

**Statement of**

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**On**

**“SBlnet: Does it Pass the Border Security Test?”**

**Before the**

**Committee on Homeland Security**

**Subcommittee on Border, Maritime and Global  
Counterterrorism**

**Subcommittee on Management, Investigations and Oversight**

**U.S. House of Representatives**

**March 18, 2010**

Good morning.

It has been six months since we last appeared to discuss *SBI<sub>net</sub>*. In that time, the Boeing Team has made significant progress on the deployment of the *SBI<sub>net</sub>* Block 1 System, and we are seeing real-world results in actual Border Patrol operations in the Tucson Sector. In addition, we have started a second Block 1 deployment in the Ajo area. On the Northern Border, we have delivered the Buffalo project and are within weeks of delivering the Detroit project.

This progress has been achieved through application of a disciplined engineering approach and lessons learned along the way. As we have discussed previously, there is inherent complexity associated with integrating multiple commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) components into a complex system.

Testing is a critical function of all developmental programs. Its purpose is to ensure system functionality and that the design meets system requirements. In any test, we expect to find problems, and in many cases, we push the system to failure to understand its detailed functionality and durability. When issues are identified, we have a process in place to capture them, prioritize them, and address them. We utilize a closed-loop Root Cause Corrective Action (RCCA) process to ensure we fully understand each problem and have implemented a corrective action that is both comprehensive and complete.

## **Schedule**

Late last fall, our System Qualification Test (SQT) revealed several hardware and software changes that needed to be made in the system before entering into System Acceptance Test (SAT). In addition, subsequent analysis of the Playas test bed and Tucson 1 (TUS1) configurations identified differences in some of the COTS hardware and software components, which necessitated we conduct a limited set of assessments on the TUS1 configuration to ensure traceability of our verification artifacts and reduce risk to a successful System Acceptance Test and Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E).

At the same time, working closely with CBP, we revised our SAT plan to include an expanded set of routes and a more precise set of success criteria for the Key Performance Parameters (KPPs). These tests will involve daytime and nighttime operations along more than 60 Border Patrol-identified trafficking routes. To ensure that the tests are statistically valid, multi-kilometer segments along each route will be walked multiple times by various group sizes. In addition to pedestrians, vehicles will also be evaluated. This is a time-consuming and labor-intensive process necessary to ensure

the accuracy of the testing. These factors are the reason for delaying the start and extending the duration of SAT. TUS1 acceptance testing is now expected to start in late summer and conclude in early fall.

## **Cost**

The cost growth we have experienced on the program has been driven by the schedule delays. We are aggressively pursuing opportunities to reduce the cost of the TUS1 and AJO1 deployments. Our team has identified a number of opportunities in our TUS1 schedule to accelerate milestones and realize cost reductions as a result. In consideration for these delays, Boeing has committed to apply the fee that we receive for the TUS1 Deployment toward system enhancements that will be identified by the Border Patrol. In addition, Boeing has also committed company resources to establish a senior technical team to independently evaluate the readiness of the Block 1 System and to make recommendations on key areas that will enhance the system performance and availability.

Based on where we are today in the program, the progress is evident. We are not seeing any system-wide issues; we have plans in place for the remaining lower-level issues and we are confident we have a robust SAT plan with well understood success criteria. We are on the way to deliver a system with the capabilities and means to become a reliable force multiplier for the Border Patrol and one from which CBP and the Border Patrol can develop Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP) to meet our nation's evolving border security needs.

## **Early Operations**

Our current view of the system is supported by the feedback we are getting from Early Operations. Early Operations began on Feb. 6, 2010, and has provided the Border Patrol with the opportunity to use the TUS1 System during swing and midnight shifts, times that our engineers are not able to work on the system for safety and security reasons. To date, about four dozen Border Patrol Agents have taken the formal classroom training program at the Production Support Facility in Tucson. After the three-day training session, the agents are able to use the TUS1 System to support Border Patrol operations in the Sasabe Port of Entry area. During Early Operations, Boeing engineers work side-by-side with the agents to provide technical support as required. The feedback that we have received to date from the agents has been very positive and complimentary of the improvement over Project 28 and the impact on

mission performance. To date, the system has performed reliably and effectively, seven days per week.

I'd like to relay to the committee my personal observations from a visit to the Tucson Sector less than two weeks ago. I spent an evening in the Command and Control Center at the Tucson Sector Headquarters observing three agents at the consoles of the Block 1 System and the following day visiting tower sites. I was struck by the speed with which the agents are adapting to the system – both at the consoles and in the field – and the skill they are displaying even at this early stage. Also very apparent is the increased tactical advantage agents now have because of the significantly improved situational awareness the system provides. The information the system relays to the agent in the field really does give him or her greater ability to deal with each encounter effectively and safely.

As Early Operations progresses, we will work closely with the SBI*net* Program Office to capture issues and feedback. A formal system is in place to disposition issues as they arise, either in the form of corrections that need to be made prior to acceptance or as potential enhancements to be made after OT&E.

## **AJO1**

In late January, we began the second deployment of Block 1 technology, called AJO1, near the Lukeville Port of Entry in an environmentally sensitive area of the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. The six-month delay to the start of the AJO1 Deployment was driven primarily by environmental and land management assessments and permits that were required before construction could begin. Since late January, we have erected five towers and our teams are actively at work at all the remaining sites where we have permission to work. The Ajo Station Command and Control Center was recently completed, and the full system will be ready for Operational Test & Evaluation late this calendar year. The speed at which AJO1 is erected, tested, and accepted by the CBP will demonstrate the increased maturity of the Block 1 System.

## **Northern Border Projects**

We also have significant progress to report on our Northern Border projects where we are installing the Remote Video Surveillance System (RVSS) to enhance agent surveillance capabilities in the river environments near Buffalo and Detroit. The Buffalo deployment was completed and accepted by CBP on Feb. 26, 2010, and is now part of operations of the Border Patrol. The completion of the Detroit deployment has been

delayed by an issue with a government vendor, but is expected to be delivered to CBP early next month. The delivery of both of these projects is in accord with the schedule outlined in the hearing last September.

### **Mobile Surveillance Systems**

In addition, Boeing has been providing logistics sustainment for the Border Patrol's Mobile Surveillance Systems (MSS) since April 2009. These highly modified vehicles provide mobile radar and camera surveillance capability. When Boeing began this effort, the availability of the 41 MSS was less than 50 percent. Today, through close collaboration with CBP, the availability of the MSS is greater than 90 percent.

### **Conclusion**

While *SBI<sub>net</sub>* has been a difficult and challenging program, we believe the original concept of providing timely and actionable situational awareness to Border Patrol Agents remains a sound one. With the support of CBP, we now have a version of the Block 1 System in use today by the Border Patrol – providing value to their operations. To date, we are more than three-quarters complete with the first two deployments and are within months of starting formal acceptance testing for the TUS1 system.

So, does *SBI<sub>net</sub>* pass the border security test? Based on the capabilities developed, the engineering rigor, and the positive mission impact of Early Operations, the answer is “yes.”