Boeing Announces Completion of Sea-Based Radar's Mooring System

The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] today announced that the Sea-Based X-Band Radar (SBX) mooring system has been installed at SBX's homeport in Alaska, completing a key piece of infrastructure for the missile defense sensor.

Manson Construction, a Boeing subcontractor, used tugs, barges and cranes to place the mooring system's eight anchors on the bottom of Kuluk Bay. Heavy machinery aboard a barge then dragged the 75-metric-ton anchors, embedding them into the sea bed. The construction team completed the installation three weeks ahead of schedule.

"This was an enormous undertaking, and completing it 21 days ahead of schedule was the result of excellent planning and great team work by all players, including industry partners Manson Construction Co., Golder Co. and Glosten Associates; our government customer, the Missile Defense Agency; and the American Bureau of Shipping, which ensured the work met all mooring installation standards," said Paul Smith, director of Ground-based Midcourse Defense (GMD) radars.

When SBX visits its homeport of Adak, Alaska, a small island in the Aleutian Islands, it will be chained to the anchors to keep it stationary in Kuluk Bay.

SBX is a powerful new sensor developed by Boeing for the U.S. Missile Defense Agency's GMD system, the nation's only defense against long-range ballistic missiles. Boeing is GMD's prime contractor.

"The completion of the mooring system is an important achievement because it will allow the Sea-Based X-Band Radar to operate closer to shore, making it easier to protect and resupply the vessel," said Scott Fancher, vice president and program director for GMD. "This will enhance SBX's ability to perform essential sensing functions for the GMD system, which defends the United States against long-range ballistic missiles. SBX can be deployed worldwide; it can detect small objects thousands of miles away; it can provide critical data on incoming ballistic missile threats; and it is the only platform of its type in the world."

SBX, which consists of a radar atop a modified semi-submersible oil drilling platform, arrived in Alaskan waters in February for the first time after completing a self-propelled, 2,200-nautical-mile journey from Hawaii. During its voyage, the platform displayed its durability by successfully navigating severe winter storms in the northern Pacific Ocean, including waves more than 50 feet high and wind gusts of more than 100 miles an hour. The radar system is able to move throughout the Pacific Ocean, or any of the world's oceans, to support advanced missile defense testing and defensive operations.

During a GMD test in March, the mobile SBX, positioned in the north-central Pacific Ocean, demonstrated its capability by detecting, tracking and assessing a long-range ballistic missile target launched from Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif. As part of the GMD system, SBX provided that target information via satellite to GMD's Colorado-based fire control system, which used the data to simulate a target shootdown with a simulated ground-based interceptor.

An integral element of the global ballistic missile defense system, GMD consists of sensors, command-and-control facilities, communications terminals, a 20,000-mile fiber optic communications network, and interceptors deployed in underground silos at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California and Ft. Greely, Alaska. Industry partners include Raytheon, Orbital Sciences Corp., and Northrop Grumman.

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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