

Boeing Delivers 500th Apache Longbow Combat Helicopter, Milestone Trainer

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] today delivered its 500th AH-64D Apache Longbow helicopter, and celebrated the delivery of the 22nd and final AH-64D maintenance trainer to the U.S. Army.

In a ceremony at the Boeing facility in Mesa , Ariz. , the U.S. Army accepted the 500th Apache Longbow, which was produced at the Mesa plant. A large contingent of U.S. government and military dignitaries were present at the early morning ceremony recognizing both milestones.

The 500th Apache Longbow delivered today is the 383rd delivered to the U.S. Army, which has ordered of 501 Apache Longbows. Boeing has a backlog of more than 300 Apaches from the U.S. Army and several international customers.

The U.S. Army has selected Apache as the combat helicopter for its future force, a designation that will keep the Apache Longbow an integral part of the U.S. Army for the next three decades. Follow-on improvements in development for the next round of Apache Longbow enhancements include a new composite rotor blade, the joint tactical radio system, improved drive systems and cognitive decision-aiding software.

"These upgrades will help the Apache Longbow retain its leading-edge capabilities," said Al Winn, Boeing vice president of Apache Programs. "Ongoing design efforts will ensure that the Apache Longbow continues to meet the network-centric objectives of the U.S. Army, as well as the diverse needs of our international customers."

The 22nd and final Apache Longbow maintenance trainer, which was officially delivered in July, will join others at the Army's training facility at Fort Eustis , Va. Boeing employees at its Williams Gateway facility, also in Mesa , build the trainers.

"This program represents the kind of total solution Boeing can provide to our customers," said Keith Hertenberg, vice president and general manger, Training and Support Systems. "We not only build the world's finest multi-role combat helicopter, the Apache Longbow, but we also provide training equipment, and additional after-sale support at Army bases and even on the front lines around the world." Boeing delivered the first Apache Longbow Maintenance Trainer to the Army in 1999.

Apache helicopters have been demonstrating their capabilities on the front lines of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom in a wide range of roles -- from supporting ground troops to convoy escort to counter insurgency.

Apache Longbow deliveries to date include helicopters for the U.S. Army and five international defense forces around the world. Eleven nations fly the AH-64 Apache. The Apache Longbow is the world's most advanced multi-role combat helicopter, incorporating new technologies making it the most digitally sophisticated and network-capable helicopter in the world. Recent developments include the addition of a digital moving map for enhanced crew situational awareness; a fiber channel data bus for improved capacity to process information; and use of the joint variable messaging format to improve communications.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses. Headquartered in St. Louis , Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a \$27 billion business. It provides systems solutions to its global military, government and commercial customers. It is a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems; the world's largest military aircraft manufacturer; the Lead Systems Integrator (LSI) for the U.S. Army's Future Combat System (FCS); 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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