Boeing Receives Contract for 3rd Mach 6 Hypersonic Missile Test

ST. LOUIS, Oct. 02, 2008 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] has been awarded an $18.3 million follow-on contract from the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) to conduct a third powered flight of the HyFly hypersonic missile. HyFly is powered by a Dual Combustion Ramjet (DCR) engine.

"The DCR engine is designed to accelerate HyFly and sustain flight at Mach 6," said Carl Avila, director of Advanced Weapons and Missile Systems for Boeing. "This will be a major step in the development of a weapon system that could revolutionize the military's ability to respond rapidly to time-critical threats hundreds of miles away. It will demonstrate that hypersonic weapons are viable and will put us one step closer to making a high-speed strike weapon available to the warfighter."

This third HyFly test follows two initial flights that, while partially successful, yielded significant data that will be useful in completing a successful test flight. The first flight in September 2007 successfully tested stage separation, inlet cover ejection, and DCR engine ignition. A software error prevented missile acceleration, ending the test. For the second test in January 2008, HyFly successfully boosted to Mach 3.5. The missile achieved stage separation and inlet cover ejection, but the DCR engine failed to light due to a malfunction in the fuel system unrelated to the engine. HyFly remained under control during the flight and successfully completed a demonstration of terminal guidance accuracy.

Both flights were launched from a Boeing-operated F-15E aircraft over the sea range at the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division, Point Mugu, Calif.

Boeing is the prime contractor for HyFly. Aerojet, based in Sacramento, Calif., supplies the DCR engine. The government team, which also was involved in prior phases of the Hyfly program, includes the Office of Naval Research, the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, and the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division in Point Mugu and China Lake, Calif.

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Contact Info:
Chris Haddox
The Boeing Company
Advanced Systems
(314) 234-6447
chris.d.haddox@boeing.com