Boeing Awarded Additional $175 Million for Joint Unmanned Combat Air Systems Capability Demonstration Program

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) awarded Boeing [NYSE: BA] an additional $175 million to continue the X-45C portion of the Joint Unmanned Combat Air Systems (J-UCAS) Capability Demonstration Program.

This new award continues the demonstration program and adds a full demonstration of a new Autonomous Aerial Refueling technology. The autonomous refueling effort will continue ongoing Air Force Research Laboratory and Boeing development activities and culminate in an in-flight X-45C refueling by a KC-135 tanker in 2010.

"With autonomous refueling, the X-45C provides an even longer sustained, lethal presence in hostile airspace holding enemy forces open to immediate surveillance or destruction," said David Koopersmith, Boeing J-UCAS X-45 vice president and program manager. "The Boeing X-45C will effectively and affordably fill critical gaps in key Air Force and Navy mission areas."

Boeing previously received $767 million from DARPA in October 2004 to build and flight test three X-45C air vehicles, two mission control elements, and integrate the J-UCAS Common Operating System. The first X-45C will be completed in 2006, with flight-testing scheduled to begin in 2007. Since Boeing began the J-UCAS Advanced Technology Demonstration Program, two X-45A's have flown 55 test missions at NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center, Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

Winner of a 2005 Flight International Aerospace Industry Award, the J-UCAS X-45 program is a DARPA/U.S. Air Force/U.S. Navy/Boeing effort to demonstrate the technical feasibility, military utility and operational value of an unmanned air combat system for the Navy and Air Force. Operational missions for the services may include persistent strike; penetrating electronic attack; suppression of enemy air defenses; and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

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; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader in sustainment solutions and launch services.
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