Boeing and iRobot Team to Develop New Reconnaissance Robot for Military, Civil and Commercial Use

Boeing [NYSE: BA] and iRobot Corp. [NASDAQ: IRBT] today announced they have signed a teaming agreement to design and develop a next-generation, small unmanned ground vehicle (SUGV) called the SUGV Early. The vehicle will provide military, civil and commercial users with unprecedented reconnaissance and secure, real-time intelligence capabilities.

The SUGV Early will be a smaller, lighter version of the iRobot PackBot, which is used daily in Iraq and Afghanistan to safely disarm Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and search buildings, caves and tunnels for hostile forces. To date, iRobot has delivered more than 900 PackBot robots to a broad range of military and civilian customers worldwide. The robots have performed tens of thousands of missions in Iraq and Afghanistan and are credited with saving soldiers' lives.

The remotely operated and highly maneuverable SUGV Early will feature a video camera and commercial electro-optics, infrared sensors mounted on an articulated manipulator arm and a track-driven chassis that will allow it to negotiate rough terrain and stairs. The 30-pound backpackable unit is designed for use in a wide range of hazardous situations, such as bomb disposal and disaster relief operations. The system, which utilizes commercial off-the-shelf technology and employs the basic design of future networked robotic systems currently under development for the U.S. Army, will be ready for delivery in 2008.

"This partnership allows Boeing and iRobot to combine our expertise, capabilities and resources to provide customers with a small robotic vehicle that can perform a variety of surveillance missions and assist soldiers, law enforcement officials and rescue workers performing high-risk operations," said Dennis Muilenburg, vice president and general manager, Boeing Combat Systems. "The SUGV Early builds on lessons learned from users of the combat-proven iRobot PackBot, as well as experimentation using next-generation prototypes, to provide a solution that meets immediate warfighter, civilian and commercial needs."

"The SUGV Early will have a large, diverse customer base," said Vice Adm. Joe Dyer (U.S. Navy, Ret.), president of iRobot Government and Industrial Robots. "By teaming with Boeing, we can leverage their system-of-system capabilities and global marketing strength to quickly get these life-saving robots into the hands of our troops, first responders and allies worldwide."

Under the agreement, Boeing will provide expertise in systems integration, large volume production and global marketing, while iRobot will design, develop and manufacture the robots. Boeing and iRobot will jointly offer these commercial robots to all U.S. Department of Defense, civil and international markets.

iRobot is a provider of robots that perform dull, dirty or dangerous missions in a better way. The company's proprietary technology, iRobot AWARE Robot Intelligence Systems, incorporates advanced concepts in navigation, mobility, manipulation and artificial intelligence. This proprietary system enables iRobot to build behavior-based robots, including its family of consumer and military robots. For additional information about iRobot, please visit www.irobot.com.
A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses specializing in innovative and capabilities-driven customer solutions. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $32.4 billion business with 72,000 employees worldwide.
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For further information:
Chick Ramey
The Boeing Company
office: (253) 657-5636
charles.b.ramey@boeing.com
Mary McAdam
The Boeing Company
office: (703) 647-1469
mary.m.mcadam@boeing.com