Boeing Awarded $189 Million Space-Based Surveillance System Contract

A Boeing [BA: NYSE] and Ball Aerospace team has won a $189 million contract to develop and initially operate the Space-Based Space Surveillance System (SBSS) for the U.S. Air Force.

The SBSS detects and tracks space objects, such as satellites and orbital debris. The Department of Defense will utilize data generated by the SBSS to support military operations. Additionally, NASA could use the information to calculate orbital debris collision avoidance measures for the International Space Station and Space Shuttle missions.

"To be part of the team selected to develop and field this highly innovative and critically important space-based capability for the Air Force is a great honor," said Tom McDonald, vice president of Transformational Space Systems for Phantom Works, Boeing's advanced R&D unit. "In addition to its importance to the Air Force, this program also opens an important new market for Boeing and industry."

The SBSS contract calls for the Boeing team to develop a satellite, the ground segment, and provide launch services. The team will also be responsible for mission planning, mission data processing and operation of the system for up to one year, prior to transitioning it to the Air Force. The SBSS satellite is slated to be launched by mid to late 2007.

"Boeing is extremely pleased to have the opportunity to develop and field this important new-generation space capability for the Air Force," said John Fuller, executive director, Boeing Air Force Space Systems.

After the competitive down-select process, Boeing was chosen for the SBSS sub-contract by Northrop Grumman Mission Systems, acting on behalf of the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center. Northrop Grumman Mission Systems carried out this function through the Mission Area Prime Integration Contract with the Air Force. By winning this initial SBSS contract, Boeing is strategically positioned to compete for follow-on contracts and other related programs in the Space Situation Awareness (SSA) market. Current projection for the SSA mission area is valued at more than $2 billion.

The Boeing SBSS program office is located in Huntington Beach, Calif., and draws upon Boeing expertise in El Segundo, Calif.; Maui, Hawaii; Colorado Springs, Colo.; and Leesburg, Va.; Ball Aerospace in Boulder, Colo.; and Harris Corp., in Melbourne, Fla.

Phantom Works is the advanced research and development unit and catalyst of innovation for the Boeing enterprise. Through its Integrated Defense Advanced Systems group, it provides leading edge systems and technology solutions to Boeing Integrated Defense Systems, one the world's largest space and defense businesses.

Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $27 billion business that 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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