

Boeing CONECT Contract to Bring NCO Capability to B-52

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The U.S. Air Force has awarded Boeing (NYSE:BA) a \$216.7 million contract to begin the system design and development (SDD) phase for the B-52 Combat Network Communications Technology (CONECT) program.

The CONECT program will serve as the enabler for Network-Centric Operations (NCO) capability on the B-52 and will allow the Air Force to transform the aircraft's mission through information integration, both on-board and off-board the aircraft.

"CONECT is the newest chapter in the B-52's history as an extremely versatile and adaptable weapon system," said Pat Finneran, vice president and general manager of Aerospace Support, part of Boeing Integrated Defense Systems. "CONECT will provide the warfighter an NCO-enabled platform to operate within the integrated battlespace."

The CONECT program will improve the B-52's ability to share data with other military systems and platforms through enhanced communications, added tactical data links for increased situational awareness, and new technology allowing aircraft crews to dynamically retask missions and weapons during flight. Components include an architectural foundation of color displays, networks and computational assets, a Link-16 tactical data link, and an advanced wideband terminal which will provide B-52 crews significant enhancements in situational awareness and communication capabilities.

The SDD phase is scheduled to run through 2009. Plans are to eventually modify the entire fleet of B-52s. Potential total contract value is estimated at \$500 million.

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 \$30.5 billion business. It provides network-centric system solutions to its global military, government, and commercial customers. It is a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems; 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 and Department of Homeland Security; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader in sustainment solutions and launch services.

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