Boeing EDD Awarded Electric Propulsion Contract for NASA Mission

Boeing [NYSE:BA] has been awarded a contract by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) to provide the electric propulsion system to be used on the Dawn spacecraft.

Boeing Electron Dynamic Devices, Inc. (EDD), located in Torrance, CA., will be responsible for the production of three xenon ion thrusters and two power processor units (PPUs) to be used NASA's latest Discovery program.

This electric propulsion system will provide the primary propulsion for the Dawn mission as it travels to Vesta and continues on to Ceres. NASA scientists are hoping to discover how planets are formed and find additional clues as to the origins of the solar system.

"EDD is pleased to support NASA -- JPL on this important mission," said Chris Stephens, EDD vice president and general manager. "This award represents our customer's confidence in EDD to provide quality electric propulsion as was demonstrated in the highly successful NASA Deep Space One (DS1) mission."

The ion thrusters and PPUs for the Dawn spacecraft will be identical to the NSTAR equipment that was qualified and flown on the highly successful NASA Deep Space One mission. The DS1 flight spare ion thruster has achieved more than 30,000 hours of operation and processed more than 235kg of xenon in a life test at JPL. This demonstrates that the NSTAR ion thrusters could meet the Dawn mission requirements of 19,000 hours and 150kg of propellant throughput per thruster.

The Dawn ion thrusters and PPUs will be produced and tested at the EDD facility in Torrance with delivery by late 2004. The Dawn mission is currently scheduled for launch in May 2006.

Boeing EDD is a leading provider of high reliability products to space and defense customers and the world leader in the development and production of xenon ion thrusters and associated power processor units. EDD serves as an independent merchant supplier under Boeing Integrated Defense Systems.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $25 billion business. It provides systems solutions to its global military, government and commercial customers. It is a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; the world's largest military aircraft manufacturer; the world's largest satellite manufacturer and a leading provider of space-based communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader in launch services.

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