

Boeing to refurbish and test Unmanned Undersea Vehicle for US Navy

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The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA] has signed an \$11 million sole-source contract with U.S. Naval Sea Systems Command for the refurbishment of the AN/BLQ-11 Long-term Mine Reconnaissance System and further investigation of Unmanned Undersea Vehicle (UUV) capabilities and technologies via at-sea testing. The work will be performed at Boeing facilities in Anaheim, Calif., and at test ranges in Puget Sound, Wash., Norfolk, Va., and the Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center near Andros Island, Bahamas.

While the Navy has invested in a variety of other UUV systems that are currently in various stages of development, AN/BLQ-11 is the only submarine-certified, fully autonomous UUV system. In January, Boeing and the Navy demonstrated the ability to perform homing and docking with an underway submarine.

"We proved the feasibility of the homing and docking portion of the AN/BLQ-11 recovery concept," said Tom Jones, director of Boeing Marine Systems. "With this next round of testing, we will show the repeatability of the process and complete a full recovery evolution. We are very pleased the Navy has decided to continue risk reduction testing with AN/BLQ-11 and believe it will demonstrate the enabling technologies required to meet the Navy's desire to field submarine-based UUVs."

During extensive testing in Washington state, the AN/BLQ-11 demonstrated a highly advanced level of autonomy. It is designed to be launched, torpedo-style, from Los Angeles class submarines to survey, detect and gather data on underwater objects for more than 12 hours. Upon completion of its duties, AN/BLQ-11 would then home in and dock with the submarine's 60-foot robotic arm for recovery back through the torpedo launch tube. This system enables operators to retrieve data collected and prepare the vehicle for its next mission. The AN/BLQ-11 system consists of a recovery arm, two unmanned undersea vehicles, shipboard deployed equipment and non-deployed shore support equipment.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a \$32.4 billion business. It provides network-centric system solutions to its global military, government and commercial customers. It is a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems; the world's largest military aircraft manufacturer; the world's largest satellite manufacturer; a foremost developer of advanced concepts and technologies; a leading provider of space-based communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader in sustainment solutions and launch services.

Source: [Shephard Group UVonline.com](http://www.shephardgroup.com)