Icing for Danish F-16s

A series of flight tests was recently completed on Danish F-16 fighters fitted with EADS' AAR-60 Missile Launch Detection System (Milds). The ultraviolet-light missile warner was first developed for helicopters, but modified into the AAR-60(V)/2 Milds-F for fighter applications. The four flights included testing at supersonic, afterburner operations and flying at high altitude. Recorded data from the test is now being analyzed to prepare the system for proper flight trials in about a year. The missile warner is being carried in a weapons pylons built by Danish manufacturer Terma.

Test Time

The five Bell AH-1Z and UH-1Y helicopters undergoing flight testing at NAS Patuxent River, Md., have accumulated more than 3,000 hr. in the air since the first aircraft flew in December 2000. Both the AH-1Z and UH-1Y are being remanufactured from AH-1W and UH-1N airframes under the H-1 modification program. The test aircraft are preparing to enter operational evaluation by the U.S. Marine Corps this summer. According to Bell Helicopter Textron, the test fleet has fired more than 2,000 2.75-in. rockets, 13,662 rounds of machine gun and automatic cannon ammunition, 11 Hellfire and three Sidewinder AIM-9 missiles. There are 10 UH-1Ys and six AH-1Zs being remanufactured at Bell's facilities in Amarillo, Tex. The Pentagon, however, has approved a change to the original H-1 program to allow Bell to build new-production UH-1Ys instead of remanufacturing UH-1N helicopters, and the first of these is scheduled to be built in 2006, with initial deliveries set for 2008.

Avacatt Upgrade

L-3 Communications' Link Simulation and Training division will upgrade the U.S. Army Aviation Combined Arms Tactical Trainer (Avacatt) reconfigurable manned simulator suite for the AH-64D Apache Longbow attack heli-copter. The upgrade includes development and integration of the Longbow's latest core avionics capability into each Avacatt suite. The suites are housed in two mobile trailers with six simulators, a battle master control room and briefing facility. In addition to the AH-64A and AH-64D, the suites are used to train pilots flying the OH-58D, UH-60L and CH-47D. Work on the upgrade will be performed at Link's facilities in Orlando, Fla.; Arlington, Tex.; Binghamton, N.Y.; and Broken Arrow, Okla. Link is under contract to build 11 Avacatt suites, but the Army has approved funding to build 23 units.

Recorder Order

The U.S. Army has awarded Smiths Aerospace a $4-million contract to provide its new-generation cockpit voice and data recorder systems for the service's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment MH-47 Chinnok, MH-60 Black Hawk and U.S. Coast Guard HH-60 Jay Hawk and HH-65 Dolphin helicopters (shown). The crash-survivable recorders are designed and manufactured at Smiths' facility in Michigan, and deliveries are expected to be completed this year.

Composite Congregation

The FAA Joint Advanced Materials and Structures (JAMS) Center of Excellence and the Materials and Structures Branch Technical Meeting, held recently at the National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR) at Wichita State University in Kansas, was a broad-based peer review of materials and structures research sponsored by the FAA. JAMS comprises two groups: the Centers for Advanced Materials in Transport Aircraft Structures and for Composites and Advanced Materials. According to NIAR, more than 20 commercial aviation organizations, universities and representatives from the FAA and other government agencies reviewed technical progress and promoted the interchange of information between researchers. Through JAMS, these include work on polymer composites, advanced processing techniques and structural concepts, cabin safety and crashworthiness. The plan is to convene each year to assure that research addresses the safety and certification needs of commercial aviation, according to NIAR officials.

Media Is the Message

U.S. Special Operations Command has awarded three contracts worth up to $100 million each for "media approach planning" and product development and dissemination as well as "media effects analysis" for the Joint Psychological Operations Support element and other government agencies to SYColeman Inc., Lincoln Group and SAIC, all of Washington. The work is scheduled to continue through June 6, 2010.

Out of Sight

Technical Directions Inc.'s small turbojet engine, which is a non-line-of-sight launch system candidate for the Army's Loitering Attack Missile, has won a $1.6-million commitment from the House Appropriations Committee. TDI is a subcontractor for the launch system under a Raytheon/Lockheed Martin partnership. The TDI powerplant employs automotive turbocharger components and uses fuel to lubricate and cool bearings. TDI's J45 engine, a 30-lb-thrust turbojet, has been tested for the USAF/Lockheed Martin Low-Cost Autonomous Attack System program.