Boeing Awarded $2 Million DoD Contract for Next-Generation Communications System

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] announced today that a $2-million Department of Defense (DoD) contract has been awarded to the company's Government Information & Communications Systems (GI&CS) business area in Anaheim, Calif. to assist in the validation of an open systems architectural concept currently being developed for the DoD's Joint Tactical Radio System (JTRS) Joint Program Office.

GI&CS will be responsible for developing a JTRS Core Framework, which is the operating system for the next-generation software radio, and a four-channel prototype to validate the JTRS Software Communications Architecture (SCA). The SCA defines JTRS standards that will be the basis for all future DoD tactical radios. The development of the critical Core Framework element will provide Boeing with a design and test center for future JTRS-compliant software applications and hardware products.

Under the terms of the contract, GI&CS will also conduct a study on how best to integrate JTRS onboard airborne platforms.

"Boeing's JTRS activities are one element of the company's strategic commitment to solving the most demanding communication needs of the DoD," said Carl O'Berry, GI&CS vice president and general manager. "This win is key to achieving our vision of a 'system-of-systems' approach to ensure timely and accurate information delivery anywhere in the world."

The JTRS is a software programmable communication system that will improve warfighter capability by providing military commanders with the ability to command, control and communicate with their forces via voice, video and data during all military operations. The system will be developed for use in all environmental domains, including airborne, ground, mobile and fixed station, and will be based on a common communications system architecture that will be interoperable with legacy communications systems and will be capable of future technology insertion.

Existing tactical communications sytems by comparision have minimal interoperability across systems and limited potential for enhancement.

Boeing views the JTRS as a complex communication system, not as a radio program, according to O'Berry. Boeing brings unique strengths to the project in the area of large-scale communication systems architecture development and integration, software development and integration, and advanced network design and security architectures for software defined radios. Ultimately, the vision is to create complete interoperability between the ground, air and space arms of the U.S. Government to achieve global connectivity.

The architecture development and validation phase, which includes multiple vendor validation efforts, is the second leg of a three-phase project and is expected to be completed in 2001. During the first phase, a Boeing-led industry consortium was awarded a $1.5 million cost-sharing agreement to conduct a baseline architecture definition study.

Once the architecture is developed and validated, phase three activities will result in procurement and integration of systems and waveforms that are compliant with the SCA and which satisfy individual DoD user requirements. Service procurement is expected in 2001.

Work on the JTRS contract will be performed in Anaheim, Calif.

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