Boeing Wins $27 Million SDB I Focused Lethality Munition Contract

Boeing [NYSE: BA] recently received the first phase of a $27 million U.S. Air Force contract for the Small Diameter Bomb I Focused Lethality Munition (SDB I FLM) Joint Capability Technology Demonstration (JCTD).

"FLM is a very low collateral damage variant of our SDB I system that provides a large blast effect with very few metal fragments," said Boeing SDB Program Manager Dan Jaspering. "It will allow the warfighter to prosecute targets in confined areas while minimizing the risk of damaging adjacent structures."

Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and the U.S Air Force Research Laboratory developed the technology for the FLM warhead. Under the JCTD contract, Boeing will incorporate the FLM technology into the SDB I system, perform a series of ground and flight tests, and manufacture a limited number of FLM weapons.

The FLM warhead design features an advanced, multi-phase blast explosive and a composite carbon fiber warhead case allowing for pinpoint strikes with low collateral damage. "It is a very clever design, and early tests are encouraging," Jaspering said.

The weapons will undergo flight testing in August 2007. Boeing will deliver the first 50 weapons for operational assessment in January 2008, with the Air Force procuring as many as 450 SDB I FLM units through 2012.

An all-weather, 250-pound class weapon system, SDB I quadruples the number of weapons each aircraft can carry. At 71 inches long and with a standoff range of 60 nautical miles, the weapon is compatible with every U.S. fighter and bomber aircraft.

Boeing will manufacture more than 24,000 such weapons and 2,000 carriages for the Air Force. The Air Force is investing $1.2 billion for production, with deliveries planned beyond 2015.

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