

Boeing's Combat Survivor Evader Locator Authorized for use in Middle East Theatre

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The United States Central Command (CENTCOM), which oversees military operations in the Persian Gulf region, has announced the Boeing [NYSE: BA] Combat Survivor Evader Locator (CSEL) communications system has been authorized for use by the joint services now operating in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The announcement comes after CENTCOM completed final testing of the CSEL communications system, which allows rescue teams to quickly and securely locate and recover isolated personnel within minutes or hours.

"The CSEL survival radio system gives our troops a critical tool that can help ensure their safe return, should they become isolated," said Master Sgt. Jonathan Redfern, Aircrew Life Support superintendent, CENTCOM Joint Search and Rescue Center.

The CSEL communication system provides capabilities far beyond just a hand-held radio. The system provides complete end-to-end system architecture, including: secure digital message communications, Global Positioning System (GPS), line-of-sight, voice and the full spectrum of radio and ground equipment interfaces required to work with existing search and rescue systems.

CSEL's capabilities are enabled through a system of 14 fixed and six portable joint search and rescue centers around the globe. The system enables search and rescue capabilities, including GPS location and assured communications, anywhere in the world.

"In addition to its advanced features," said Mike Bates, Boeing's Anaheim, Calif.-based CSEL program manager, "the radio supports all legacy international and maritime rescue beacon waveforms. Thus, a survivor downed in friendly territory, or under no immediate threat of capture by the enemy, can use the standard radio beacons to elicit help from other agencies such as the Coast Guard."

The CSEL multifunction hand-held radio portion of the system is specially designed for easy, intuitive use. Unique communication and message encryption prevents signals from being intercepted. Additionally, an extended battery life ensures crucial contact for extended periods.

Boeing received a full-rate production order from the U.S. Air Force in March 2005. To date, the CSEL program has enabled 20 joint search and rescue centers, UHF base stations, nearly 200 CSEL planning computer systems and has delivered more than 6,000 CSEL radios to the joint services.

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