Boeing Completes Key Risk Reduction Milestone for Space Surveillance System

The Boeing [NYSE:BA] team that is building the Space Based Space Surveillance (SBSS) system has successfully completed a key risk reduction milestone by selecting a vendor for the optical sensor that will fly aboard the Pathfinder spacecraft.

Team leader Boeing, along with space vehicle provider Ball Aerospace & Technologies Corp., have selected Semiconductor Technology Associates Incorporated (STA) of San Juan Capistrano, Calif., as the supplier of the charge coupled device (CCD), which is a critical element in the optical payload that will collect images aboard the spacecraft. STA's CCD has successfully completed environmental and life testing as part of the down selection process, another example of the rigorous risk reduction approach the Boeing-led team has implemented to meet program requirements with high confidence.

"This is a major accomplishment for our team as we continue to progress towards the program's critical design review (CDR) in November of this year," said Howard Chambers, vice president and general manager of Boeing's Space & Intelligence Systems (S&IS) division. "We understand the critical capability that SBSS will provide to our country's space situational awareness, and our team is focused on delivering a high quality product to meet our customer's needs."

Lt. Col. Steven Nessmiller, program manager for SBSS at the Air Force's Space and Missile Center, said: "This is another example of how the government and contractor team continues to execute on our plan to launch the spacecraft in December 2008. We are very pleased with the extraordinary capability that this system will bring to the space surveillance network."

The SBSS Pathfinder team identified the CCD development effort as the highest technological risk on the program. As a result, Ball Aerospace contracted with two vendors to develop, test and deliver flight-grade components. This approach enabled a competitive environment that resulted in the delivery of high-quality, flight-grade CCDs from both vendors. In the competition, STA was teamed with the University of Arizona's Imaging Technology Laboratory, which provided raw wafer processing and coatings.

"Ball has made significant investments in detector technology over many years," said David Taylor, CEO of Ball Aerospace. "The success on SBSS shows that these investments and the parallel development risk reduction strategy are paying off."

Under a contract awarded in March 2004, the Boeing team is developing a spacecraft with a visible sensor and ground segment to support a December 2008 launch. In addition, the Boeing team has an option to operate the system for up to one year prior to transitioning operations and maintenance to the Air Force customer. SBSS Pathfinder will augment the existing space surveillance network (SSN) and provide an increase in capacity and timeliness of detecting and tracking orbiting space objects, including potential future threats to America's space assets. The Department of Defense will utilize data generated by the system to support worldwide military operations.

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 $30.8 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; a foremost developer of advanced concepts and technologies; 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
###

For further information:
Joe Tedino
The Boeing Company
office: (703) 270 6678
joseph.j.tedino@boeing.com
Diana Ball
The Boeing Company
office: (562) 797-4303
diana.ball@boeing.com