



## Photo Release -- Northrop Grumman's First KC-30 Tanker Completes Initial Assembly in 30 Days

July 31, 2007

### Pre-Flight Ground Testing Underway

MELBOURNE, Fla., Jul 31, 2007 (PrimeNewswire via COMTEX News Network) -- Northrop Grumman Corporation's (NYSE:NOC) first KC-30 Tanker aircraft completed initial airframe assembly in July, illustrating an efficient and low-risk approach for quickly replacing the U.S. Air Force's KC-135 tanker fleet.

A photo accompanying this release is available at: <http://media.primezone.com/noc/>

The first developmental KC-30 aircraft, designated SDD-1, entered final assembly a month earlier at the EADS commercial aircraft center when technicians began fitting together large subassemblies to create the commercial A330 airframe.

"If we're successful in our bid to provide the Air Force with the more capable tanker -- we're ready immediately," said Paul Meyer, Northrop Grumman vice president and general manager of the KC-30 program. "Having the very first KC-30 already completing airframe assembly clearly shows the advantage in leveraging a current and efficient production line, which we feel offers a competitive advantage. We're absolutely committed to meeting and exceeding the Air Force's need to quickly replace its mission-critical tanker aircraft."

Northrop Grumman's first KC-30 Tanker is the 871st airframe built on the A330/A340 final assembly line. It is now in ground testing as part of the assembly process and will be ready for military modification in late November -- one month after the currently projected contract award for the Air Force's KC-X program to recapitalize its aging aerial tanker fleet.

"Our tanker was selected by key U.S. allies in the last three head-to-head tanker competitions because it truly is the most superior aerial refueling tanker in the world today," said John H. Young Jr., CEO of EADS North America Tankers. "The Northrop Grumman KC-30 Tanker being offered to the U.S. Air Force for its next generation tanker will be built on the same superb and modern platform and provide the most advanced, operationally robust refueling capability available."

The KC-30 Tanker benefits from an active commercial production line, which is supported by a fully operational industrial supply chain. To date, more than 1,110 A330/A340s have been sold, with 800-plus aircraft delivered to international operators and over 240 aircraft in the current backlog.

A powerful U.S. and allied industrial team led by Northrop Grumman has been established to produce and supply KC-30 Tankers for the U.S. Air Force. The aircraft is based on the A330 Multi-role Tanker Transport, which was selected to support the air forces of Australia, the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates.

About the KC-30: Northrop Grumman's KC-30 Tanker carries 45,000 more pounds of fuel than a KC-135 or any competitor, providing a significant boost to the U.S. Air Force's global reach. The KC-30 is also designed to refuel Navy and coalition aircraft, and to serve as a multi-role transport aircraft to move passengers, cargo and medical evacuation patients. The KC-30 incorporates defense systems, precision fly-by-wire technology, and the ability to integrate a communications suite and a global support network.

The KC-30 will be assembled in Mobile, Ala., and create or support more than 25,000 U.S. jobs. It will be built by a world-class industrial team led by Northrop Grumman, and includes EADS North America, General Electric Aviation and Sargent Fletcher.

(Photo: <http://www.primezone.com/newsroom/prs/?pkgid=4059>)

Northrop Grumman Corporation is a \$30 billion global defense and technology company whose 120,000 employees provide innovative systems, products, and solutions in information and services, electronics, aerospace and shipbuilding to government and commercial customers worldwide.

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SOURCE: Northrop Grumman Corp.

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