Boeing B-52 CONECT System Completes Flight Test Milestone

Program poised for low-rate initial production authorization

New network communication system allows for future upgrades

WICHITA, Kan., Dec. 12, 2011 -- Today Boeing [NYSE: BA] announced completion of all flight testing needed for the B-52 Combat Network Communications Technology (CONECT) program to receive low rate initial production (LRIP) authorization from the U.S. Air Force. The flight test program was conducted at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., by Boeing and the Air Force.

“Completion of the LRIP flight test phase means CONECT is ready to be reviewed by our customer for initial production authorization,” said Scot Oathout, B-52 program director. “CONECT increases B-52 operational effectiveness by providing improved mission flexibility, increased situational awareness and new network-centric capabilities. In addition, CONECT paves the way for easier integration of future upgrades.”

Milestone C authorization for low-rate initial production is expected in mid-2012.

The CONECT modification provides the ability to change a mission, as well as change the target of a weapon, while the B-52 is in flight. The system provides increased situational awareness for B-52 crews by adding several communication data links and full-color LCD displays with real-time intelligence feeds overlaid on moving maps. CONECT also enables future B-52 improvements with its onboard, high-speed network.

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