

Boeing Among Industry Teams Selected to Design New DARPA Space System

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ST. LOUIS, March 04, 2008 -- A team led by Boeing [NYSE: BA] has been selected by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to demonstrate initial technologies for a new spacecraft system architecture concept.

A \$12,891,049 cost-plus-fixed-fee, 12-month Phase 1 contract was awarded to Boeing Advanced Systems to research, design, develop and test DARPA's Future, Fast, Flexible, Fractionated, Free-Flying Spacecraft United by Information Exchange (System F6) space technology and demonstration program.

The DARPA System F6 is based on a concept whereby a group of spacecraft operate together wirelessly as a single unit to enable flexible data sharing and distributed processing that will allow cooperative communications among the spacecraft. This concept of multiple spacecraft operating together to perform a mission similar to that of a single larger spacecraft is known as "fractionation."

"We believe the fractionation spacecraft concept proposed by our team can be a game-changer that could provide the high degree of flexibility needed for responsive space missions," said Bob Friend, director for Boeing Operationally Responsive Space.

The objective of the DARPA System F6 is to demonstrate the feasibility and benefits of a satellite architecture wherein the functionality of a single spacecraft is replaced by a cluster of wirelessly interconnected spacecraft that could perform a wider variety of tasks than single systems. Along with potential increases in flexibility, this technology also may reduce overall program costs.

The team led by Boeing Advanced Network and Space Systems, Huntington Beach, Calif., includes L-3 Communications Interstate Electronics, Anaheim, Calif.; Millennium Space Systems, Manhattan Beach, Calif.; Octant Technologies, San Jose, Calif.; and Science Applications International Corp., Torrance, Calif.

Expected for completion by Feb. 20, 2009, Phase 1 will culminate in an F6 Preliminary Design Review that evaluates each industry team's concept.

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Contact Info:

Robert Villanueva

Boeing Advanced Systems

office: (562) 496-5688

robert.s.villanueva@boeing.com
