Boeing to Demonstrate Ground Robotics Capabilities at US Army 'Rodeo'

ST. LOUIS, Aug. 28, 2009 -- The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] will demonstrate its ground robotics capabilities at the U.S. Army's first Robotics Rodeo, to be held Sept. 1-3 at Fort Hood, Texas. The event is sponsored by the Army's Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC) and Fort Hood's III Corps.

The event is an opportunity for industry to demonstrate to Army and government officials how the latest robotic technologies will support their operational needs by performing dangerous combat missions normally completed by soldiers.

Boeing Combat Systems is developing several robotic solutions designed to protect soldiers. One of them is the Small Unmanned Ground Vehicle (SUGV) 300 series of robots, designed in partnership with iRobot Corp. [NYSE: IRBT]. These robots can be equipped with cameras, sensors, computers and sophisticated software to perform basic reconnaissance, dispose of explosives and complete other tasks that greatly reduce risks to soldiers in the field.

Boeing and subcontractor Autonomous Solutions Inc. will also demonstrate semiautonomous navigation capabilities by using surrogate vehicles to simulate military convoy and route-clearance vehicles in war zones.

"We are looking forward to showcasing some of Boeing's work in ground robotics at this event, especially since the environmental conditions will be similar to those of combat zones in Afghanistan and Iraq," said Valori Bring, director of Boeing's Global Forces and Robotics Systems business area. "We hope to receive real-time feedback from the soldiers -- to learn from them -- so we can make the improvements they need and help save lives."

Army officials are looking for robotic equipment that can maneuver through rough terrain under adverse environmental and lighting conditions, provide reconnaissance and surveillance, navigate in GPS-denied environments, project sensor information to remote work stations, and operate safely in limited-visibility environments.

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