

Boeing Unveils Bird of Prey Stealth Technology Demonstrator

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Boeing [NYSE: BA] today unveiled the "Bird of Prey," a technology demonstrator that pioneered breakthrough low-observable technologies and revolutionized aircraft design, development and production. The once highly classified project ran from 1992 through 1999, and was revealed because the technologies and capabilities developed have become industry standards, and it is no longer necessary to conceal the aircraft's existence.

In addition to proving many new stealth concepts, the Bird of Prey program demonstrated innovative rapid prototyping techniques. Developed by the Boeing Phantom Works advanced research-and-development organization, the Bird of Prey was among the first to initiate the use of large, single-piece composite structures; low-cost, disposable tooling; and 3-D virtual reality design and assembly processes to ensure the aircraft was affordable to build as well as high-performing.

Fully funded by Boeing, the Bird of Prey project costs \$67 million. A subsonic, single-seat technology demonstrator, the aircraft completed 38 test flights as part of its flight-demonstration program. Its first flight took place in fall 1996. Bird of Prey has a wingspan of approximately 23 feet and a length of 47 feet, and weighs nearly 7,400 pounds. Powered by a Pratt & Whitney JT15D-5C turbofan engine, the Bird of Prey has an operational speed of 260 knots and a maximum operating altitude of 20,000 feet.

"Early investments in technology demonstration projects such as Bird of Prey have positioned Boeing to help shape our industry's transformation," said Jim Albaugh, president and CEO of Boeing Integrated Defense Systems. "With this aircraft, we changed the rules on how to design and build an aircraft, and what we've learned is enabling us to provide our customers with affordable, high-performing products. Projects such as Bird of Prey have provided the catalyst for integrating speed, agility and reduced cost into the processes we employ to introduce new commercial and military systems to market."

Boeing's current development of the X-45A Unmanned Combat Air Vehicle, or UCAV, technology demonstrator draws directly on its Bird of Prey experience. Some aspects of the UCAV's innovative radar-evading design, such as its shape and inlet, were developed from this project. Together, Boeing Phantom Works and Boeing Integrated Defense Systems are developing UCAV for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA, and the U.S. Air Force.

"The success of the Bird of Prey is a testament to the shared commitment of Boeing and the Air Force to pioneering innovative methods to drive down costs and improve performance," said George Muellner, senior vice president of Air Force Systems for Boeing Integrated Defense Systems. "This project stressed affordability as much as performance and quality, and is one of many that we are using to define the future of aerospace."

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 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. Boeing Phantom Works is the catalyst of innovation within the company. By working with the company's business units, it provides advanced solutions and innovative, breakthrough technologies that reduce cycle time and cost while improving the quality and performance of aerospace products and services.

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For further information:

Erik Simonsen
562-797-5473

erik.simonsen@boeing.com

Jim Bafaro
314-232-4071

james.l.bafaro@boeing.com
