Boeing F/A-18 E/F Super Hornets Head Out on First Deployment

The F/A-18E/F Super Hornet moved one step closer to combat when it deployed yesterday onboard the USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN-72) as part of Carrier Air Wing Fourteen. U.S. Navy Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA-115) landed 12 Super Hornets from Naval Air Station Lemoore on the carrier, which is heading across the Pacific with other ships from the battle group. This is the first operational use of the Super Hornet, built by Boeing [NYSE: BA] in St. Louis.

"First deployment of the Super Hornet is the culmination of years of hard work and commitment on the part of Boeing, members of the Hornet Industry Team and the U.S. Navy," said Tony Parasida, vice president of the Boeing F/A-18 Hornet program. "The Super Hornet is ready for combat, ready to defend our nation in the ongoing war on terrorism and ready to carry the men and women of the U.S. Navy safely into and out of harm's way."

Deliveries of the Super Hornet have been on or ahead of schedule throughout the life of the program. The first of seven test-model aircraft rolled out in September 1995. Following a highly successful flight-test program, the first production model Super Hornet was delivered in December 1998, more than a month ahead of schedule. After completing the most thorough operational evaluation in naval history, the U.S. Navy stood up the first Super Hornet squadron at NAS Lemoore in January 1999. The 100th production-model aircraft was delivered in June 2002.

The Super Hornet can perform a broad range of air-to-air and air-to-ground missions during the day or at night, in virtually any kind of weather. Equipped with an aerial refueling system, the Super Hornet also can serve as a tactical airborne tanker.

Eleven weapons stations, two more than the Hornet, carry a vast array of air-to-air and air-to-surface weapons including precision-guided munitions. The Super Hornet can carry more than 17,000 pounds of ordnance, more than 30,000 pounds of fuel and can reach airspeeds of more than 1.5 times the speed of sound.

An aerospace industry team led by Boeing collaborates to build the Super Hornet. Boeing and Northrop Grumman cooperate to build the fuselage, General Electric manufacturers the engines, and Raytheon provides the radar.

The Boeing Company is the world's largest manufacturer of satellites, commercial jetliners and military aircraft. In terms of sales, Boeing is the largest exporter in the United States. Total company revenues for 2001 were $58 billion.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems, or IDS, is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $23 billion business. It provides systems solutions to its global military, government and commercial customers. It is a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; the world's largest military aircraft manufacturer; the world's largest satellite manufacturer and a leading provider of space-based communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader in launch services.

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