BELL BEGINS MANUFACTURING UH-1Y FOR FIRST INTERNATIONAL OPERATOR

News / Manufacturer



Bell Textron Inc.has restarted UH-1Y Venom helicopter production for the first international operator. Crestview Aerospace has completed manufacturing the first of eight cabins at the Crestview Florida facility. The aircraft will complete final assembly at the Bell Amarillo Assembly Center. The helicopters are part of the 2020 U.S. Department of Defense contract awarded to Bell for the production and delivery of eight UH-1Y and four AH-1Z helicopters for the government of the Czech Republic.

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“Crestview Aerospace is honored and grateful for the opportunity to team with Bell on the continued production of the UH-1Y cabin for the first international customer,” said Paul Kohlmeier, senior vice president, Strategy and Business Development, Crestview Aerospace. “Crestview continues to build in the same high quality and reliability into the international Venom helicopters that underpin the aircraft currently operated by the United States Marine Corps around the world.”

Bell delivered the final UH-1Y for the United States Marine Corps (USMC) program of record in April 2018 and has continued to produce and deliver the AH-1Z as part of the H-1 production contract for 349 H-1 aircraft, consisting of 160 UH-1Y and 189 AH-1Z.

The UH-1Y shares 85 percent commonality of parts with the AH-1Z. The commonality between the aircraft enabled critical component supply chains to remain active during AH-1Z production for the USMC.

“Time, logistics, and man-hours are all strategic resources,” said Mike Deslatte, vice president and H-1 program director, Bell. “Commonality helps ensure everything between the Viper and Venom, from manufacturing, maintenance, and upgrades, remains seamless while simultaneously providing lower program and life cycle costs. It’s a real tactical advantage on multiple levels.”

The UH-1Y and AH-1Z share the same engines, integrated mission system and dynamic components, such as the four-bladed rotor system. Both aircraft are specifically designed and produced for expeditionary operations. Together, they provide a full spectrum of military operations, unlike any other helicopter duo.

Bell anticipates USMC production through early 2022, followed by continued production for foreign military customers. Bell has two signed Foreign Military Sales (FMS) cases in production, Bahrain and the Czech Republic.

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