

First T-50 Rolls Out In Ceremony

PRNewswire
SEOUL, South Korea

The first T-50 Golden Eagle aircraft, an advanced, supersonic trainer being developed by Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) with the assistance of Lockheed Martin, was rolled out in a ceremony in Korea on Oct. 31.

Korea's President Kim, Dae-jung served as the principal speaker at the ceremony, which was held at the KAI facility in Sachon, Republic of Korea.

"Today we celebrate a major step in Korea's role in aviation history," President Kim said. "The T-50 is the first supersonic jet aircraft developed by our rapidly growing aerospace industry. This aircraft is expected to not only serve the advanced training needs of the Korean Air Force, but also a number of other major air forces around the world. We fully expect to be an exporter of advanced aerospace products."

Other dignitaries included Korean government officials, Republic of Korea Air Force (ROKAF) senior officers, international air force officers and aerospace executives from Korea, the United States and other countries.

Assembly of the first T-50 was completed in mid-September, 100 days ahead of the original schedule.

"Being ahead of schedule has become a trademark on this program and is a reflection of the strong technical expertise, the excellent program management, and the dedication of all of the T-50 team members," said Kil, Hyoung-Bo, president of KAI and master of ceremonies at the rollout. "The T-50 is expected to be the mainstay of our production operations at KAI for the next 10 years or more."

KAI is the prime contractor for the T-50. Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company is the principal subcontractor and is responsible for general technical consulting, the wing, avionics and the electronic flight control system.

"We are very proud to be a part of this program, a continuation of the long-standing industrial cooperation we have enjoyed with the aerospace industry in Korea," said Robert T. Elrod, executive vice president for programs at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics. "We are particularly pleased with the schedule performance the team has achieved, due in part to adoption of advanced engineering and manufacturing technologies and lean practices."

The T-50 rolled out is the first full-scale development (FSD) aircraft and is scheduled for its first flight in mid-2002. It and three other FSD aircraft will be test flown through 2005. The first production T-50 is expected in late 2005. The ROKAF intends to acquire 94 T-50 advanced trainers and the derivative A-50 fighter lead-in trainer/light combat aircraft.

The supersonic T-50 will have the maneuverability, endurance and systems to prepare future pilots to fly current and next-generation fighters like advanced F-16s, the F-22 and the Joint Strike Fighter. These same characteristics give it an excellent capability as a lead-in fighter and light combat aircraft in many air forces. The fighter lead-in/light combat version of the Golden Eagle is designated the A-50, and its main differences are the addition of an armament system and a fire control radar.

T-50/A-50 advanced technology features include relaxed static stability, digital fly-by-wire flight control, side-stick controller, selectable flight control performance, triple redundant electrical system, on-board oxygen generation system, modern cockpit (head-up display, color multifunction displays, hands-on-stick and throttle, etc.), and (for A-50) integrated armament/fire control avionics.

Korea Aerospace Industries, Ltd. is the Republic of Korea's national aerospace company established in 1999 with the consolidation of Samsung Aerospace, Daewoo Heavy Industries and Hyundai Space and Aircraft Company. KAI lines of business include fixed-wing aircraft, helicopter aircraft and satellites. Its major products are the KF-16, KT-1 basic trainer, T-50/A-50, SB427 helicopters, aerostructures and KOMPSAT satellite program.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co. is a leader in advanced military aircraft and related technologies. Its customers include the military services of the United States and allied countries throughout the world. Products include the F-22, F-16, F-117, C-5, C-27J, C-130, P-3, U-2 and Joint Strike Fighter, among other renowned aircraft. LM Aeronautics is a unit of Lockheed Martin Corp. , headquartered in Bethesda, Md. Lockheed Martin is a global enterprise principally engaged in advanced-technology systems, products and services. The corporation's core businesses are systems integration, space, aeronautics and technology services.

The release and a high resolution photo will be posted on the gallery in the near future.

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