



## **NATIONAL SCHOOLS BUILD A PLANE CHALLENGE LAUNCHED**

**17 December 2008:** The Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS) and Boeing today launch the 'Schools Build a Plane Challenge' to educate and inspire school children, through a practical challenge to manufacture and fly a light aircraft. Launched as a national competition to bid for two aircraft kits during 2009, the challenge will promote air-mindedness in young people aged between 14 and 18. In order to ensure the broadest possible educational benefit, as well as to utilise the best possible resources, schools nationwide will be encouraged to bid for the challenge in partnership. This will most likely involve the aircraft build taking place in around a number of locations, with the final assembly being at an appropriately equipped facility.

Capt David Rowland, president of the RAeS, said: "Through this challenge we will provide young people with the chance to develop a wide range of skills through hands-on learning and encourage pupils to consider careers in the engineering and science sectors. "

The application process will commence early in the New Year with the first team announced on the RAeS annual youth day on 31 March. The building work will start in mid 2009. The aim is to have the aircraft completed, inspected to ensure it conforms with engineering regulations and flight certifications and then to achieve its first flight in the 2009/10 school year. Boeing experts as well and regional branch members of the RAeS will be on-hand to act in a mentoring capacity during the build process. In order to be successful schools will have to demonstrate amongst other key criteria how they will manage the project and deliver it on time whilst ensuring the widest possible educational benefit.

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Sir Roger Bone, president, Boeing UK, commented: “Boeing is committed in the UK as well as on a global basis to ensuring student success through teacher development and improving school leadership as well as, on the broadest possible basis and in line with the national curriculum, encouraging interest in aviation and aerospace. This exciting project will directly engage young people and their teachers with the practical elements of science, technology and engineering in a fun and inspiring way.”

As with all aviation projects there will be focus on the commercial arrangements with the successful schools being expected to market and sell the aircraft. The funds raised from the sale will be reinvested in the project, enabling other schools to take part in the scheme. Securing the sale at an early stage in the process will help de-risk the project. The schools will be expected to maintain a video diary of the project and document their experience in order to help successive schools taking part in the challenge.

-ENDS-

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