GEORGIA TECH RESEARCH

News Release
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GEORGIA TECH GETS CENTER
FOR HELICOPTER TECHNOLOGY

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ATLANTA, Ga. -- Georgia Institute of Technology has been chosen by the U. S. Army for national leadership in rotary wing aircraft technology.

Tech ranked number one among 17 universities competing for designation as one of three Army-funded Centers of Excellence in helicopter technology. Georgia Tech's internationally-known School of Aerospace Engineering will receive up to $5.8 million over the next five years to expand academic curricula and research activities in rotary wing technology.

The U. S. Army Research Office is sponsoring these Centers of Excellence to stimulate more continuous research in helicopter technology and more comprehensive training for engineers in this field. Though rotorcraft are much less developed than fixed wing airplanes, they receive a much smaller proportionate share of R&D funds than the latter.

As a result, rotary wing design is still nearly as much an art as it is a science. Extensive R&D programs are necessary to overcome the enormous aerostructural complexities of helicopter flight.

"Georgia Tech has worked in this field for 50 years and has five faculty members working extensively in helicopter technology," says Dr. Arnold Ducoffe, director of Tech's School of Aerospace Engineering. "We will fulfill our commitment to the Army by establishing full M.S. and Ph.D. level curricula in rotary wing aircraft technology, with a special emphasis on design, and by conduct of state-of-the-art research in the disciplines of aerodynamics, aeroelasticity and structures."

In the past, enrollment in helicopter technology courses has been sporadic, a factor which has limited the level of support which Georgia Tech could provide in this area. The new Center will attempt to stimulate greater student participation through greater numbers of students from the Defense establishment and through a well-endowed fellowship and research assistantship program sponsored by the Army.

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This expansion of academic offerings will necessarily broaden the research program in rotary aircraft technology at Tech. Army funds will be used to upgrade and add research facilities for this effort. New facilities will consist of a 16-foot static thrust stand along with computer hardware and software for use in computer-aided engineering and design. Georgia Tech's existing nine-foot wind tunnel and model helicopter test facility will be upgraded by adding a data acquisition system, a laser doppler velocimeter and measurement hardware such as hot-wire anemometry.

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