

Future Combat Systems Successfully Completes Experiment and Soldier-testing of Key Technologies

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The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] and Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) [NYSE: SAI], functioning as the Lead Systems Integrator for the U.S. Army's Future Combat Systems (FCS) program, have successfully completed an eight-month experiment that is a cornerstone of soldier evaluation activities and an important step toward the early infusion of key FCS capabilities to the current force.

Experiment 1.1, spanning July 2006 through February 2007, is a three-phase effort that combines laboratory, field and demonstration activities with soldier testing of early FCS prototypes. The experiment will help reduce program risk; provide early feedback into the System of Systems development, integration and verification process; and identify and prioritize any needed refinements early in the development process.

"Experimentation is critical to FCS program success and most importantly will help enable the early spin out of key capabilities to the current force in 2008," said Dennis Muilenburg, vice president and general manager of Boeing Combat Systems and FCS program manager. "The successful completion of Experiment 1.1 further validates the progress and maturity of selected FCS technologies and demonstrated interoperability between FCS and current force systems."

Phase 1 engineering laboratory events, conducted July 2006 through September 2006 at the FCS System of Systems Integration Laboratory in Huntington Beach, Calif., and the Army's Systems Engineering and Experimentation Lab at Fort Monmouth, N.J., tested hardware and software integration, as well as networking and systems interoperability.

Phase 2 field events, conducted September 2006 through December 2006 at the White Sands Missile Range, N.M., and Ft. Bliss, Texas, testing complex, focused on gathering data and assessing FCS systems performance while operating in a realistic environment. The FCS team, which included more than a dozen U.S. Army soldiers as observers, demonstrated Non-Line-of-Sight Launch System networking, Distributed Fusion Management capabilities, Unattended Ground Sensors capabilities, Joint Tactical Radio System Ground Mobile Radio performance, and interoperability with current Army and Marine Corps systems.

During Phase 2, the FCS team also demonstrated interoperability between FCS and an AH-64D Apache multi-role helicopter. This included the exchange of real-time situational awareness and the ability to display video imagery from the FCS Class I Unmanned Aerial Vehicle in the helicopter's cockpit. The interoperability demonstration is an example of how FCS network-centric technology can be used to send the right information to the right place at the right time in the battlespace.

The final demonstration phase of Experiment 1.1, which was conducted January 2007 to February 2007 at the White Sands Missile Range and Ft. Bliss test complex, included 36 soldier participants who provided "hands-on" feedback of early FCS prototypes, while exercising initial doctrinal concepts for employing these new capabilities. Phase 3 represented the first time soldiers collectively employed FCS systems in a live training environment and used an FCS computer-based training support package.

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