Boeing Demonstrates FAB-T Interoperability with Milstar Satellite

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] has successfully demonstrated for the first time that its Family of Advanced Beyond line-of-sight Terminals (FAB-T) system can acquire an operational satellite and complete downlink data transmissions.

During the Low Data Rate test, a FAB-T radio communicated with an operational Milstar satellite and completed a series of downlink tests, meeting program schedule commitments and laying the foundation for uplink tests and other interoperability assessments later this year. The test, conducted from Rockwell Collins' FAB-T Systems Integration Laboratory, used Boeing, RCI, ViaSat and L-3 Communications integrated hardware and software products.

"This successful FAB-T test is a significant milestone with an operational asset that demonstrates backwards compatibility with Milstar and provides the foundation for FAB-T Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) satellite communications capability," said Jim Dodd, Boeing FAB-T program manager. "The Boeing FAB-T team is pleased to have executed this important test achievement for the U.S. Air Force."

Further progress also has been made on the next block upgrade. The Extended Data Rate (XDR) software development is ahead of schedule, and L-3 Communications recently completed XDR uplink/downlink acquisition and tracking with the AEHF satellite simulator.

The FAB-T system includes software-defined radios, antennas and associated user interface hardware that will enable the government to host numerous waveforms that accommodate data rates in excess of 300 megabits per second. Once operational, FAB-T will provide critical, secure beyond line-of-sight communications capability for warfighters via various satellites that support military forces. Initial deliveries are scheduled to begin in December 2008.

FAB-T, a key enabler of network-centric communications, will provide strategic forces with a multi-mission-capable family of software-defined radios that use common open system architecture to link to different satellites and enable information exchange between ground, air and space platforms. FAB-T represents a key building block in Boeing's vision of the integrated battlespace of the future, where networked information and communications systems provide a competitive edge to decision-makers and military personnel.

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