Boeing KC-767 Tanker Advanced Camera System Improves Aerial Refueling Safety

With two aircraft flying about 50 feet apart at hundreds of miles per hour, aerial refueling, even under the most ideal conditions, is an exacting maneuver. Boeing's [NYSE: BA] KC-767 Tanker recently demonstrated technology that will improve safety for tanker aircrews and the airplanes receiving critical fuel.

Using a series of cameras mounted on the tanker's fuselage, the KC-767 Remote Vision System (RVS) provides high-definition stereoscopic imagery to the aircraft's boom operator stationed behind the KC-767 cockpit. Boeing flight crews recently activated the RVS while on a test flight and evaluated the system using a Cessna Citation in the receiver's position.

"This advanced technology will give KC-767 aircrews wingtip-to-wingtip visibility behind their aircraft," said Mark McGraw, Boeing vice president for Tanker Programs. "In addition to improving safety, RVS will enhance all-weather, day/night refueling capabilities for military forces around the world."

Following the RVS flight, Boeing KC-767 crews flew to Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., where they completed two weeks of takeoff performance testing and certification required by the Federal Aviation Administration.

Since its first flight in May 2005, the KC-767 Tanker has logged more than 120 flights and 360 hours. Boeing is building tankers for both Italy and Japan, with delivery to the Japan Air Self-Defense Force in February 2007, followed by delivery to Italy in mid-2007.

In addition to flight-testing the KC-767 for international customers, Boeing is competing for a contract to build the U.S. Air Force's next-generation tanker aircraft.

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