

Comanche Prototype Flies With More Powerful LHTEC Engines

The Boeing Sikorsky RAH-66 Comanche Prototype No. 1 has successfully flown with more powerful engines, manufactured by LHTEC (Light Helicopter Turbine Engine Company), a Rolls-Royce and Honeywell consortium.

Program test pilots John Armbrust and Rus Stiles flew the prototype June 1 for 1.2 hours to evaluate the performance of newly installed LHTEC T800-LHT-801 engines. The upgraded and improved engines each provide uninstalled output of 1,563 shaft horsepower (1,165.5 kW), a 17-percent power increase over Comanche's earlier T800-LHT-800 engines.

"Our first T-801 flight was successful in every respect," said Chuck Allen, vice president and director, Boeing Sikorsky Joint Program Office. "We completed all scheduled events, covering a variety of maneuvers and airspeeds up to 120 knots. And, we have recently completed additional flights to expand the performance envelope."

The T-801 engine's added power meets the Cavalry aviator's demanding performance and maneuverability requirements of 500 feet-per-minute vertical rate of climb and 165 knot cruise speed at mission gross weight of more than 12,000 pounds in high and hot operational environments. This performance level assures full capability for the Army's Objective Force reconnaissance and attack system over 95 percent of the world's potential battlefields. All U.S. Army Comanches will utilize two T-801 engines.

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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