Boeing Delta IV Common Booster Core/RS-68 Main Engine Completes Successful Extended Duration Test

Continuing with testing of the Delta IV Common Booster Core (CBC) and integrated RS-68 main engine at NASA's Stennis Space Center, Boeing [NYSE:BA] officials today announced another successful test, the third in the program's series of integrated stage assembly tests.

Conducted at 3:32 p.m. CDT on Tuesday, the test lasted 145 seconds, ending upon depletion of the liquid hydrogen fuel. The test demonstrated the integrated performance and operation of the CBC and RS-68 through various test sequences representing an actual flight, including engine shutdown after complete fuel consumption.

"The success of this test is another important step toward our first launch in early 2002," said Dan Collins, vice president and program manager of Delta and Titan programs. "The Delta team demonstrated the ability to detect liquid hydrogen fuel depletion and the performance of the integrated booster. This test validated these profiled areas and proved that our engineering, manufacturing and integration processes also work. The Delta IV program will now move forward with more advanced tests of the CBC and RS-68."

Other elements of this week's test included a "planned recycle," where Boeing engineers halted the countdown, then resumed it, simulating an actual countdown. Thrust vectoring or "gimbaling" of the main engine was conducted to test the engine's lateral movement. Throttle power settings ranging from 58 to 101 percent held at various duration times were also tested.

According to Collins, the quick-look data indicated that all aspects of Tuesday's demonstration were successful.

The next Delta IV CBC/RS-68 test will simulate a Delta IV Heavy mission profile with a liquid oxygen depletion shutdown and related systems performance.

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Boeing Delta Web Site

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