Boeing Starts Flight Tests for Canada's First C-17

The first of four Boeing [NYSE: BA] C-17 Globemaster IIIs for the Canadian Defense Forces took flight for the first time Monday, a major milestone leading to the aircraft's delivery on Aug. 8. With a takeoff weight of 460,000 pounds, (208,650 kg), the advanced airlifter lifted off from Long Beach, Calif., at 3:36 p.m. Pacific time, and flew for three hours and 45 minutes.

Led by Boeing production pilot Joel Brown, the seven-person crew put the C-17 through a series of functional checks, flying west over the Pacific Ocean, before returning to the facility where Boeing assembles and tests C-17s prior to delivery.

"For a first flight, we thought it performed exceptionally well," said Brown. "But our expectations are always high that the C-17 will perform well."

"We're looking forward to providing this world-class capability to our new customer, on time and on budget," said Dave Bowman, vice president and C-17 program manager. "The C-17 program continues to deliver on its commitment to execute flawlessly and deliver C-17s on time with the quality and reliability that has made the C-17 the best airlifter the world has ever seen."

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