Boeing Awarded Contract to Upgrade B-1 Bomber Radar

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] has received a $180 million contract to upgrade the fire control radar on the U.S. Air Force's fleet of 67 B-1B long-range bomber aircraft.

Under a nine-year Reliability and Maintainability Improvement Program (RMIP), Boeing will deliver modification kits to replace the bombers' receiver and processor beginning in 2011. The RMIP kit, built principally by subcontractor Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems, Baltimore, Md., comprises a new radar transmitter/receiver, a radar processor computer and a translated, rehosted software package.

"The RMIP kit will increase the radar system's reliability and substantially improve the B-1's combat readiness," said Kurt Eberhart, manager of Boeing's B-1 radar program in Long Beach, Calif. "Current and future missions depend heavily on the aircraft's ability to find and track targets, so this modification to the synthetic aperture radar is critical."

John C. Johnson, vice president and general manager of Northrop Grumman's Aerospace Systems division, added, "Although the AN/APQ-164 radar has successfully provided target detection, location tracking and accurate weapon delivery since 1985, the RMIP will improve reliability threefold, resolve the problem of diminishing manufacturing sources and keep the B-1 mission-capable."

Boeing will support field installation and checkout of the RMIP kits at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas; Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D.; and Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. Installation is scheduled to be completed in 2014. Boeing will flight-test the upgraded aircraft at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

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