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NEWS release

FOR RELEASE:

PIASECKI'S X-49A SPEEDHAWK VTDP COMPOUND HELICOPTER COMPLETES INITIAL PHASE ONE FLIGHT TESTING

In February 2008 Piasecki Aircraft Corporation (PiAC) completed the initial Phase 1 flight test of the SpeedHawk X-49A Vectored Thrust Ducted Propeller (VTDP) compound helicopter at New Castle County Airport near Wilmington, Delaware.



“All contract milestones have been successfully completed and the results, pending Government analysis, meet or exceed contract objectives,” announced Fred Piasecki, Vice President, Engineering and Chairman of the Board. “We are now in the process of supporting the Government review of the test data, while we continue to expand the Phase 1 Flight test matrix.” The Government’s review of test data will be complete in June, and to the extent identifies any additional Phase 1 test requirements, these will be addressed during ongoing flight tests being conducted this summer.

After completion of Phase 1, plans are the X-49A test aircraft will be brought out of flight status and modified to conduct Phase 2 flight testing. These modifications incorporate a supplementary power unit, upgrades to the flight controls and streamlining various parts of the aircraft to achieve speeds over 200 kts. The objective of the X-49A VTDP compound helicopter technology is to significantly improve helicopter speed, range, ceiling, survivability and life cycle cost. To date the Phase 1 flight tests preliminary results indicate a significant increase in speed over the baseline H-60; hover performance on average appear to be within 3.7% of predicted values; and forward flight vibration and fatigue loads were significantly reduced. Based on these test results, PiAC is confident that we can safely expand the flight envelope beyond the current NATOPS limit of the SH-60 and demonstrate the full capability of this technology.

John Piasecki, President and CEO of Piasecki Aircraft Corp. located in Essington Pa., said “These successful tests are the product of decades of innovative research and development in compound helicopters by our company led by Frank Piasecki, our founder and one of the original inventors and pioneers of the American helicopter industry.

Piasecki Aircraft Corporation [PIAC] is an aerospace research and development engineering and manufacturing company with a focus on the development of advanced manned and unmanned vertical lift aircraft technologies. It’s founder, Frank N. Piasecki, one of the original pioneers of the helicopter industry, was awarded America’s highest technical honor, the National Medal of Technology, in 1986 and the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 2005. Frank N. Piasecki passed away on 11 February 2008. John W. Piasecki, President and CEO and Frederick W. Piasecki, Chairman of the Board and Vice President, Technology are committed to maintaining the high standards and forward thinking innovations forged by Frank N. Piasecki in the vertical take-off and land rotorcraft industries.

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