Bell Boeing Delivers 1st Block C V-22 Osprey to US Marine Corps

Latest Osprey variant features new weather radar, improvements to electronic warfare systems, situational awareness and aircrew comfort

PATUXENT RIVER, Md., Feb. 14, 2012 -- The Bell Boeing V-22 Program, a strategic alliance between The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] and Bell Helicopter - Textron [NYSE: TXT], today announced that the U.S. Marine Corps has taken delivery of the first MV-22 Osprey produced with the new Block C suite of design upgrades.

"The on-time, on-budget delivery of our first Block C aircraft is the latest milestone in our ongoing quest to make the world's most revolutionary aircraft even more advanced," said John Rader, executive director of the Bell Boeing V-22 Program. "Block C Ospreys will meet our current customers' enduring need for the latest mission capabilities, while presenting an even more compelling value proposition to future domestic and international customers."

The V-22 Block C design upgrade includes a new weather radar system that improves navigation in poor weather conditions, and a redesigned Environmental Conditioning System to enhance aircrew and troop comfort. Expanded capacity and effectiveness built into the Electronic Warfare system -- including additional chaff/flare dispensers -- increases the Osprey's ability to defeat air-to-air and ground-to-air threats. The Block C also provides greater situational awareness with enhanced cockpit and cabin displays.

"We continue to increase the capabilities of this first-of-type tiltrotor, and Block C is the latest, evolutionary step," said Marine Corps Col. Greg Masiello, Joint V-22 Program Manager, Naval Air Systems Command. "Whether it's the addition of weather radar, upgrades to the environmental control system, or improvements for situational awareness, Block C brings enhanced capability to V-22 pilots, maintainers, and crew members throughout the aircraft's life cycle."

About the V-22 Osprey Program:

The V-22 Osprey is a joint service, multirole combat aircraft that uses tiltrotor technology to combine the vertical performance of a helicopter with the speed and range of a fixed-wing aircraft. With its nacelles and rotors in vertical position, it can take off, land and hover like a helicopter. Once airborne, its nacelles can be rotated to transition the aircraft to a turboprop airplane capable of high-speed, high-altitude flight.

More than 160 Osprey tiltrotors are currently in operation and the worldwide fleet has amassed more than 130,000 flight hours, with nearly half of those hours logged in the past two years.

Safety, survivability and mission efficiency have become hallmarks of the operational fleet. According to Naval Safety Center records, the MV-22 has the lowest Class A mishap rate of any tactical rotorcraft in the Marine Corps during the past decade. Navy flight-hour cost data also show that the Osprey has the lowest cost per seat-mile (cost to transport one person over a distance of one mile) of any U.S. naval transport rotorcraft over the past two years.

About Bell Boeing:

Bell Helicopter, a wholly owned subsidiary of Textron Inc., is an industry-leading producer of commercial and military, manned and unmanned vertical lift aircraft and the pioneer of the revolutionary tiltrotor aircraft. Globally recognized for world-class customer service, innovation and superior quality, Bell's global workforce serves customers flying Bell aircraft in more than 120 countries. Textron Inc. is a multi-industry company that leverages its global network of aircraft, defense, industrial and finance businesses to provide customers with innovative solutions and services. Textron is known around the world for its powerful brands such as Bell Helicopter, Cessna Aircraft Company, Jacobsen, Kautex, Lycoming, E-Z-GO, Greenlee, Textron Systems and Textron Financial Corporation. More information is available atwww.textron.com.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Defense, Space & Security is one of the world's largest defense, space and security businesses specializing in innovative and capabilities-driven customer solutions, and the world's largest and most versatile manufacturer of military aircraft. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Defense, Space & Security is a $32 billion business with 63,000 employees worldwide. Follow us on Twitter: @BoeingDefense.

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Contact:

Andy Lee
Bell Boeing V-22 Program
+1 215-834-7010
andrew.h.lee2@boeing.com

Greg Hubbard

Bell Helicopter V-22 Program
+1 817-280-4616
ghubbard@bellhelicopter.textron.com