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SEATTLE, Aug. 2, 2010 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] P-8A Poseidon aircraft T3 successfully completed its first flight test in Seattle on July 29. T3 is the P-8A program's mission-system and weapon-certification aircraft.

During the two-hour and 48-minute flight from Boeing Field, Boeing and U.S. Navy test pilots performed airborne systems checks including engine accelerations and decelerations, autopilot flight modes, and auxiliary power unit and engine shutdowns and starts.

In the coming weeks, T3 will join the two P-8A test aircraft currently at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Md., and complete additional ground and flight tests.

"At Pax River, the Boeing and Navy team will use some of the ground test data we've gathered in Seattle for in-flight separation and delivery accuracy tests that will occur later this year," said Chris Ahsmann, P-8A chief engineer for Boeing.

T3 is one of six flight-test aircraft that are being assembled and tested as part of the U.S. Navy System Development and Demonstration contract Boeing received in 2004. Airworthiness-test aircraft T1 entered flight test in October 2009 and arrived at the Navy's Patuxent River facility in April of this year. T2, the primary mission-system test aircraft, arrived at Pax River in June.

The Navy plans to purchase 117 P-8A anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft to replace its P-3 fleet. Initial operational capability is planned for 2013.

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