Boeing, Royal Australian Air Force Complete 1st Year of In-country C-17 Pilot Training

AMBERLEY, Queensland, Nov. 18, 2010 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) today announced they have successfully completed the first year of in-country Pilot Initial Qualification (PIQ) training for the C-17 Globemaster III airlifter.

Since the first of four courses began on Feb. 1, Boeing Defence Australia has trained eight new C-17 pilots and collectively delivered more than 1,600 hours of programmed PIQ training, including 560 hours of computer-based training and 480 simulated flight hours in the Boeing-developed C-17 Globemaster III Aircrew Training System (ATS). The ATS was commissioned by the Defence Materiel Organisation (DMO) in November 2009 and made Australia the first C-17 ATS customer outside the United States.

Squadron Leader Peter Thompson and Flight Lieutenant James Gotch graduated today as the latest batch of RAAF C-17 Globemaster III pilots trained in Australia by Boeing Defence Australia's C-17 aircrew training team at RAAF Base Amberley. Previously, all RAAF C-17 pilots and aircrew trained in the United States.

Wing Commander Paul Long, who conducted the in-country PIQ training in 2010, will take up the position of Commanding Officer for No. 36 Squadron at the end of this year.

"The ability to train our people in Australia has provided 36 Squadron with greater flexibility, cost savings and capability improvements," Long said. "Having the ATS facility within walking distance at Amberley provides easy access to Boeing instructors and the ATS. Aircrew can now achieve their training and be back at work the same day instead of the past practice of having to travel to the U.S."

"The graduation of all eight students as qualified C-17 pilots demonstrates the success and value of this in-country training capability, which is provided by the expertise of Boeing Defence Australia's instructors and the Amberley-based C-17 ATS in partnership with the RAAF's own Qualified Flying Instructors," said Nigel Page, Boeing Defence Australia C-17 ATS site lead.

In addition to PIQ training, Boeing Defence Australia provides continuation training for current RAAF C-17 pilots and loadmasters, as well as scheduling and logistics support. These services are provided under the stewardship of the DMO's Heavy Air Lift Systems Program Office. C-17 PIQ training at RAAF Base Amberley will recommence in January.

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