High Performance T-50 Golden Eagle Offers Cost-Effective Training Solution For Modern Air Forces

Just 24 months after receiving the low-rate initial production contract, Korea Aerospace Industries (KAI) delivered its first T-50 Golden Eagle supersonic trainers to the Republic of Korea Air Force. Today, this supersonic aircraft continues as the most cost-effective training solution available for air forces worldwide.

The success of this development program was highlighted by KAI and team partner Lockheed Martinduring a briefing to the press at the 2006 Farnborough International Air Show here today.

"As the world's only high performance supersonic trainer in production, the T-50 has the unique capability of allowing new fighter pilots the ability to smoothly transition into advanced aircraft such as the F-16 and 5TH Generation F-35 Joint Strike," 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 system, and a fully integrated logistics support package -- all designed to provide the most efficient training environment at lowest life cycle cost."

Last month, program officials announced the opening of a new marketing office in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. This facility gives KAI greater proximity to potential customers in the Middle East and Europe and allows the Korean-based company an opportunity to grow its business-base.

"The T-50 program's transition from a flight testing program to production and delivery in less than two years is quite phenomenal," said JR Wildridge, Lockheed Martin's T-50 international marketing director. "The ability to deliver the aircraft to the customer in such a short period clearly illustrates the well thought out design of this aircraft."

The supersonic T-50, with its maneuverability, endurance and systems integration, provides excellent capability as a lead-in fighter trainer (LIFT). The main differences from the fast jet trainer are the addition of armament and an all-weather, day and night multimode fire control radar. Plans are currently in development for a light combat variant for air forces worldwide.

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 also expressed pride in the delivery of the advanced aircraft to schedule.

"Several experienced pilots have flown the T-50. Each time a new pilot flies the T-50 they all seem to have the same comments about the Golden Eagle's high performance, excellent handling qualities and modern cockpit and avionics. The T-50's capabilities provide flexibility like no other trainer aircraft on the international market," Wildridge added.

Currently, the Republic of Korea Air Force (ROKAF) is using the T-50s delivered last year for instructor pilot training. Plans are to deliver a total of eight T-50s to the ROKAF in 2006 and one per month afterwards. To date five aircraft have been delivered to the ROKAF, all on schedule.

KAI and Lockheed Martin agree that both the advanced jet trainer and LIFT versions will enable student pilots to 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.

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.

For additional information, visit the following websites:
http://www.lockheedmartin.com/
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