

Fielding of AH-64D Apache Longbow Helicopter to ARNG

What is it?

The AH-64D Apache Longbow Helicopter is a four-bladed, twin-engine attack helicopter with tail wheel-type landing gear arrangement, and tandem cockpit for a crew of two. The Apache was developed as Model 77 by Hughes Helicopter for the United State's Army's Attack Helicopter program to replace the AH-1 Cobra. First flown on 30 September 1975, the AH-64 features a nose-mounted sensor suite for target acquisition and night vision systems. The Apache is armed with a 30-millimeter (1.2 in) M230 Chain Gun carried between the main landing gear, under the aircraft's forward fuselage. It has four hard points mounted on stub-wing pylons, typically carrying a mixture of AGM-114 Hellfire and Hydra 70 rocket pods. The AH-64 also features double- and triple-redundant aircraft systems to improve survivability for the aircraft and crew in combat, as well as improved crash survivability for the pilots.

What has the Army done?

Due to the termination of the Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter (ARH) contract, the Army decided to utilize the ARH funding to modernize all and equip the Active and Reserve Components with AH-64D Longbows. The pure fleetings of the Apache removes legacy AH-64A aircraft and gives commonality to the platform with the enhanced Longbow capability. This pure fleetings process greatly enhances the ground commander's capability by providing them with digitized and modernized close attack aviation support.

What continuing efforts does the Army have planned?

The Army is inducting both ARNG AH-64A and Active Component AH-64D Block I Apache aircraft into remanufacturing facility where they are converted to Block II aircraft. The next step the Army will upon funding approval begin the Block III Apache Program. This will require the induction of all Block I, and several Block II aircraft for conversion/production to Block III, as well there will be up to 56 "new built" aircraft. End state for US Army AH-64D Longbow inventory is 810 total aircraft of which 690 will be Block III, and 120 will remain Block II. As of December 2010, the ARNG has an inventory of 96 of 96 Block I and 3 of 96 planned Block II aircraft.

Why is this important to the Army?

The AH-64D Longbow Apache is the world's most advanced attack helicopter and continues to be further developed using updated state-of-the-art technology. This will ensure that the United States Military will have on the battlefield the most capable multi-role combat helicopter which meets the needs of the war fighter today, as well as in the future.