Boeing Receives US Air Force Contract to Build Next-Generation Refueling Tanker

ST. LOUIS, Feb. 24, 2011 -- The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] has received a contract from the U.S. Air Force to build the next-generation aerial refueling tanker aircraft that will replace 179 of the service's 400 KC-135 tankers.

The contract calls for Boeing to design, develop, manufacture and deliver 18 initial combat-ready tankers by 2017.

"We're honored to be given the opportunity to build the Air Force's next tanker and provide a vital capability to the men and women of our armed forces," said Jim McNerney, Boeing chairman, president and CEO. "Our team is ready now to apply our 60 years of tanker experience to develop and build an airplane that will serve the nation for decades to come."

In selecting the Boeing NewGen Tanker after a lengthy and rigorous proposal process, the Air Force has chosen an American-built, multi-mission tanker that is based on the proven Boeing 767 commercial airplane and meets all requirements at the lowest risk for the warfighter and the best value for taxpayers. The Boeing proposal was created by an integrated "One Boeing" team from various sites across the company, including employees from the Commercial Airplanes; Defense, Space & Security; and Engineering, Operations & Technology organizations.

"This contract award would not have been possible without the hundreds of Boeing employees across the entire company, and the thousands of our industry teammates, who remained laser-focused on our commitment to offer a solution that is first in capability and best in value," said Dennis Muilenburg, president and CEO of Boeing Defense, Space & Security. "This award is also a tribute to the Air Force and Defense Department officials who worked so tirelessly to make this procurement process fair, ultimately resulting in the selection of the right plane for the mission. We look forward to working with our Air Force customer to deliver this much needed capability to the servicemen and women we are honored to serve."

The KC-46A tankers will be built using a low-risk approach to manufacturing by a trained and experienced U.S. work force at existing Boeing facilities. The KC-46A tanker also will fuel the economy as it supports approximately 50,000 total U.S. jobs with Boeing and more than 800 suppliers in more than 40 states.

"Boeing has always been committed to the integrity of the competitive process, and the men and women across our Boeing commercial and defense teams and our entire supplier network are ready to extend that commitment to delivering these tankers on time and on budget," said Jim Albaugh, president and CEO of Boeing Commercial Airplanes.

Based on the proven Boeing 767 commercial airplane, the KC-46A Tanker is a widebody, multi-mission aircraft updated with the latest and most advanced technology and capable of meeting or exceeding the Air Force's needs for transport of fuel, cargo, passengers and patients. It includes state-of-the-art systems to meet the demanding mission requirements of the future, including a digital flight deck featuring Boeing 787 Dreamliner electronic displays and a flight control design philosophy that places aircrews in command rather than allowing computer software to limit combat maneuverability. The NewGen Tanker also features an advanced KC-10 boom with an expanded refueling envelope, increased fuel offload rate and fly-by-wire control system.

To learn more about the KC-46A Tanker, visit www.UnitedStatesTanker.com.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Defense, Space & Security is one of the world's largest defense, space and security 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 Defense, Space & Security is a $32 billion business with 66,000 employees worldwide. Follow us on Twitter: @BoeingDefense.

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Broadcast media can obtain related B-roll video footage through the contacts below.

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