



FACT SHEET

Bell Textron, Inc.

The company was founded on July 10, 1935, by Lawrence Dale Bell in Buffalo, New York. The company's original name was Bell Aircraft Corp.

Bell's initial focus was on the design and construction of fighter aircraft. The first helicopters the company produced were the XFM-1 Airacuda and the P-39 Airacobra. The company also created the P-59 Airacomet, the first American jet fighter; the P-63 Kingcobra, the successor to the P-39; and the Bell X-1.

Bell hired an inventor named Arthur M. Young in 1941 to conduct helicopter research and development. Bell's goal was to broaden the company's economic base so that it would be less reliant on government contracts.

The first full-sized helicopter Bell produced was the Bell 30, which conducted its maiden flight on Dec. 29, 1942. The Bell 47 was the first helicopter in the world to be rated by a civil aviation authority. It was used successfully in both civilian and military roles.

Bell Aerospace consisted of three divisions of Bell Aircraft Corp., including its helicopter division. Textron purchased Bell Aerospace in 1960 and renamed the helicopter division Bell Helicopter Co. Within a few years, the company became the largest division of Textron thanks to the success of the UH-1 that was used in the Vietnam War.

Textron changed the name of the company to Bell Helicopter Textron in January 1976. Bell developed manufacturing and technology agreements with Agusta to produce the Bell 206 and sublicenses via Agusta with Westland to produce the Bell 47, as well as other aircraft. When Agusta and Westland merged, the partnerships were retained, but the AB139 became known as the AW139.

Bell Helicopter invented tiltrotor aircraft that lift vertically like a helicopter and then fly like an airplane. They have twice the speed, three times the payload, and five times the range of traditional helicopters.

Bell Helicopter has delivered over 35,000 aircraft to customers around the world. The company is currently headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas.

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