

Boeing Delivers 300th Apache Longbow to U.S. Army

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Reaching a goal of 300 in anything can be quite an accomplishment. Imagine a baseball player's 300th career homerun or a hit television series 300th episode. Now imagine the dedication it has taken for employees at Boeing [NYSE: BA] to deliver the 300th Apache Longbow combat helicopter to the U.S. Army.

The 300th AH-64D Apache Longbow, the world's most advanced, most capable multi-role combat helicopter, was delivered to the Army on May 22 at the Boeing Mesa, Ariz., facility where the Apache is built.

"Like all the Apache Longbow's that have preceded it, number 300 is a testimony to our great ongoing partnership with the U.S. Army's Apache Project office," said Al Winn, Apache Programs vice president. "We are continuously looking at ways to address our customer's evolving needs, while meeting delivery schedules and keeping the Apache a world leader."

The U.S. Army has designated the Apache Longbow as a key member of its Objective Force for the future. The latest helicopters, including number 300, are in what is known as the "Block II" configuration, meaning these aircraft contain a number of enhancements which are key to improving situational awareness and move the program ahead toward Apache's role in the digital Army of the future.

"These upgrades - and those proposed for future aircraft enhancement - will help the Apache retain its leading edge capabilities," continued Winn. "They include: the addition of a digital map to improve navigation; a high-frequency radio to improve communications; and an improved data modem to enable Joint Variable Message Format (JVMF) messaging, allowing the Apache to communicate within the Tactical Internet."

Boeing is delivering 269 AH-64Ds to the U.S. Army through the year 2006 under the second of two multi-year contracts. The first contract, Multi-Year I, covered 232 Apache Longbows for a total of 501.

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For further information:

Carole Thompson Sutton

(480) 891-2119

carole.j.thompson-sutton@boeing.com

Marc Sklar

(480) 891-4940

marc.a.sklar@boeing.com
