First T-50 Golden Eagles Delivered To Korean Air Force; Only Supersonic Trainer In Production Today

In December 2005, just 24 months after receiving the low-rate initial production contract, Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) delivered the first two production T-50 Golden Eagle supersonic trainers to the Republic of Korea Air Force. The success of this development program was highlighted by KAI and team partner Lockheed Martin during a briefing to the press at the 2006 Asian Aerospace conference and air show here today.

"As the world's only high performance supersonic trainer in production, the T-50 will introduce a new generation of pilots to the power of modern, advanced fighters such as the F-16 and 5th Generation F-35 Joint Strike Fighter," said Dr. Alex Jun, vice president of marketing for KAI. "The T-50 integrated training system provides pilots with the best training solution available. It incorporates a high performance supersonic fast jet trainer, a modern ground based training device, and a fully integrated logistics support package; all designed to provide the most efficient training environment at lowest life cycle cost."

"The T-50 program's transition from a flight testing program to production and delivery in less than two years is quite phenomenal," said Jun. "Being able to deliver the aircraft to our customer in such a short period illustrates the well thought out design of this aircraft."

The supersonic T-50 with its maneuverability, endurance and systems integration provides an excellent capability as a lead in fighter trainer (LIFT) and potentially as a light combat aircraft for many air forces worldwide. The LIFT version of the Golden Eagle is designated as the A-50. The main differences from the fast jet trainer are the addition of armament and an all-weather, day and night multimode fire control radar.

Operational pilots who received the T-50 after acceptance flights at KAI's Sacheon, South Korea production facility noted that the technological advances and capabilities of the trainer exceeded their expectations. Company officials there also expressed their pride in the delivery of the advanced aircraft to schedule.

"Several experienced pilots have flown the T-50 to include the ROKAF chief of staff," said Jun. "All are very complimentary of the Golden Eagle's high performance, excellent handling qualities and modern cockpit and avionics. The T-50's integrated training solution provides flexibility like no other aircraft on the international market."

Currently, the ROKAF is using the T-50s delivered last December for instructor pilot training. Once the initial cadre of instructors is trained, the aircraft will enter service and be used to train student pilots. Plans are to deliver a total of eight T-50s to the ROKAF in 2006 and one per month afterwards.

Both KAI and Lockheed Martin representatives were quick to agree that the T-50, with both the advanced jet trainer and the LIFT versions, student pilots will progress from primary trainers to high-performance, modern operational fighters in a very cost-effective manner providing an ideal solution for the training needs of many air forces around the world.

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.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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 helicopter, UAVs, aerostructures and KOMPSAT satellite program.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin Corp. employs about 135,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2005 sales of $37.2 billion.

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