Boeing's 1st C-130 AMP Trainer for US Air Force Declared 'Ready For Use'

LITTLE ROCK, Ark., Sept. 14, 2009 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] has completed delivery of the U.S. Air Force's first simulator for the C-130 Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) to Little Rock Air Force Base. The Weapon System Trainer (WST) passed government acceptance testing and was declared "ready for use" on July 20.

Boeing is scheduled to deliver a suite of trainers over the next several years to support the AMP training program at Little Rock. Each piece of training equipment offers a different level of instruction to train crew members in the operation of the new capability AMP will install in the aircraft.

"As a guard unit, our entire mission depends on exceptional training," said Lt. Col. Domenic Sarnataro, 189th Airlift Wing Chief of Safety, Arkansas Air National Guard. "Ours is the only unit that will provide training for the C-130 AMP, so the sooner we can start using these simulators, the better prepared we will be when training begins late next year."

The simulator is a full-motion, high fidelity simulator that is essential in training Air Force aircrews to fly the AMP-modified aircraft in an operational environment. An important feature of this training device is that it uses the same software as the C-130 AMP aircraft, which will make it easier for the Air Force to keep the simulator current with the aircraft. Any future modifications can be made to the aircraft and the training devices at the same time, so aircrews can train on any new capability in the simulator before they fly it in the aircraft.

Three C-130 AMP aircraft have completed initial flight testing and are undergoing additional evaluation flights with the Air Force before the AMP upgrade kits are installed on the fleet.

Boeing partnered with Tampa, Fla.-based subcontractor CAE USA to integrate the new AMP cockpit into the simulator and to perform similar modifications for other training devices in the suite.

"As the world's most experienced provider of C-130 training systems and services, we are extremely pleased to partner with Boeing to deliver the first C-130 AMP Weapon Systems Trainer to the Air Force," said John Lenyo, president and general manager of CAE USA. "This state-of-the-art simulator will play a key role in ensuring Air Force C-130 crews are well-trained and mission-ready with the modernized aircraft."

Just as the training program is refurbishing old training devices, the AMP program will save the Air Force millions of dollars by modifying existing C-130s when compared with the cost of acquiring new aircraft.

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