

## **Successful First Flight as Boeing Begins Testing Upgraded E-6B Aircraft**

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Flight testing the state-of-the-art Next Generation 737 glass cockpit on the U.S. Navy's 707 E-6B communications aircraft will verify the new technology as more reliable, versatile and pilot-friendly. The latest improvement to the E-6B is the most advanced commercial flight deck offered by The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA].

During the successful first flight on Aug. 1 from the Boeing Maintenance and Modification Center in Wichita, Kan., Boeing test pilot Charles Gebhardt put the aircraft through a number of basic maneuvers including acceleration, deceleration and banked turns to ensure the instruments, displays and flight management systems operated properly. Flight testing will continue over the next three months with a joint Boeing and Navy test team on each flight. In addition to Gebhardt, the flight test team included Navy co-pilot Pat Leard, Boeing flight engineer Gary Breeden and Navy flight engineer Robin "Doc" Holladay.

"We'll be operating across the flight envelope to see how well the new flight deck displays and communications systems perform ", said Dave Brower, Boeing E-6B program manager.

The communications suite has been upgraded to provide enhanced capabilities plus the addition of a broad band phased array antenna providing access to the government's classified and unclassified internet communications links. In addition to basic testing maneuvers, the flight test program includes checking out new battle management, command and control communications mission equipment.

The first of 15 upgraded E-6B fleet aircraft is scheduled for modification starting the third quarter of 2002. Production modification of the entire fleet is expected to be completed in 2005.

The E-6B TACAMO (Take Charge and Move Out) is a modified 707-320B aircraft that provides a vital communications link between national command authorities and U.S. strategic nuclear forces. Boeing delivered 16 E-6 aircraft to the U.S. Navy from 1989 to 1992.

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