Boeing Begins In-country C-17 Pilot Training for Royal Australian Air Force

AMBERLEY, Queensland, Feb. 1, 2010 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) today welcomed the first class of C-17 Globemaster III student pilots at RAAF Base Amberley.

Two RAAF student pilots entered Pilot Initial Qualification (PIQ) training today, and two more will begin the second PIQ training course on Feb. 15. Boeing Defence Australia instructors will provide them with 350 hours of programmed training over 100 days, including 85 hours of computer-based training and 120 simulated flight hours with the C-17 Globemaster III Aircrew Training System (ATS).

The Boeing-developed C-17 ATS, provided through a U.S. Air Force Foreign Military Sales contract, consists of a Loadmaster Station, Learning Center, various support systems and a Weapons Systems Trainer (WST), which is a realistic, full-motion simulator used for pilot training.

"Becoming a RAAF C-17 pilot is my ultimate goal, and knowing I'm only a few months away from achieving this is incredibly exciting for me," said Pilot Officer Stephen Maunder, one of the two RAAF student pilots who began training today. "Being able to carry out my PIQ training under Boeing instructors at RAAF Base Amberley is a huge advantage, and I'm sure the WST will feel like our second home until we graduate in mid-April."

After completing the training, which will culminate in five flights at the controls of a real C-17 and acceptance by the RAAF's No. 36 Squadron, the students will graduate as qualified RAAF pilots.

The RAAF commissioned the C-17 ATS in November, making Australia the first C-17 ATS customer outside the United States. Previously, all RAAF C-17 pilots and aircrew trained in the United States.

"Training in the United States has been an amazing opportunity for all pilots and loadmasters, and Boeing's U.S. team and the U.S. Air Force at Altus and Hickam bases have provided second-to-none training along with warm hospitality," said Squadron Leader Brent Taylor, 36 Squadron Training Flight Commander. "But now that the C-17 WST is operational, the strategic opportunities presented by a locally based training system include removing substantial travel costs and providing increased capability through reduced aircraft training hours, making way for increased tasking.

"The Boeing Defence Australia instructors have strong aviation backgrounds in military and civilian operations, and I look forward to a long and rewarding relationship and have no doubt the in-country training will be of the highest standard," Taylor added.

Boeing Defence Australia C-17 ATS site lead Nigel Page said that in-country C-17 pilot training "will allow the RAAF to develop a new generation of qualified pilots while saving a considerable amount of time and money through the use of its own facilities at Amberley. The RAAF is an important Boeing customer, and we look forward to supporting the C-17 strategic airlift capability for national and international operations while expanding our training capability in Australia."

Boeing Defence Australia provides instructors for PIQ training and continuation training for current RAAF C-17 pilots and loadmasters, as well as scheduling and logistics support. The company's full range of training solutions includes mission planning systems; aircrew and maintenance training devices; training centers; and training services including instructors, courseware and logistics support.

Boeing Defence Australia, a wholly owned subsidiary of The Boeing Company and a business unit of Boeing Defense, Space & Security, is a leading Australian aerospace enterprise. With a world-class team of nearly 2,000 employees at 13 locations throughout Australia and two international sites, Boeing Defence Australia supports some of the largest and most complex defense projects in Australia.

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