Boeing Delivers Operational Flight Trainer for Australia's Wedgetail AEW&C Program

SEATTLE, March 10, 2009 -- The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] has delivered an operational flight trainer (OFT) to Australia for the Project Wedgetail airborne early warning and control (AEW&C) program. The OFT, which the customer accepted on Feb. 27, is the first segment of the Wedgetail program to be delivered to Australia.

The Wedgetail aircraft is a derivative of the commercial 737-700 and the OFT is based on the proven technology of the Next-Generation 737 simulator platforms. The motion-based flight simulator was designed, built and installed by Thales and managed under a subcontract by Boeing Defence Australia.

The OFT is customized to account for the unique characteristics of the Wedgetail AEW&C system, including controls for the communication, aerial-refueling and Electronic Warfare Self Protection systems.

"Delivering the OFT is a major step forward in the program because it enables the training of Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) pilots in anticipation of delivery of the first two Wedgetail aircraft later this year," said Maureen Dougherty, Boeing vice president, AEW&C Program.

Prior to delivery, the OFT passed a series of certification tests and was awarded zero flight time status, the highest level of accreditation under Australian standards. This accreditation allows experienced pilots to train using this type of simulator instead of an actual aircraft.

RAAF pilots have used the OFT since October 2007 to familiarize themselves with the Wedgetail AEW&C flight deck and to develop training scenarios.

The simulator was installed at the Wedgetail AEW&C Support Center at RAAF base Williamtown.

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