Boeing And McDonnell Douglas To Work Together On Joint Strike Fighter

The Boeing Company and McDonnell Douglas Corporation today announced that the two companies have agreed to work together on the Boeing Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program. The memorandum of agreement, signed Jan. 20, is unrelated to the planned merger of the two aerospace companies.

The agreement announced today is similar to that made public late last year involving commercial programs. It initially involves approximately 50 McDonnell Douglas engineers and managers, some of whom will temporarily relocate to Seattle to work on the JSF program, with the remainder working on JSF-related tasks in St. Louis. The specifics of the assignments undertaken by the McDonnell Douglas people will be defined as the work evolves and, as such, will not be made public immediately. The Joint Strike Fighter is an affordable, multi-service aircraft that will enter service in the next century with the U.S. Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy and the United Kingdom Royal Navy. These armed forces will need as many as 3,000 Joint Strike Fighters to replace several different aircraft in service today.

Mickey Michellich, Boeing vice president for the Joint Strike Fighter program, said the strategic teaming will allow the company to take full advantage of McDonnell Douglas' broad range of design prototyping and production experience in fighter aircraft. "McDonnell has a proud heritage in tactical aviation and we are excited about the prospects of applying their expertise to the Boeing Joint Strike Fighter program," Michellich said.

"This agreement benefits not only both of the companies involved but also the customers of the Joint Strike Fighter program," said McDonnell Douglas Vice President John Steurer, who leads the McDonnell Douglas JSF effort.

Boeing and McDonnell Douglas have worked together on other aerospace projects. They are both members of the team responsible for design and construction of the International Space Station and also participate in the international study group exploring the potential for next-generation supersonic commercial transports.

On Nov. 16, 1996, Boeing was awarded a $662 million contract from the Department of Defense to proceed with the Concept Demonstration Phase (CDP) of the Joint Strike Fighter program. During the four-year CDP, Boeing will demonstrate critical technologies, processes and characteristics of its plan to produce an affordable JSF. The company also will define a multi-service preferred system concept for the next phase of the JSF program, the Engineering and Manufacturing Demonstration (EMD) program.

The CDP contract also calls for Boeing to build and flight-test two airplanes. One aircraft will demonstrate characteristics of both the Air Force Conventional Takeoff and Landing (CTOL) and the Navy's carrier-based (CV) variants. The second aircraft will demonstrate the Short Takeoff and Vertical Landing (STOVL) variant envisioned for use by the Marine Corps and the Royal Navy.

###