Military Pilot Training Enters A New Era With Rollout Of The First Production T-50 Advanced Jet Trainer Aircraft

Training systems for military aircraft pilots entered a new era on August 30, 2005, when Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) rolled out the first production version of the T-50 Golden Eagle advanced jet trainer.

The aircraft was developed and is being marketed worldwide with the assistance of Lockheed Martin.

Korea's President Roh Moo-hyun, was the principal speaker at the ceremony. "The roll out of the T-50 means the achievement of the long desire of the Korean government to boost the high tech aerospace industries in Korea and to strengthen the basis of self national defense through development of the indigenous supersonic aircraft. The T-50 aircraft will be a cornerstone of the superiority of the ROKAF's air defense power and allow our Air Force the ability to change or improve the configuration of the aircraft, which will ultimately allow us to develop indigenous fighters in the near future," said President Roh, during his speech at the ceremony.

The T-50 provides the opportunity to enhance pilot training at lower overall costs due to reduced flying time in operational fighter qualifications. Other benefits include a robust integrated logistics support system with a worldwide support network.

Chung Hae-Ju, president of KAI, said, "The remarkable success of the development and the smooth production of the T-50 advanced jet trainer within ten years came as a result of the strong will and vision of all members of the T-50 team, the endless support from the related government agencies and the devoted efforts of the KAI employees, Lockheed Martin and all the participating industries."

KAI is the prime contractor for the T-50, and Lockheed Martin is the principal subcontractor assisting with development of the new high-performance trainer. The two companies are joint participants in international marketing of the T-50.

The supersonic T-50 will have the maneuverability, endurance and systems to prepare pilots to fly current advanced fighters such as the Lockheed Martin advanced F-16 and fifth generation fighters such as the Lockheed Martin F-35 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 lead-in fighter trainer version of the Golden Eagle is designated as the A-50. Its main differences are the addition of an armament system and a fire control radar.

South Korea is currently ordering 50 T-50 and 44 A-50 aircraft, while an additional 200 A-50s could be ordered in the 2007 to 2012 timeframe to replace the country's aging F-5 fighters. KAI and Lockheed Martin see the potential for the sale of another 600 aircraft to other international customers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Korea Aerospace Industries Ltd. (KAI) 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, research and 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, C-5, C-130, C-130J, P-3, S-3 and U-2. The company produces major components for the F-2 fighter, and is a co-developer of the C-27J tactical transport and T-50 advanced jet trainer.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin Corp. employs about 130,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2004 sales of $35.5 billion.

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