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Terminals will offer US Air Force protected wideband satellite communications

HUNTINGTON BEACH, Calif., Jan. 29, 2013 -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] recently achieved two important milestones on the U.S. Air Force Family of Advanced Beyond Line-of-Sight Terminal (FAB-T) program, which will provide protected wideband satellite communications among ground and airborne terminals for the command and control of U.S. nuclear forces.

The Boeing FAB-T team has completed software qualification testing and systems integration testing on the FAB-T development program. The team also has demonstrated FAB-T's integration with the Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) and Milstar mission control subsystem, which commands both satellite constellations. Conducted in Boeing's factory, this test validated FAB-T's ability to control strategic satellite communications payloads on orbit. The AEHF and Milstar satellite constellations will relay FAB-T communications once FAB-T is operational.

"With these significant achievements, Boeing has demonstrated via formal software qualification testing and informal system level integration testing that the Boeing design meets FAB-T's functional and performance requirements," said Paul Geery, Boeing vice president and FAB-T program manager. "We've also demonstrated AEHF spacecraft control, which is critical to FAB-T's mission. Our effort is the only industry offering that has demonstrated this capability. FAB-T will enable the Air Force to perform all satellite control functions, including setting up networks, establishing user traffic priorities, and scheduling satellite beams."

During testing, FAB-T also transmitted data using both low-data-rate and extended-data-rate (XDR) communications protocols. The system's advanced XDR capability offers Internet-like functionality and improved speed compared with earlier systems and software.

In April 2012, Boeing and the Air Force agreed on a set of additional FAB-T capabilities, including Presidential and National Voice Conferencing, to be developed under Boeing's firm fixed-price contract. The Boeing team has implemented those capabilities and expects to enter functional qualification testing early this year.

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