Boeing Reaches Another Major Design Milestone for Project Wedgetail

The Boeing Company [NYSE:BA] has successfully completed the preliminary design review for the airborne mission system for Australia's Project Wedgetail, taking a major step toward manufacturing parts for the 737 airborne early warning & control system (AEW&C).

A Boeing-led aerospace industry team will provide four 737 AEW&C systems plus options for up to three additional systems. The contract also provides for ground-based support segments for flight and mission crew training, a mission support segment, software maintenance facilities and spare parts. Boeing expects to deliver the first two aircraft to the Commonwealth of Australia in 2006.

"The airborne mission segment is the most complex and highly integrated single element in the overall AEW&C System we are buying from Boeing. The review therefore represented the culmination of a huge amount of work", said Group Capt. Lindsay Ward, leader of the Australian Defence Resident Project team.

"Under our partnering approach with the contractor team headed by Boeing, the program has a solid track record of facing up to and resolving issues so that we can keep forging ahead while still meeting required capability outcomes. This review was no exception."

The review was conducted on schedule -- one year after the start of the System Acquisition contract. It includes a general review of the airborne mission system design against the requirements established by the Commonwealth of Australia. It shows how the radar, communications, mission computing , electronic warfare self protection, navigation, and aircraft subsystems integrate together.

Ross Dessert, Boeing Wedgetail program manager, said, "The success of the preliminary design review shows we have a functional design for the 737 AEW&C system and we're rapidly moving toward the release of drawings and the building of parts.

"The teamwork by our Australian customer and our partners Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems, BAE SYSTEMS Australia and Boeing Australia was outstanding. Their hard work, focus and commitment are helping making this state-of the-art AEW&C system a reality."

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