Boeing CONECT Upgrade Successful in Flight Test Aboard B-52

Test demonstrates functionality of CONECT interphone system

WICHITA, Kan., Aug. 22, 2011 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] on Aug. 3 successfully completed an evaluation flight of the B-52 Combat Network Communications Technology (CONECT) interphone system. The six-hour flight from Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., evaluated the interphone system's readiness for formal flight tests and accomplished formal flight tests of other CONECT capabilities. The interphone system enables crew members to communicate with one another, other aircraft and the ground.

"The successful interphone evaluation keeps the CONECT team on track to complete our ground and flight tests by the end of October," said Scot Oathout, B-52 program director for Boeing. "CONECT will greatly increase the B-52's flexibility by enabling additional capabilities for re-tasking of missions while in flight."

The CONECT modification increases crews' situational awareness by adding more communication data links and full-color LED displays that feature symbols of mission data overlaid on color moving maps. CONECT also provides the infrastructure for future improvements on the B-52, including an onboard, high-speed network. Milestone C authorization for low rate initial production is expected in mid-2012.

"CONECT gives the B-52 the ability to participate in net-centric operations," said Oathout. "This means the aircraft can exchange real-time digital information with other ground-based and airborne assets while on a mission, increasing its effectiveness, survivability and lethality. CONECT keeps the B-52 in the fight."

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