

WAH-64 Apache



WAH-64 ZJ172

Contrary to recent claims made by two UK Sunday national newspapers, the WAH-64 Apache is not grounded. Rather, the first production Apache built by GKN Westland Helicopters at its Yeovil facility has completed its maiden flight. The aircraft, ZJ172, is one of 67 ordered by the Ministry of Defence for the British Army Air Corps.

Captained by GKN Westland test pilot Richard Morton, with Boeing production test pilot, Walt Jones, also on board, the aircraft completed the initial Production Acceptance Test Flight (PATF) which included aircraft systems checks, main rotor track and balance procedures and basic handling manoeuvres. During an 18 minute flight, no problems were encountered and the aircraft achieved 140 knots.

Speaking after the flight, Richard Morton said: "This was a very special initial flight as it was completed in the first GKN Westland Apache to be built here at Yeovil. The aircraft performed as expected and the many people involved in this programme should take credit for this achievement. "

Apache Programme Director, Martin Fausset, said the maiden flight was another example of the aircraft's successful performance. "Although the WAH-64 is based on the US Army D model Apache, the UK variant has been specifically designed to suit the UK requirement and is therefore very different in configuration. There is no doubt that the Ministry of Defence will have a world-class capability with this helicopter. "

The first WAH-64 Apache was handed over to the British Army in March 2000 and was one of eight UK Apaches built by Boeing at their Mesa, Arizona facility and shipped to the UK for final assembly and test. Two of these aircraft have already been delivered to the British Army. With GKN Westland's own Apache line now ramping up production, the remaining WAH-64 aircraft are being delivered to Yeovil as part fuselages for completion, final inspection and test by GKN Westland Helicopters.

Apache's in-service date, which is defined as the delivery of the first nine aircraft, is scheduled for December 2000. Apache will greatly augment the operational effectiveness of the British Army on the battlefield. It will provide a massive increase in capability both in terms of firepower, communications and supportability.

WAH-64 Apache is a derivative of the US Army's AH-64D Apache Longbow, the next generation version of the combat proven AH-64A Apache, the aircraft which is in service with many defence forces around the world. In addition to the RTM322 engines, WAH-64 includes a number of systems unique to the UK.

These, plus the enhancements incorporated in the AH-64D, make it more effective in combat, and more survivable, deployable and maintainable in the field than the AH-64A.

The Apache Longbow fire control radar and advanced avionics suite give pilots the ability to detect, classify, prioritise and engage stationary and moving targets rapidly at stand-off ranges in near all-weather environments. Its ability to communicate digitally with other aircraft and ground forces gives the WAH-64 significant advantage over current combat helicopters.

First UK built WAH-64 Apache delivered

16 August 2000

The first production Apache, [designated ZJ172](#), built by GKN Westland Helicopters at its Yeovil facility was delivered on time to the Ministry of Defence on July 31st, two weeks after its maiden flight.

The first WAH-64 Apache was handed over to the British Army in April 2000 and was one of eight UK Apaches built by Boeing at their Mesa, Arizona facility and shipped to the UK for final assembly and test. Two of these aircraft have already been delivered to the British Army and a third to the Defence Evaluation Research Agency at Boscombe Down.

The first UK built aircraft commenced production in Yeovil in September 1999 and was completed from a part fuselage supplied by Boeing. With GKN Westland Helicopters' own Apache line now ramping up production, ZJ172 is the first of 59 aircraft to be built at Yeovil over the next three years to satisfy the order from the Ministry of Defence for 67 Apache helicopters.

Apache Programme Director, Martin Fausset, said the delivery was yet another example of the aircraft's successful performance. "That this delivery has been achieved precisely two weeks after the aircraft's maiden flight rightly confirms that this complex and challenging contract is on schedule. However, that this first UK produced aircraft has achieved a delivery milestone set over four years ago is a testament to the teamwork and strong project management skills of all who are involved with this programme. There are more than 180 companies contributing to the UK Apache and their commitment is setting new levels of excellence in prime contracting. "

The Apache project was one of the first to form an Integrated Project Team, a key element of the MoD's Smart Procurement initiative, in November 1998. The 70-strong team is based in the UK's Defence Procurement Agency at Abbey Wood, Bristol. It also includes representatives from the Defence Logistics Organisation based at Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton and GKN Westland in Yeovil.

The WAH-64 Apache will be the cornerstone of the Armed Forces' new Joint Helicopter Command. Created as part of the Strategic Defence Review, the Joint Helicopter Command will focus the joint capabilities of the three Services and enhance the operational effectiveness of the battlefield helicopter. Apache's in-service date, which is defined as the delivery of the first nine aircraft, is scheduled for December 2000. Apache will greatly augment the operational effectiveness of the British Army on the battlefield. It will provide a massive increase in capability both in terms of firepower, communications and supportability.

In 1996, GKN Westland Helicopters, as prime contractor, was awarded a contract valued at more than £2 billion (\$3.2 billion) to supply 67 WAH-64 Apache attack helicopters to the British Army Air Corps. Contract completion is scheduled for end 2003.

AH Mk1 Apache Release to Service signed

22 January 2001

The UK's AH Mk1 Apache has been officially 'Released to Service', marking the moment the British Army assumed ownership of the first nine aircraft and began the training of its pilots.

Brigadier Richard Folkes OBE ADC, Director Army Aviation, who signed the Release, confirmed the importance of the signing: "This is a milestone event in the United Kingdom Attack Helicopter programme. Whilst there is still much to do until the Apache enters operational service, it represents the start of the

real development for both the Attack Helicopter and the Air Manoeuvre capabilities within the British Army."

Westland's Apache Programme Director, Martin Fausset, said: " This is a tremendous team effort from all involved with this complex programme to have achieved this important signing."

The Defence Procurement Agency (DPA) also formally declared achievement of ISD on 16 January 2001 to coincide with the Release to Service.

The first AH Mk1 Apache was handed over to the Ministry of Defence in April 2000 and was one of eight UK Apaches built by Boeing at their Mesa, Arizona facility and shipped to the UK for final assembly and test. The first production Apache built by Westland Helicopters was delivered on time to the Ministry of Defence on July 31 2000, two weeks after its maiden flight. The Ministry accepted the aircraft in accordance with the contracted delivery date established in April 1996.

The prime contract for 67 AH Mk1 Apache helicopters was awarded on 25 March 1996. Whilst Westland Helicopters has prime contractor responsibility, Boeing holds the design rights to Apache and are the key sub-contractor. Eight AH Mk1 aircraft have been manufactured by Boeing in the US with the other 59 being assembled by Westland in the UK.

The AH Mk1 Apache is a version of the US Army Apache AH-64D and will replace the Lynx Mk7 TOW system in the anti-armour role. The AH Mk1 Apache is powered by Rolls-Royce Turbomeca RTM322 engines whereas AH-64D is fitted with GE T701 engines. The aircraft will be equipped with the latest technology Longbow fire control radar, Hellfire missiles, both semi-active laser and radio frequency versions, CRV7 ground suppression rocket system and the 30mm cannon.

All aircraft will have the improved Helicopter Integrated Defensive Aids Suite (HIDAS) which will provide much increased situational awareness, early identification of potential threats, and increased survivability. A series of qualification trials were held at the US Army's Yuma Proving Ground in December 2000. This flight testing, in both day and night, achieved flare safe separation throughout the flight envelope, successful dispensing of chaff in flight and HIDAS interoperability with aircraft systems, TADS/PNVS, 30mm cannon and CRV7