



A SPLENDID, BLENDED FLIGHT

The X-48B Blended Wing Body flight-research vehicle takes off earlier this year from Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., on a flight test. In March, the X-48B flight-research team of Boeing, NASA and the U.S. Air Force Research Laboratory successfully concluded the first phase of the aircraft's flight-test program, which started in 2007 and logged 80 flights. The aircraft is an 8.5 percent scale model of a heavy-lift, subsonic airplane with a 240-foot (73-meter) wingspan that possibly could be developed over the next 20 years for military applications such as aerial refueling and cargo hauling. [NASA](#)

Quotables

“You come here and you feel oxygen. You get this incredible bump-up in terms of what this means for the region.”

– Marco Cavazzoni, vice president and general manager of final assembly and delivery for Boeing Charleston, who was on hand in April for the placement of the first steel column at Charleston's future 787 final assembly and delivery facility, as reported in the *Charleston Post and Courier* on April 6.

“It is living up to and exceeding everything we expected of it.”

– Royal Australian Air Force Wing Commander Glen Braz, commanding officer of the first Australian Super Hornet squadron, talking about the RAAF's new F/A-18F Super Hornet, as reported in the *Townsville Bulletin* on March 27. The first five aircraft were recently delivered to Australia, which operates 71 F/A-18A/B Hornets. (See *Frontiers* story in this issue, pages 34–35.)