

Dispatches from

What two Boeing communicators saw in Afghanistan

In February, Integrated Defense Systems communicator Brian Nelson and Boeing Defence UK communicator Madonna Walsh journeyed to Afghanistan to capture in words and on film the experiences of allied service men and women who operate Boeing-made military equipment in one of the world's most dangerous regions.

Nelson and Walsh were guests of the United Kingdom's Joint Helicopter Command during their five-day visit to Kandahar Air Field and the British forward operating base, Camp Bastion. Both sites are major staging points in the south of Afghanistan for air and ground missions supporting coalition troops fighting the Taliban and Al Qaeda, with the ultimate aim of providing security that will encourage development, reconstruction and allow some form

of national governance to take root. They interviewed front-line military personnel from Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands.

The visit allowed Nelson and Walsh to witness the critical role played in-theatre by Chinook and Apache



PHOTO: Group Capt. Andrew Turner commands the Joint Aviation Group in Kandahar. PATRICK ALLEN



PHOTOS: (TOP) C-17s transport all kinds of freight to and from Afghanistan. **BOEING (BOTTOM)** UK Chinooks airlift supplies to troops in the field.

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– Brian Nelson, *Integrated Defense Systems communicator*

Afghanistan



helicopters as well as the C-17 military transport aircraft. Members of the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force, along with servicemen from other allied nations, all of whom operate these aircraft day in and day out, shared their experiences.

Nelson and Walsh detailed what they saw and heard through reports in Boeing News Now, the company's news site on the Boeing intranet, as well as through videos recorded during the trip. The five-day account, called "Dispatches from Afghanistan," gave readers a vivid picture of the front line of the war on terror—and of the role Boeing products play in that effort. To read the account, visit <http://ids.web.boeing.com/index.aspx?com=11&id=131> on the Boeing intranet; videos can also be found there.

For Nelson and Walsh, the experience was invaluable. "Being there in person allowed me to put myself in the shoes of the troops who depend on Boeing aircraft for food, water, ammunition, medical evacuations, close air support and safe transport to and from the base," Nelson said. "Seeing firsthand how these troops count on Boeing ought to make us redouble our efforts to ensure we give them the best equipment we can."

Added Walsh: "'Dispatches from Afghanistan' enabled us to show Boeing employees worldwide what a difference they make. Every person I spoke with in Afghanistan said in so many words: 'Thank you, Boeing.'" ■

PHOTOS BY MADONNA WALSH UNLESS NOTED

PHOTOS: (TOP LEFT) A ground crew loads weapons onto an Apache at Camp Bastion. **AGUSTAWESTLAND (MIDDLE)** A Chinook loadmaster remains vigilant on approach to Camp Bastion. **(LEFT)** Paramedic Flt. Lt. Andy Smith relies on Chinooks to reach patients quickly. **(TOP RIGHT)** Immediate Response Team members await the next callout.