Boeing KC-46 Tanker Program Successfully Completes Preliminary Design Review

US Air Force program remains on schedule

Critical Design Review set for 2013

MUKILTEO, Wash., May 8, 2012 -- The Boeing [NYSE: BA] KC-46 Tanker program has completed a Preliminary Design Review (PDR) with the U.S. Air Force, a key milestone in the development of the next-generation aerial refueling tanker.

The review, which began March 21 and ended April 27, demonstrated that the preliminary design of the KC-46A Tanker meets system requirements and establishes the basis for proceeding with detailed design. Boeing remains on plan to deliver 18 combat-ready KC-46A Tankers by 2017.

"I'm happy with Boeing's performance. They're maintaining a very tight focus on meeting commitments and staying on or ahead of schedule. The program remains on a good path," said Air Force Maj. Gen. Chris Bogdan, KC-46 Program executive officer. "This is important news for the nation's warfighters, because it reaffirms our commitment to delivering the KC-46A tanker on schedule."

The program's next major milestone is a Critical Design Review (CDR) that will take place in the summer of 2013. The CDR will determine that the design of the KC-46A is mature and ready to proceed to the manufacturing phase.

"The KC-46 team is designing an aircraft that will offer superior, modern multi-role capabilities for the warfighter, including advanced refueling systems and military avionics, and the ability to transport cargo, passengers and patients," said Maureen Dougherty, Boeing KC-46 Tanker vice president and program manager. "Working closely with our Air Force teammates, we've made tremendous progress in the past 14 months and have the foundation in place to enter the detailed design phase."

In addition to the successful PDR, the Boeing KC-46 team has completed several major milestones on or ahead of schedule over the past year that include a System Requirements Review, Integrated Baseline Review, 767-2C PDR, and Firm Configuration Reviews for the 767-2C and the KC-46A Tanker.

Boeing will build 179 next-generation aerial refueling tanker aircraft that will begin to replace the Air Force's fleet of 416 KC-135 tankers. Based on the proven Boeing 767 commercial airplane, the KC-46A tanker is a widebody, multi-mission aircraft updated with the latest and most advanced technology to meet the demanding mission requirements of the future, including a digital flight deck featuring Boeing 787 Dreamliner electronic displays and a flight control design philosophy that places aircrews in command to maximize combat maneuverability. The KC-46A also features a modernized KC-10 boom with a fly-by-wire control system, and a refueling envelope and fuel offload rate that is greater than that of the KC-135 it will replace.

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