

## Australia's First Wedgetail Aircraft Rolls Out of Boeing Plant

# Australia's First Wedgetail Aircraft Rolls Out of Boeing Plant

---

The Australian Minister for Defence, members of the Royal Australian Air Force, The Boeing Company [NYSE:BA] and its industry partners celebrated today as the first Project Wedgetail aircraft, a next generation 737-700, rolled off the factory line during a ceremony in Renton, Wash.

The plane is one of four that will be transformed into an Airborne Early Warning & Control, or AEW&C, system for the Commonwealth of Australia under a program called Wedgetail in honor of Australia's native eagle. Both Australia and Turkey have signed billion-dollar contracts with Boeing Integrated Defense Systems to develop AEW&C systems. AEW&C is part of Boeing's vision for an integrated battlespace where real-time information is quickly and simultaneously accessible to aircraft and forces and commanders on the ground, at sea and in the air.

Patrick Gill, Boeing vice president of 737 AEW&C programs, said, "The rollout is the latest in a series of major Wedgetail milestones achieved on schedule. They include design reviews of the state-of-the-art Multi-role Electronically Scanned Array radar, the airborne mission system, identification friend or foe, electronic support measures, electronic warfare self protection, navigation and communication systems.

"Boeing looks forward to continuing this progress as we move toward modifications of the aircraft and flight testing next year. Our thanks to Boeing Commercial Airplanes for building this state-of-the-art aircraft while keeping to its quality, cost and schedule commitments for Project Wedgetail."

Air Vice Marshal Norm Gray, head of Australia's Airborne Surveillance and Control Division, said, "Production of aircraft number one ahead of the contracted schedule reflects well upon the work of the combined Boeing and Commonwealth team. Australia looks forward to employing the versatile Wedgetail system as a key element of its upgraded surveillance system."

Following the completion of delivery and flight test activities, the plane will fly to Delaware in January for installation of auxiliary fuel tanks, which should take approximately eight weeks. It will then fly back to the Northwest where crews will modify the plane at the Boeing Military Flight Center in Seattle. The modifications include installation of a reinforced fuselage section that will hold the Multi-role Electronically Scanned Array radar. Provisions for the mission system equipment also will be installed. All of this is part of preparations for FAA Airworthiness Certification. Flight testing is scheduled for the fourth quarter of 2003. Delivery of the first two 737 AEW&C aircraft is expected in 2006.

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. 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-base communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader in launch services.

###

For further information:

Dave Sloan

253-657-3046

[david.a.sloan@boeing.com](mailto:david.a.sloan@boeing.com)

Marta Newhart

562-797-2718

[marta.e.newhart@boeing.com](mailto:marta.e.newhart@boeing.com)

---