Boeing and SAIC Announce Accelerated Testing of FCS Early Prototype Systems

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 17, 2008 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] and partner Science Applications International Corporation [NYSE: SAI], the Lead Systems Integrator for the U.S. Army's Future Combat Systems (FCS) program, today announced that the Army has accelerated test schedules for two FCS robotic prototypes based on current readiness levels and positive feedback from soldiers who are using early versions of the systems in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Beginning this month, 25 FCS Small Unmanned Ground Vehicle (SUGV) units developed jointly with iRobot Corporation and 11 Class I (Block 0) Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) developed jointly with Honeywell will be delivered in increments to Army Evaluation Task Force soldiers at Fort Bliss, Texas. The soldiers will train with the equipment before conducting user testing in the summer. Deliveries will occur between January and June 2008 with testing expected to conclude in September. Based on soldier feedback, a recommendation will be made to senior Army leadership whether to field the platforms or continue with system development under the core FCS program.

"The acceleration of the SUGV and Class I (Block 0) UAV prototypes and testing underscores the Army's commitment to enhancing soldier survivability and mission effectiveness by getting the capabilities into their hands as soon as possible," said Dennis Muilenburg, vice president-general manager, Boeing Combat Systems, and FCS program manager. "The decision to accelerate, driven in part by feedback from soldiers in theater, also confirms that we are on the right track to deliver a crucial capability that is needed and desired by our soldiers currently serving in combat operations."

The 30-pound SUGV is a small, lightweight, soldier-portable unmanned ground vehicle that is capable of conducting military operations in high-risk environments, including urban terrain, tunnels, sewers and caves, without exposing soldiers directly to potential hazards. The Class I (Block 0) UAV, a platoon-level asset and the smaller of the two FCS unmanned vehicle classes, will provide dismounted soldiers with unprecedented reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition capabilities on the battlefield. The Class I UAV can operate in complex urban and jungle terrains with vertical takeoff, hover and landing capability, and can be operated autonomously or controlled by dismounted soldiers.

Although they will occur in parallel, acceleration activities are considered separate from "Spin Out 1," the first of three planned infusions of FCS capabilities to the Current Force. Spin Out 1 consists of equipment and technologies that will provide enhanced situational awareness and communication capabilities through technology insertions to Abrams battle tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles and HMMWV vehicles. Spin Out 1 elements include network integration "B" kits consisting of an Integrated Computer System, System-of-Systems Common Operating Environment, Battle Command and Network Management software and communications system including the Joint Tactical Radio System Ground Mobile Radio. Also included are Tactical and Urban Unattended Ground Sensors to provide real-time threat information in complex terrain and the Non-Line-of-Sight Launch System for remotely controlled precision fires. Deliveries of Spin Out 1 equipment and technologies are well under way in preparation for field testing later this year.

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Contact Info:
Mary McAdam
Boeing FCS Communications
office: (703) 647-1469
mary.m.mcadam@boeing.com
Regen Wilson
SAIC FCS Communications
office: (202) 246-3011
WILLIAM.R.WILSON-2@saic.com