

Boeing Wins FAA Contract For Satellite-Based ATC Systems

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FAA yesterday awarded Boeing a \$23 million contract to examine the feasibility of incorporating satellite-based communications and air traffic management systems into the National Airspace System. It's the first significant FAA contract for Boeing's new Air Traffic Management division.

Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.) said the contract award stems from a clause she argued for in this year's defense appropriations bill allocating funds specifically for a project of this nature. FAA Administrator Jane Garvey said Boeing's program fits with FAA's existing long-range Operational Evolution Plan. Boeing ATM President John Hayhurst said the program would focus on three areas: a global satellite-based communication, navigation and surveillance architecture; a secure, integrated common information network, and a secure broadband communications system. Hayhurst said Boeing's aim is to "demonstrate the viability of these concepts and the benefits they will provide."

Hayhurst said the first public demonstration could occur late this year or early next year. Boeing will conduct proof-of-concept demonstrations using a satellite communications-equipped 737-400 test aircraft.

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