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Boeing [NYSE: BA] and a team of U.S. bio-defense companies will modify the ScanEagle unmanned air vehicle (UAV) to look for biological warfare agents as part of a program funded by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) of the U.S. Department of Defense.

The DTRA has awarded Boeing Phantom Works a two-year, Phase 1 contract worth \$8.2 million for the Biological Combat Assessment System (BCAS) Advanced Technology Demonstration (ATD) program.

The DTRA and the Boeing-led team will work with the U.S. Pacific Command and the U.S. Navy Third Fleet to design and develop a remote sensor system that can assess battle damage and collateral effects, employing breakthrough operational capabilities to locate, track, collect and detect simulated biological warfare agents in a designated target area.

The team will integrate the sensor system into the Boeing-Insitu ScanEagle UAV and then will demonstrate the system's capabilities in flight tests. Successful flight tests will lead to a possible Phase 2 follow-on contract and limited production options with the DTRA worth \$15 million.

"Being able to accurately determine whether a target area has biological or chemical agents, or other weapons of mass destruction, is vital to the ability of U.S. forces to successfully complete missions against terrorist threats and minimize the danger that could come to friendly forces or civilians," said Keith Coleman, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems program manager for DTRA BCAS. "The technologies that we develop as part of this program will demonstrate an end-to-end combat assessment capability that we expect will have high value in the DoD's Global War on Terrorism."

Boeing, which for the first time is serving as a lead systems integrator on a program directed solely toward chemical and biological defense, is drawing on scientists and engineers from across the company and industry to execute the DTRA BCAS program. Industry team members include the Midwest Research Institute, Applied Research Associates and Steris. From within Boeing, team members come from Boeing Commercial Airplanes, the Advanced Systems group of Integrated Defense Systems, and the Phantom Works organizations of Engineering and Information Technology and Advanced Homeland Security.

"These team members have broad experience and expertise in investigating advanced technologies and developing integrated chemical and biological countermeasures systems for military and commercial applications," said John Stammreich, Boeing Phantom Works vice president of Advanced Homeland Security. "Many of these applications are in the Homeland Security marketplace, where Boeing is engaged with more than 30 active Homeland Security-related projects and programs. We expect the work of the team for DTRA BCAS to provide an effective solution for our government customer and to create additional business opportunities in areas that are important to national security."

The BCAS ATD effort began in the Weapons of Mass Destruction Counterforce Applications Branch of the DTRA Technology Development Directorate. Its mission is to develop WMD counterforce planning tools, weapons and assessment system technologies; demonstrate prototype systems in operationally realistic environments; support the DoD in defining concepts of operations; and provide enhanced capabilities to the Combatant Commands. Currently, the Chemical and Biological Technologies Directorate will administer the DTRA BCAS ATD program.

The enhanced capabilities are in response to potential adversaries who can develop and/or deploy chemical, biological and/or radiological weapons of mass destruction in conflicts involving the United States or its allies and coalition partners.

Phantom Works is the advanced research and development unit and a catalyst for innovation for The Boeing Company. It provides advanced solutions and innovative, breakthrough technologies that reduce cycle time and cost while improving the quality and performance of aerospace products and services.

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