Boeing and SAIC Award Honeywell Contract to Develop Future Combat System Class I Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

The Boeing Company [NYSE:BA] and partner Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC), functioning as the Lead Systems Integrator for the U.S. Army's Future Combat System (FCS) program, today awarded a contract, valued at approximately $61 million, to Honeywell Defense & Space Electronic Systems to develop the Class I Unmanned Aerial Vehicle System (UAVS). The Class I UAVS, a platoon-level asset and the smallest of four FCS unmanned aerial vehicle classes, will provide dismounted soldiers with unprecedented reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition capabilities on the battlefield.

"We have evaluated Honeywell's engineering design approach and success in the area of micro air vehicle technology, and we are confident that their design solution for the FCS Class I UAVS is a superior fit that will meet both current and future warfighter requirements," said Dennis Muilenburg, Boeing vice president, general manager and FCS program manager. "We are excited to have Honeywell as a key partner on the FCS best-of-industry team and look forward to maintaining our critical path forward on FCS UAV development."

The FCS program will leverage Honeywell's work on the Micro Air Vehicle (MAV), a prototype vehicle developed under a Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) Advanced Concept Technology Demonstration. Recently used by the Army's 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii for soldier testing and experimentation, the MAV has successfully demonstrated ducted fan technology, a key to meeting FCS Class I UAV requirements for a small, back-packable UAV that provides "hover and stare" capability.

In addition to the MAV activity with DARPA, Honeywell has been working under an FCS systems engineering contract, including gap analysis and early risk mitigation, to ensure MAV technology will meet the full set of FCS Class I requirements. The team recently completed a system functional review verifying that the technology is on track and, following an update to the design to meet all FCS requirements, will be ready to be integrated into the FCS networked system-of-systems to provide reconnaissance, surveillance and target acquisition capability.

Class I is one of four UAV systems organic to platoon, company, battalion and brigade echelons that form the aerial component of the FCS networked system-of-systems, providing protection and information to soldiers on the ground. Weighing about 35 pounds, each system includes two air vehicles, a control unit and ancillary equipment. The Class I UAVS can operate in complex urban and jungle terrains with vertical takeoff and landing capability, and can be operated autonomously or controlled by dismounted soldiers. First prototype deliveries and flight tests are scheduled for December 2008.

The current acquisition plan calls for all four classes of FCS UAV systems to be deployed with the first fully-equipped FCS Brigade Combat Team in 2014. However, the technologies will be developed according to a timeline that will allow for earlier fielding to the current force at the Army's discretion. In the interim, the Army and industry will continue to build on real-world lessons learned in Iraq and the global war on terrorism to integrate leading-edge technologies into the Class I UAVS solution.

SAIC is the largest employee-owned research and engineering company in the United States, with more than 43,000 employees in over 150 cities worldwide. For the fiscal year ended Jan. 31, 2006, the company reported annual revenues of $7.8 billion. SAIC engineers and scientists solve complex technical problems in national security, homeland security, energy, the environment, space, telecommunications, health care, and logistics. SAIC: FROM SCIENCE TO SOLUTIONS™
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