

# B-1 SPO Touts Towed Decoy for Operational Capability

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**ASC/YD** – On 29 Jan 99, the B-1 System Program Office (SPO) fielded its first performance upgrade to the B-1's defensive system since the aircraft was initially fielded in 1986. The B-1 SPO integrated the Navy-developed ALE-50 towed decoy system on the B-1 meeting its Required Assets Available commitment to Air Combat Command one month ahead of schedule. By the end of February, Ellsworth AFB will have seven Towed Decoy System equipped aircraft.

The ALE-50 towed decoy system is a radio frequency repeater jammer built by Raytheon. The B-1 tows a decoy hundreds of feet behind the aircraft to provide a more inviting radar target to enemy missiles. During operational testing in late 1997, the Towed Decoy System proved to be highly effective—exceeding operation requirements by a factor of four.

Rate production for the B-1 fleet begins in April 99 with the last modification taking place in early 2003. The modification will be accomplished at OC-ALC in conjunction with the B-1 Programmed Depot Maintenance schedule. Production rates for the new system peak at 19 aircraft modified per year.

The Towed Decoy System in conjunction with the recent fielded B-1 Joint Direct Attack Munition/Global Positioning System modification provides the B-1 with a significant conventional capability. The B-1 can now deliver 24 JDAM precision-guided weapons in a hostile environment and survive.