

Best in **test**

Dennis O'Donoghue

Vice president, Boeing Test & Evaluation
Engineering, Operations & Technology



Boeing's test and evaluation units are being integrated into one team. Its leader tells why this means better support for Boeing programs.

By Jennifer Hawton and photo by Bob Ferguson/Boeing

As a Boeing test pilot, Dennis O'Donoghue worked to ensure the company's products performed as promised. Today, he's still focused on making sure Boeing is providing quality products and services—but now as the leader of an enterprisewide test and evaluation team.

O'Donoghue is vice president of Boeing Test & Evaluation, one of two companywide organizations created in January within Engineering, Operations & Technology. BT&E is responsible for the test and evaluation of new Boeing airplanes, modification and upgrades to existing aircraft, and test support to certain Boeing businesses.

Since January, BT&E has focused on establishing its foundation and integrating the test and evaluation assets of Integrated Defense Systems and Commercial Airplanes. Among BT&E's many activities are identifying its core capabilities; creating its strategic plan and concept of operations; and bringing test and evaluation employees from across the enterprise into the BT&E fold. By the start of 2010, the formation of BT&E should be 90 percent complete.

BT&E faces the task not only of building a team and integrating people and assets from around the company but also of fulfilling its obligations to Boeing businesses, especially as several high-profile development programs approach first-flight milestones. *Frontiers* spoke to O'Donoghue about BT&E's goals and challenges.

What is the role of BT&E?

Our objective is simple. It's to help Boeing reach its goal of being the world's best and best-integrated aerospace company. Because we're an enterprisewide test and evaluation organization, our teams can use common processes and tools and share Lean practices. And we can allocate our resources more efficiently and better manage our knowledge, skills and expertise throughout Boeing. By doing all this, we'll ensure that we are the "best in test."

Why is Boeing doing this now?

To remain competitive Boeing will always need to find ways to operate more efficiently and effectively as one company. As economic conditions get tougher and our markets get more competitive, we have to be more aggressive in making these improvements. That's why this is the right time to stand up BT&E.

At the same time, we are proceeding in a carefully coordinated way to support all program and business milestones. That way, we can ensure we will meet long-term growth and productivity goals, as well as near-term challenges.

Parts of both IDS and Commercial Airplanes are being integrated into BT&E. How can you make sure this won't affect 787 Dreamliner and 747-8 flight tests?

I want to make this clear: We are committed to delivering on our promises while we manage our large-scale integration. Our

guiding principle has been to not disrupt current programs while we integrate T&E teams across the enterprise. We have gone to great lengths to ensure that we don't get distracted from our No. 1 priority, which is to deliver on our customer's expectations.

In fact, the flight-test programs for these airplanes will be great examples of how BT&E provides better support to Boeing businesses. Because BT&E is a centralized, enterprisewide test and evaluation team, we can more closely track the test and evaluation needs of all programs—and be assured that we have the right people in the right place at the right time.

What are your expectations for BT&E into 2011?

We have a lot to do. That includes fully standing up the organization, with our own accounting structure within EO&T and with test and evaluation employees from across Boeing fully enrolled.

First, I expect BT&E to execute on our current commitments. We have multiple important test programs going on in 2010 and 2011, such as the P-8A, 747-8 and 787, to name a few. And while we must focus on integrating our test and evaluation capabilities, we can't afford to miss a beat on the work we have right in front of us.

Second, we must strive to raise the level of operational excellence. We've shown over the years that, in many regards, Boeing has the best test and evaluation organization in the industry. What we do, we do very well from a technical perspective. However, now we must focus on doing it more efficiently than ever before. Our markets are only going to get more competitive, so we must find a way to reduce our costs and improve the effectiveness of our services.

Finally, I want people to have fun. I want them to wake up in the morning wanting to come to work at Boeing. And at the end of their shift, I want them to walk out the gate feeling like what they did that day added value to Boeing. ■

jennifer.d.hawton@boeing.com

To learn more about the Boeing Test & Evaluation organization, visit its site on the Boeing intranet:

<http://test-evaluation.web.boeing.com>

This site offers information such as:

- Access to the BT&E blog on the Boeing intranet
 - Updates on BT&E's integration efforts (look for the link to the BT&E Weekly Updates page)
 - The organization's structure, strategies, operating principles
 - An explanation of the organization's 19 capabilities (to view a Powerpoint presentation that describes these capabilities, visit the BT&E home page and enter the phrase "19 capabilities" in the search field)
-