First Boeing KC-767 Tanker for Japan Begins Test Readiness Review

The first Boeing [NYSE: BA] KC-767 Tanker for the Japan Air Self Defense Force (JASDF) has begun an important Test Readiness Review (TRR) in Wichita, Kan., that will allow the airplane to begin flight testing later this year.

Officials from JASDF and Itochu, a Japanese trading company and Boeing partner, will meet with Boeing Tanker program leadership and tour the airplane during the TRR. The milestone marks the completion of structural modification to the world's most advanced aerial refueling aircraft -- the first of four tanker aircraft slated for Japan. The TRR ensures that the airplane's hardware and software, as well as the facility, equipment, procedures and support personnel are ready to begin flight testing and data acquisition.

"Conducting this review represents an enormous step forward in completing the modification program and the startup of flight test," said Maj. Kenji Nagatoma, on-site Japan KC-767 Tanker liaison officer. "With both air-refueling and freighter capabilities, the Japan KC-767 Tanker will allow us to participate in many missions such as providing humanitarian relief during major natural disasters."

The Japan KC-767 Tanker is a military derivative of the proven 767-200 commercial airplane and has been configured with Boeing's advanced air-refueling boom and an advanced Remote Aerial Refueling Operator (RARO II) system. The JASDF also selected the convertible freighter configuration for its tankers, which will provide flexibility in carrying cargo or passengers, while maintaining its primary role as an aerial tanker.

"We have a long and honored history with Japan," said Mark McGraw, Boeing vice president of Tanker Programs. "Boeing is building on decades of experience in providing our customers with the latest air-refueling technologies, and that tradition continues as Japan's first tanker moves into flight test."

In addition to the tankers for Japan, Boeing and its Global Tanker Team will deliver four KC-767s to Italy.

The KC-767 Global Tanker is the most fuel-efficient, long-range aircraft specifically sized for diverse air-refueling; cargo, troop and passenger transport; and aeromedical evacuation missions.

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For further information:
Bill Barksdale

Boeing Tanker Communications
office: (314) 232-0860
mobile: (314) 707-3294
william.a.barksdale@boeing.com
Kerry Gildea
Boeing Communications
office: (703) 414-6341
mobile: (571) 643-2313
kerry.a.gildea@boeing.com