New Boeing Thrusters to be Integrated with Missile Defense Weapon

The Rocketdyne Propulsion & Power business unit of the Integrated Defense Systems of The Boeing Company [NYSE:BA] has delivered the first flight-configuration Divert and Attitude Control System (DACS) for the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defense system to prime contractor Lockheed Martin. The DACS is a propulsion system consisting of small liquid-fueled rocket thrusters that provide the THAAD interceptor with the ability to maneuver as it closes on its target.

"This recent success continues Boeing's role as a key provider of propulsion systems for missile defense. We're confident that the DACS will carry on a long tradition of superb performance when THAAD enters flight testing later this year," said Rocketdyne general manager and vice president Byron Wood.

The delivery follows recent successful testing of the rocket thrusters, as well as a design verification test where the entire DACS completed a full-duration hot-fire demonstration of an actual mission. The design verification test, or DVT, was performed at the Air Force Research Laboratory's National Hover Test Facility at Edwards Air Force Base on April 29th.

An initial data review indicates all test objectives of the DVT were met and the DACS performed as expected. Post-test analysis of the data is in progress and expected to demonstrate the DACS design is in full compliance with its specified system level requirements.

THAAD is a critical element in the Ballistic Missile Defense System and is designed to intercept incoming ballistic missiles at very high altitudes, far away from the critical military and civilian assets it is intended to protect. The THAAD system is comprised of command and control/battle management, radar, missiles and launchers. THAAD can be quickly transported by air to any location as needed.

After a Program Development & Risk Reduction phase, Lockheed Martin was awarded the prime contract for the THAAD Development Program in 2000. The THAAD missile is powered by a single-stage solid-propellant rocket motor with thrust vectoring. After burnout, the booster is separated from the kill vehicle (KV), which continues to the intercept point, using the liquid-fueled DACS thrusters to guide it to hit the incoming warhead. The KV destroys the target by force of a direct impact.

Flight testing of THAAD is scheduled to begin later this year. The successful DACS tests are important milestones leading up to flight testing.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $27 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 leading provider of space-based communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader of launch services.

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