T-50 Completes 100th Test Flight

The T-50 Golden Eagle, an advanced supersonic trainer developed by Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) with the assistance of Lockheed Martin , has completed its 100th test flight.

"The T-50 development program continues right on track, and we are beginning to accelerate our flight test program with our two aircraft," said No Sun Park, director & plant manager of KAI's Sachon plant. "We successfully accomplished three flights on the day we flew the 100th flight. On one of those flights, we reached a speed of Mach 1.2 [1.2 times the speed of sound] for the first time. These are both important milestones for the Republic of Korea's consideration of the Initial Production Authorization later this year."

The ground testing program is also on schedule. On April 25, the airframe durability vehicle completed one lifetime of testing, equivalent to 8,334 flight hours. The 100th test flight was completed on April 28. Durability testing is being conducted at the Agency for Defense Development testing laboratory in Taejon, South Korea, and began on schedule July 22 of last year. Testing continues on a second lifetime, which is expected to be completed in April 2004.

The T-50 Golden Eagle is being developed by KAI for the Republic of Korea Air Force. Lockheed Martin, as principal subcontractor to KAI, is providing technical expertise for the program and is responsible for developing the T-50 avionics system, flight control system and wings. The two companies are cooperatively marketing the T-50 internationally.

The T-50 Full-Scale Development program began in 1997 and will continue through 2005. Initial production authorization is planned for the latter part of 2003 with production deliveries to begin in 2005.

The T-50 will have the maneuverability, endurance and advanced systems to prepare future pilots to fly current and next-generation fighters like advanced F-16s, the F/A-22 and the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. These same characteristics give it an excellent capability as a lead-in fighter trainer and potential light-combat aircraft derivative in many air forces.

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 Co. 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, SB427 helicopters, UAVs, aerostructures and KOMPSAT satellite program.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co., a business area of Lockheed Martin, is a leader in the design, development, systems integration, production and support of 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-16, F/A-22, F-35 JSF, F-117, T-50, C-5, C-130, C-130J, P-3, S-3 and U-2.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin employs about 125,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology systems, products and services. The Corporation reported 2002 sales of $26.6 billion.

For more information on KAI, visit:http://www.koreaaero.com/

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