Boeing Receives Contract to Modernize B-52 with Digital Communications

CONECT will be installed in 10 more bombers; upgrade improves situational awareness and mission effectiveness

OKLAHOMA CITY, Feb. 4, 2015 – The B-52 Stratofortress bomber was built during the Cold War, but its digital capabilities have entered the 21st century thanks to Boeing's [NYSE: BA] ongoing Combat Network Communications Technology (CONECT) upgrade.

On Jan. 28, the U.S. Air Force awarded Boeing a full rate production contract to deliver 10 CONECT kits that modernize communication systems for the B-52 bombers today and into the future. Those technology enhancements include full-color LCD displays with real-time intelligence feeds overlaid on moving maps, several communication data links that connect via satellite to platforms and troops in the field and an onboard, high speed network that enables aircrew to respond quickly to a mission change or identify and engage new targets with their weapons.

"CONECT gives the B-52 the agility and flexibility needed for the modern battlefield while also providing greater situational awareness for the aircrew," said Scot Oathout, Boeing's B-52 program director.

U.S. Air Force personnel install CONECT at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., in conjunction with the B-52's regularly scheduled programmed depot maintenance.

Under previous contracts, Boeing is currently supplying 20 CONECT kits to the Air Force. This new full rate production award will bring the total number of upgraded B-52s to 30.

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Contact:

Ben Davis
Global Services & Support
Office: +1 405-528-7488
Mobile: +1 405-694-9600
benjamin.a.davis2@boeing.com