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# Hawker Beechcraft Selects Salina Airport Authority for Light Attack Training Package



BY TEXTRON AVIATION

Hawker Beechcraft Corporation (HBC) today announced that it has signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Salina Airport Authority to use Salina's airport, airspace and vast array of civilian and military resources for training associated with HBC's Light Attack aircraft. The U.S. Air Force (USAF) plans to competitively award a Light Air Support contract within the next six months. If HBC's Light Attack aircraft is selected, pilot and maintenance training at Salina could begin in late 2012.

HBC's new Light Attack aircraft represents a new chapter for HBC. It is a departure for HBC from its role of supplying trainer aircraft to a role of providing aircraft that can themselves be utilized in combat. The AT-6 is a robust, state-of-the-art Light Attack aircraft designed for a broad spectrum of missions, including counter-insurgency, close air support, armed overwatch, homeland defense and homeland security. The AT-6 features the A-10C mission system from Lockheed Martin and MC-12W EO/IR sensor from L-3 WESCAM to achieve a capable, affordable and sustainable Light Attack aircraft. The synergy of the AT-6 with fielded USAF training and operational platforms and programs make it a natural fit for meeting the USAF's 21st century challenges.

“The goal of the Light Attack aircraft program is to leverage U.S. Government programs, people and platforms to provide the most capable, affordable and sustainable aircraft possible,” said Jim Maslowski, HBC president, U.S. and International Government Business. “Working with the Salina Airport Authority is another example of how HBC proposes to build on already existing resources to benefit the U.S. Air Force.”

Although the beginning phase would be modest in 2012, HBC’s footprint in Salina could grow to meet the training needs of the U.S. and foreign military Light Attack mission(s). Currently, the Beechcraft T-6 and AT-6 programs – through HBC and its U.S. partners and suppliers – employ approximately 1,400 people in nearly 20 states.

“Salina and the surrounding area have every resource we need to produce combat-ready pilots and maintainers for the USAF Light Air Support Program,” said Derek Hess, HBC director, Light Attack. “We are hopeful the USAF will agree that the ground and air capabilities of the civilian and military complex surrounding the Salina Airport Authority provide unmatched training resources for the emerging Light Air Support program.”

“The Salina Airport Authority looks forward to providing the HBC Light Attack program with airfield and hangar facilities for light air support pilot training, and is hopeful that HBC’s selection by the USAF will create employment opportunities in Salina and surrounding areas,” said Timothy Rogers, executive director, Salina Airport Authority. “Since 1942, the Salina Airport has offered world class support for civil and military pilot training. With a 12,300 foot primary runway, modern hangar space, close proximity to the Smoky Hill Weapons Range and wide open airspace, Light Air Support pilots will train in the tradition of our nation’s best aviators.” HBC has produced more than 660 Texan II trainer aircraft that have flown more than 1.5 million hours for air forces and military organizations around the globe. The new HBC Light Attack aircraft is purposed to provide close air support while meeting the demands of an austere irregular warfare environment.

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](http://www.hawkerbeechcraft.com).



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