Boeing Winged Joint Direct Attack Munition Completes 1st Round of Tests

JDAM-ER developed with Australia has glide range of more than 40 miles

Boeing to produce and integrate wing kits in-country for RAAF

ST. LOUIS, Aug. 30, 2012 -- A winged version of the Boeing [NYSE: BA] Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) that will triple the weapon's glide range to more than 40 miles is a step closer to production after completing wind tunnel tests at a U.S. facility in June.

Developed in partnership with the Commonwealth of Australia, the 500-pound JDAM Extended Range (JDAM-ER) features a modular add-on wing kit that will unfold in flight. The kit can also be coupled with other modular enhancements, such as laser sensors. The wings were first integrated with the Boeing JDAM during the Commonwealth's Capability and Technology Demonstration program, which successfully completed flight tests in 2008.

Boeing will produce and integrate the JDAM-ER wing kits for the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) under a contract awarded in 2011. The kits will be built in Australia, with initial deliveries expected to begin in early 2015.

"Boeing and our Australian partners have worked closely together to employ affordable technology and the leanest manufacturing processes to cost-effectively enhance JDAM’s capabilities," said Debbie Rub, Boeing vice president and general manager for Missiles and Unmanned Airborne Systems. "The JDAM-ER effectively meets the needs of the Commonwealth by providing a greater stand-off capability and making it safer for pilots to prosecute their missions on today’s ever-changing battlefields."

"By successfully transitioning this technology from prototype to production, the Australian Defence Force will be able to further reduce the risk to its personnel on operations, allowing RAAF aircrew to engage their targets from beyond the range of enemy air defences," said Jason Clare, Australia’s Minister for Defence Materiel. "These enhancements will increase the ability of the RAAF to strike more targets in fewer sorties."

JDAM is a low-cost guidance kit that converts existing unguided bombs into near- precision weapons. Boeing intentionally designed its JDAM kit to be modular so the product could mature with a variety of technological upgrades such as a laser sensor, improved immunity to GPS jamming, and an all-weather radar sensor.

Boeing has built more than 238,000 JDAM tail kits in its St. Charles, Mo., facility since production started in 1998. JDAM is used by 26 international militaries.

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