Boeing Begins Flight-testing B-1 with New Link 16 Communications

LONG BEACH, Calif., June 21, 2010 -- The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] today announced the start of flight tests for a B-1 Lancer bomber upgraded with new digital avionics for the aft cockpit, including a line-of-sight Link 16 data link. The B-1 Fully Integrated Data Link (FIDL) made its first flight test on June 4 at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.

The four-hour flight was conducted by the U.S. Air Force around the local Edwards test ranges. The crew successfully tested the Link 16 data link by sending and receiving text messages and receiving virtual mission assignment data such as target coordinates for a weapon.

Link 16 adds line-of-sight capability to the B-1's existing beyond line-of-sight Joint Range Extension Applications Protocol (JREAP) data link, and integrates the JREAP data onto new, full-color displays with intuitive symbols and moving maps.

"Link 16 will allow the B-1 to be an active participant in a network that is commonly used by fighter, reconnaissance and command-and-control aircraft," said Mark Angelo, B-1 program manager for Boeing. "With Link 16, target coordinates can be sent directly to the weapon system from ground troops or forward operating bases, instead of the current method, where crew members type the coordinates in by hand after hearing them over the radio."

The program will conduct three flight tests this month. Additional flight tests will take place through January 2011. The entire Air Force fleet of 66 B-1s is expected to receive the FIDL upgrade.

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A video clip of this event is available athttp://www.boeing.com/defense-space/military/b1-lancer.

Contact:

Jennifer Hogan
Maintenance, Modifications and Upgrades
Mobile: 405-818-7859
jennifer.c.hogan@boeing.com

Additional assets available online: Video (1)