

Hawker Beechcraft King Air 350-Project Liberty Acceptance
Lt Gen D.A. Deptula Remarks
19 March 2009

Wow, what a great day! Mr Schuster, Mr Maslowski, Congressional delegation members, other distinguished guests, men and woman of Hawker Beechcraft ...it's a real pleasure and privilege to be here today, and I'm honored to be part of this historic occasion.

Hawker Beechcraft has been around since 1932, adapting and growing as part of our airpower capabilities. Over the last 77 years, you all have been a constant partner with the United States military.

During World War II, you produced nearly 7,400 airplanes for the armed forces and provided the trainers for nearly every U.S. Army Air Corps bombardier and navigator. That historic level of support continues today with the delivery of our new MC-12W.

We've been at war for a very long time now...engaged in the Global War on Radical Islamic Terrorists for a longer time than World War II. From the beginning of Desert Storm in January 1991, your Air Force has been in continuous combat for over 18 years—and the whole way you've been partnered with us. You should be very proud of your contributions as you play a continuing role in the security of our Nation.

From the Secretary of Defense's office of Program Analysis and Evaluation, the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence—the two offices involved with initiating this program as part of the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Task Force, and the members of the Air Force acquisition team and Air Staff offices that worked the programatics ... you have our sincere thanks and appreciation!

The C-12 was first introduced to the Department of Defense in 1975, and it continues to be a great success story. It's now flown by all four branches of our Armed Forces in several variations, and continues serving in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Let me convey to you my thoughts in a larger sense—call it the big picture for Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance operations—and the role this aircraft will play in that bigger picture.

The Air Force has undergone a three year transformation of Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance. We are developing an ISR force that combines manned, unmanned, space, and cyberspace based platforms and capabilities that will enable us to provide multi-domain ISR dominance for current and future operations.

And that's where you come in...because in building responsive, precise, and persistent joint forces—ISR is a must!

We'll be taking this aircraft and turning it into a robust ISR collection system. The MC-12W, will provide a comprehensive signals and imagery intelligence collection capability that will be fielded in Southwest Asia as soon as possible.

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These aircraft will allow us to increase our monitoring of insurgent communications and expand our full motion video coverage, helping ensure our Soldiers, Sailors, Airman and Marines have the critical information necessary to accomplish their missions.

Your Air Force, along with our partners from our sister services, is committed to achieving our security objectives in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world. With aircraft like this—representing the enduring commitment of our citizens and the ingenuity of American industry—we'll fulfill that mission.

So on behalf of the Air Force Chief of Staff—and all the personnel of your United States Air Force—it's an honor to accept this King Air 350 as Liberty One—the newest addition to proud line of Air Force ISR aircraft.

Thank you all for what you've done—and continue to do; your dedication; patriotism; and well deserved pride in great craftsmanship. Your work here is at the top of the priority list for our joint forces as a critical ISR capability.

Congratulations! ...and have a great aerospace power kind of day!