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40 Years of Manufacturing in Canada

Celebrating four decades of innovation, people and possibilities

Historical details in this article draw from David A. Brown's "The Bell Helicopter Textron Story," a key source documenting the history of Bell's early development and design innovation.



Bell Textron Canada is commemorating 40 years of operations, marking a milestone that reflects the company's deep roots in Canada and its longstanding commitment to advancing rotorcraft innovation, supporting national missions, and contributing to the country's aerospace manufacturing excellence.

In the Beginning

Bell's presence in Canada began more than half a century ago, when the company first established support operations to serve Canadian customers. That early commitment expanded significantly in 1986, when Bell chose Mirabel, Quebec, as the home of its commercial assembly and delivery center. Since then, Bell Textron Canada Ltd. has grown into one of the country's most recognized companies.

Long before the Mirabel facility opened its doors, Bell was contributing to Canada's aviation. The company's first helicopter sold in the country, a Bell 47, took flight in 1945, setting the standard for decades of collaboration with Canadian operators, governments, and communities.

In the 1970s, Bell strengthened its presence by opening supply Centers in Ottawa and Calgary, real-time support hubs that played a vital role in providing parts for the Canadian Coast Guard, National Defense, and other operators across the country. This established Canada as a critical part of Bell's global customer support network.

1986 was a turning point when Bell inaugurated Bell Helicopter Textron Canada Ltd. In Mirabel. The first Canadian-assembled aircraft, a Bell 206B JetRanger, flew the same year, marking the beginning of a new chapter in Canadian aerospace manufacturing.

Canada's Commercial Excellence

Over the next four decades, Mirabel would become synonymous with Bell engineering excellence and operational performance. The site has grown into a fully integrated assembly and delivery center, home to advanced manufacturing capabilities, as well as flight testing, certification, and customer delivery.

Throughout its history, the Mirabel team has proudly delivered many of Bell's most iconic commercial aircraft. Bell in Canada has produced more than 6,000 aircraft with aircraft currently flying across Canada in roles that support emergency response, law enforcement, utility missions, medical transport, tourism, and private operations.

As part of the 40th anniversary celebrations, the Vertical Flight Society has recognized Bell's Mirabel facility as a Vertical Flight Heritage Site. This designation highlights the

generations of Canadian employees whose work has shaped helicopter design, certification, manufacturing and support, and underscores Mirabel's enduring role as a hub of vertical flight in Canada and around the world.

In addition, the facility played a pivotal role in the production of the CH-146 Griffon, supporting the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) with a fleet that remains essential to supporting national operations.



Looking to the Future

As Bell celebrates 40 years of manufacturing in Canada, the company remains focused on the future and strengthening Canada's aerospace industry. From the first Bell 47 purchased in Canada to assembling and delivering modern multi-mission aircraft, Bell continues to revolutionize flight, and the next chapter is already taking shape.

About Bell

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Thinking above and beyond is what we do. For more than 90 years, we've been reimagining the experience of flight – and where it can take us.

We're an aerospace and defense company that engineers and manufactures aircraft for critical solutions in extreme scenarios. We're breaking barriers in lifting people to safety across transportation, medical, rescue and military services, and leading the industry in future solutions that are fast, reliable and efficient.

Headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas – as a wholly-owned subsidiary of Textron Inc., – we have strategic locations around the globe. And with generations of employees who have served, many in combat theatre of operation, helping our military achieve their missions is a passion of ours. Above all, our breakthrough innovations deliver exceptional experiences to our customers. Efficiently. Reliably. And always, with safety at the forefront.

About Textron Inc.

Textron Inc. is a multi-industry company that leverages its global network of aircraft, defense, industrial and finance businesses to provide customers with innovative solutions and services. Textron is known around the world for its powerful brands such as Bell, Cessna, Beechcraft, Hawker, Jacobsen, Kautex, Lycoming, E-Z-GO, Textron Systems, and TRU Simulation + Training. For more information, visit: www.textron.com.

Certain statements in this press release are forward-looking statements which may project revenues or describe strategies, goals, outlook or other non-historical matters; these statements speak only as of the date on which they are made, and we undertake no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements.

These statements are subject to known and unknown risks, uncertainties, and other factors that may cause our actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied by

such forward-looking statements, including, but not limited to, changes in aircraft delivery schedules or cancelations or deferrals of orders.

Contact details

Keira Cloud

Aftermarket, Training

kcloud@bellflight.com

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