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Boeing announced today it has formalized a core team of highly qualified suppliers to help it in its bid to win the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) program and proceed to engineering and manufacturing development (EMD). The suppliers comprising the Boeing Joint Strike Fighter Industry Team are:

- Flight Refuelling, Ltd., of Dorset, England (fuel system)
- Marconi Electronic Systems of Stanmore, England (vehicle management system and cockpit displays)
- Messier-Dowty, Ltd., of Gloucester, England (main and nose landing gear system)
- Pratt & Whitney of West Palm Beach, Fla. (JSF119 engine and exhaust nozzle)
- Raytheon Systems Company of Rosslyn, Va., (select mission systems)
- Rolls-Royce, plc., of Bristol, England (vertical lift propulsion system, attitude control system)

"Each of these suppliers is a leader in its class," said Frank Statkus, Boeing vice president and Joint Strike Fighter program manager. "They have earned their way onto this program by proving their expertise, innovation and low-cost solutions. They bring a distinct competitive advantage to the Boeing JSF concept."

Each of them also supplies highly critical systems that are discriminating factors in the success of the Boeing proposal.

Boeing has solidified its relationship with these suppliers through a variety of agreements that share one common element -- a long-term commitment to the Boeing JSF.

"We're linked for the future," Statkus said. "We're sharing a vision of success and developing an affordability strategy together. We'll also develop our EMD proposal together. It will be a very dynamic, collaborative effort that captures all of our strengths."

"The team will grow as other suppliers who ascribe to our shared commitment and team-oriented management practices come on board."

To implement this common commitment, Boeing is working to minimize subcontractor oversight. Traditionally, supplier engineers are required to route design changes through several layers of Boeing engineering management before they are approved. On JSF, these suppliers will be empowered to approve their own changes. Other adjustments to the way Boeing works with its suppliers are underway.

The international profile of the Boeing JSF Industry Team reflects the global nature of the program. The U.S. Department of Defense has created opportunities for allied governments to participate in the JSF program. The United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway, The Netherlands and Canada have already taken advantage of this opportunity and are active partners.

In addition to the U.K., other international suppliers to the Boeing JSF are based in The Netherlands, Denmark and Canada.

"We don't think it's prudent to limit our supplier base to one country," Statkus said. "Top-notch engineering and manufacturing expertise exist throughout the world, and we can leverage that expertise to develop the most affordable JSF for current and future customers."

Boeing is competing to build the JSF for the U.S. Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps and U.K. Royal Navy under a four-year concept demonstration phase contract that includes the production and flight test of two concept demonstrators. A competition winner will be selected in 2001.

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