Boeing Airborne Laser Engineers Receive Missile Defense Agency Award

WASHINGTON, April 29, 2009 -- Three Boeing [NYSE: BA] Airborne Laser (ABL) engineers and three of their government and industry teammates received the Technology Pioneer Award from the U.S. Missile Defense Agency (MDA) on March 23 for advancing technologies that would enable ABL to intercept and destroy ballistic missile threats.

MDA presented the award at the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics/MDA 7th Annual Missile Defense Conference in Washington to honor the recipients' work in developing critical technologies central to implementing high-power directed energy on ABL as a new class of powerful weaponry for the warfighter. Two critical ABL components are the high-energy laser to shoot down ballistic missiles soon after they are launched, and the beam control/fire control system that points the laser beam while compensating for atmospheric turbulence. The laser, the beam control/fire control system and a state-of-the-art battle management suite are now integrated aboard the ABL aircraft, which underwent the largest modification to an airplane ever accomplished by Boeing. ABL is scheduled to perform a missile-intercept test this year.

"The six members of the joint government-industry team that received this prestigious award greatly deserve this recognition," said Michael Rinn, Boeing vice president and ABL program director. "Thanks to their technical skill, teamwork and boundless dedication, we will soon be able to demonstrate the revolutionary speed, mobility, precision and lethality that the Airborne Laser could provide to America's warfighters. ABL could change not only missile defense, but warfare in general, and these technology pioneers have blazed a path for other directed-energy weapons to follow."

The honorees are:

- Don Clapp, ABL chief engineer and mission assurance manager, Boeing
- Jeff Hartlove, ABL deputy program manager, Northrop Grumman
- Steve Lamberson, ABL chief scientist, ABL System Program Office, MDA
- Dave Morris, ABL chief scientist and system performance manager, Boeing
- Harold Schall, ABL chief engineer for integration and testing, Boeing
- Paul Shattuck, ABL beam control/fire control chief engineer and technical director, Lockheed Martin.

Boeing is the prime contractor and overall systems integrator for ABL, which is designed to provide speed-of-light capability to destroy all classes of ballistic missiles in their boost phase of flight. ABL also has the potential to be deployed for other missions, including destroying aircraft and surface-to-air missiles.

The ABL aircraft is a modified Boeing 747-400F whose back half holds the high-energy laser, designed and built by Northrop Grumman. The front section of the aircraft contains the beam control/fire control system, developed by Lockheed Martin, and the battle management system, provided by Boeing.

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, and the world's largest and most versatile manufacturer of military aircraft. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $32 billion business with 70,000 employees worldwide.

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