Boeing Submits Ares I Crew Launch Vehicle Upper Stage Production Proposal

Boeing [NYSE: BA] today submitted its final cost volume bid to NASA for production of the Ares I crew launch vehicle upper stage.

The Boeing-led team provided a tailored proposal designed to meet or exceed NASA requirements by leveraging best-of-industry suppliers, including several with advanced technology development contracts on critical Ares I systems.

"We offer unique capability to NASA's Ares I team, bringing value based on our experience in commercial, defense and space programs, along with innovation and new advocacy and outreach efforts," said Jim Chilton, Boeing vice president of Exploration Launch Systems. "We are completely committed to delivering NASA a safe, affordable and producible upper stage."

Boeing's team of suppliers include Hamilton Sundstrand, a subsidiary of United Technologies Corp. [NYSE: UTX], Moog Inc. [NYSE: MOG.A and MOG.B], Northrop Grumman Corporation [NYSE: NOC], Orion Propulsion Inc., SUMMA Technology Inc., United Space Alliance and the United Launch Alliance.

"We recognize our suppliers are critical to our proposal, and we have worked closely with them to ensure they know our processes, approaches, people and tools and that their capabilities precisely match NASA's needs," said Chilton. "Boeing and its suppliers are fully prepared to continue our collaboration with NASA and are positioned to begin work immediately upon contract award."

Boeing submitted two earlier volumes: one on past performance on March 16 and another on mission suitability and plans on April 2. Delivery of this final Ares I upper stage production proposal volume culminates more than a year-long effort to bring Boeing's best lean manufacturing practices to NASA's Michoud Assembly Facility in New Orleans, La., where the upper stage will be built. NASA is expected to award the Ares I upper stage production contract in late August or early September.

Ares I, which will transport the Orion crew exploration vehicle to low Earth orbit, is an essential element of the nation's space exploration program that will return astronauts to the moon no later than 2020.

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