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Hawker Beechcraft Announces First Flight, Accelerated Testing of AT-6 Light Attack Aircraft



BY TEXTRON AVIATION

Advanced derivative of world's most proven trainer aircraft will offer light attack, armed reconnaissance solution for warfighter needs

Hawker Beechcraft Corporation (HBC) today announced the successful first flight of its AT-6 prototype and the program's progression into the next phase of flight test. The AT-6 prototype is a structurally strengthened derivative of the highly successful U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy T-6A/B trainer – the world's most proven military trainer aircraft – that will offer the U.S. Air Force and partner nations a robust airpower solution that meets a wide spectrum of needs at a fraction of the cost of other platforms.

“We are very optimistic about the role the AT-6 will play for the warfighter – both in the U.S. and in partner air forces around the world,” said Bill Boisture, HBC chairman and CEO. “This is going to be a great airplane and I am pleased with the rapid pace we are moving through our planned test program. We are almost three weeks ahead of schedule. We believe the AT-6 offers the broadest range capabilities available in the market and that is why we continue to invest in its future today.”

The AT-6 is designed to be able to quickly transition pilots between basic flight training missions and complex NetCentric light attack and armed reconnaissance missions. The next phase of flight testing will last through October, during which the company will continue flight envelope expansion of the heavily instrumented AT-6 prototype, along with performance and handling qualities assessments with various external store configurations.

The Hawker Beechcraft T-6 derivative fleet recently passed the one million flight hour mark and 500th delivery with aircraft currently being flown by the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy, Hellenic Air Force of Greece, NATO Flying Training in Canada and the Israeli Air Force. T-6 trainers for the Iraqi Air Force are currently in production in Wichita, Kan., and are slated for delivery to Iraq beginning later this year.

Hawker Beechcraft Corporation is a world-leading manufacturer of business, special mission and trainer aircraft – designing, marketing and supporting aviation products and services for businesses, governments and individuals worldwide. The company’s headquarters and major facilities are located in Wichita, Kan., with operations in Salina, Kan.; Little Rock, Ark.; Chester, England, U.K.; and Chihuahua, Mexico. The company leads the industry with a global network of more than 100 factory-owned and authorized service centers. For more information, visit www.hawkerbeechcraft.com.



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