipped with 24 AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopters, built by The Boeing Company in Mesa, Ariz. The Army's 1st Attack Helicopter Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division (Mechanized), received its certification March 15 during ceremonies at Fort Hood.

The Army fielded its first combat-ready Apache Longbow battalion in October 1998 and the second in November 1999.

To qualify, the men and women of the third Apache Longbow battalion completed a series of comprehensive classroom, flight and field exercises. Members of the unit underwent a rigorous field examination, which included three live-fire exercises and approximately 3,000 flight hours during the training program.

Training at Fort Hood, which is conducted by the 21st Cavalry Brigade, focused on individual through battalion-level collective training. All pilots from the Army's third Apache Longbow battalion received their initial training at Fort Rucker, Ala., while the unit's maintainers received their training at Mesa and Fort Eustis, Va.

"Through this training experience the soldiers are learning first-hand that the capability of the Apache Longbow is extraordinary," said Lt. Col. Mark Jones, battalion commander of the 1-3rd Aviation Regiment.

The U.S. Army is modernizing its fleet of AH-64A Apaches into next-generation Apache Longbow helicopters, which link a wide range of avionics, electronics and weapons into one fully integrated weapon system. The Apache Longbow is 28 times more capable than the battle-proven AH-64A Apache, for years considered to be the world's best combat helicopter.

###

01-41

For further information:
Carole Thompson Sutton
office: (480) 891-2219
carole.j.thompson-sutton@boeing.com
Hal Klopper

office: (480) 891-5519
hal.g.klopper@boeing.com