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The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] today announced the selection of four industry leaders as partners in pursuit of a multimillion- dollar U.S. Army Joint Tactical Radio System (JTRS) contract that will bring the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) one step closer to full interoperability of America's Armed Services.

The Boeing-led team includes TRW of Carson, Calif.; BAE SYSTEMS of Wayne, N.J., who is partnered with Harris Corporation of Rochester, N.Y.; and Rockwell Collins of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Together the team will compete for the first of several clusters of JTRS software-defined radios. This initial procurement, referred to as Cluster 1, will be led by the U.S. Army for the joint services.

"JTRS is a complex communications system that requires an innovative approach and extensive knowledge in large-scale system design, development and integration," said Jim Albaugh, president and chief executive officer of Boeing Space and Communications. "Boeing has formed a strong partnership with the Army's premier air- and ground-system integrators and exceptional hardware providers to provide the best technical solution to our nation's warfighters."

The JTRS is a Defense Department initiative to develop a family of software-programmable tactical radios that provide commanders with voice, data and video communications as well as interoperability across the joint battlespace. Existing radio communications systems are built for specific purposes, are generally not interoperable and have insufficient bandwidth to meet the increasing communications demands of today's and tomorrow's joint digital battlespace.

JTRS radios are based on a Software Communications Architecture (SCA), designed by industry to be interoperable with legacy communications systems and flexible enough to evolve in response to changing warfighter requirements and technology advancements. Thus, the JTRS will bridge existing stove-piped systems by handling multiple communications requirements in a single programmable unit.

The Army's Communications-Electronics Command (CECOM) is expected to award a three-year Cluster 1 design and development contract in January 2002 to one of two competing teams. The winning team will have responsibility for the design of the JTRS architecture, the development of JTRS-compliant waveforms and the development of two qualified hardware production sources for more than 10,000 ground vehicular and airborne systems. Future production quantities generated by the Cluster 1 program are expected to exceed 100,000 units.

As prime systems integrator, Boeing will be responsible for the design and integration of the JTRS Cluster 1 vehicular and airborne systems; the acquisition of both legacy waveforms and a new wideband network waveform; and the development of two qualified production sources. Boeing is a premier integrator of large-scale systems, with vast experience managing complex systems such as Apache Longbow, the world's most advanced combat helicopter for the U.S. Army, and the Combat Survivor Evader Locator, a software-programmable command and control system developed in support of combat air and sea rescue operations.

TRW, who is prime contractor for the Army's Force XXI Battle Command Brigade-and-Below program and has extensive knowledge of the Army's digitization process, will support Boeing in the overall systems engineering effort and will be responsible for the integration of ground platforms.

World-class communications systems providers BAE SYSTEMS with support from Harris Corporation, and Rockwell Collins will have responsibility for developing the ground vehicular and airborne systems for the Army and U.S. Marine Corps, and the Tactical Air Control Party communications system for the U.S. Air Force. BAE SYSTEMS is a world leader in the design and production of wideband tactical networking radios and is the winner of the JTRS Phase 2C networked radio prototype contract. In addition to providing ground, maritime and networking communications systems, Rockwell Collins is a leading airborne communications provider for the joint services with dependable, high-quality manufacturing facilities across the United States. Harris Corporation's RF Communications division, a leading supplier of secure radio communications products, systems and networks for voice and data, will provide design and manufacturing capabilities in support of BAE SYSTEMS.

JTRS program activity will be managed out of Boeing's Battle Management Command, Control & Communications (BMC3) and Strategic Systems business segment in Anaheim, Calif.

The Boeing Company is the largest aerospace company in the world and the United States' leading exporter. It is NASA's largest contractor and the largest manufacturer of commercial jetliners and military aircraft. The company's capabilities in aerospace also include rotorcraft, electronic and defense systems, missiles, rocket engines, launch vehicles, satellites, and advanced information and communication systems. The company has an extensive global reach with customers in 145 countries.

For further information: Mary McAdam (714) 762-0178 mary.m.mcadam@boeing.com