Boeing Awarded Contract for Radar Upgrade on Saudi AWACS Fleet

SEATTLE, Sept. 15, 2008 -- The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] has been awarded a contract for the initial phase of upgrading the radar on Saudi Arabia's fleet of five E-3A Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft.

The Foreign Military Sale, not to exceed $42 million, was contracted through the Electronic Systems Center at Hanscom Air Force Base, Mass. This first phase includes a study to determine which parts are obsolete and no longer available, then locating and testing parts obtained from new sources for the modification. Phase one also includes purchase of many long lead parts and the start of software design. The next phase involves production and installation of the Radar System Improvement Program (RSIP) kits, software integration and testing, and crew training. Phase two is scheduled during the time frame of a follow-on contract expected to be awarded in 2009.

The RSIP kit, built principally by Baltimore-based Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems under subcontract to Boeing, consists of a new radar computer, a radar-control maintenance panel, and software upgrades to the radar and mission-system programs.

"RSIP increases the AWACS aircraft's radar sensitivity, allowing it to detect and track smaller targets," said Mark Mills, Saudi AWACS programs manager for Boeing. "It also improves the radar's existing computer with a new, highly reliable multiprocessor; rewrites the software to facilitate future maintenance and enhancements; and shortens the maintenance and repair cycle."

RSIP kits have been installed on the U.S., U.K., NATO and French AWACS fleets.

Boeing delivered Saudi Arabia's five AWACS aircraft between June 1986 and September 1987.

AWACS fills the needs for airborne-surveillance and command-control functions for tactical and air defense forces. The substantial growth capacity inherent in the E-3 AWACS ensures that the system can readily be adapted to meet future missions and requirements.

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