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United States Navy to Deploy AeroVironment Blackwing Reconnaissance Systems on Attack and Guided Missile Submarines

- AeroVironment develops Blackwing unmanned aircraft system as part of a successful Joint Capabilities Technology Demonstration (JCTD)
- Blackwing launches from fully submerged undersea platforms, including submarines and Unmanned Underwater Vehicles (UUVs)
- Full integration into the US Navy's submarine fleet using existing, standard command-and-control systems and equipment

WASHINGTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Navy League's Sea-Air-Space Exposition - AeroVironment, Inc. (NASDAQ: AVAV) today announced the United States Navy plans to deploy its "Blackwing™," a small, tube-launched unmanned aircraft system that deploys from under the surface of the sea, on manned submarines and unmanned underwater vehicles.

This Smart News Release features multimedia. View the full release here:
http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20160516005598/en/

U.S. Navy to deploy new AeroVironment Blackwing unmanned aircraft system on submarines (Graphic: Business Wire)

Blackwing builds on AeroVironment's extensive operational experience with small unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and its Switchblade™ Lethal Miniature Aerial Missile System (LMAMS) to provide the Navy with a low cost, submarine launched unmanned aircraft system optimized for Anti-Access/Aerial Denial (A2/AD) environments. AeroVironment developed the Blackwing system as part of a 2013 Navy and United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) sponsored JCTD called Advanced Weapons Enhanced by Submarine UAS against Mobile targets (AWESUM). This JCTD was completed in September 2015 with a strong recommendation to transition the capability into the fleet. Blackwing employs an advanced, miniature electro-optical and infrared (EO/IR) payload, Selective Availability Anti-spoofing Module (SASSM) GPS and AeroVironment's secure Digital Data Link (DDL), all packaged into a vehicle that launches from manned and unmanned submarines.

"AeroVironment's new Blackwing unmanned aircraft system is a valuable new capability that resulted from our team's close collaboration with, and responsiveness to, the U.S. Navy's undersea warfare community and the Special Operations community," said Kirk Flittie, AeroVironment vice president and general manager of its Unmanned Aircraft Systems business segment. "Delivering innovative solutions that enhance our customers' capabilities benefits the US Navy and USSOCOM, and creates new business opportunities for us. In addition to operating from undersea vehicles, Blackwing can also be integrated with and deployed from a wide variety of surface vessels and mobile ground vehicles to provide rapid response reconnaissance capabilities that help our customers operate more safely and effectively."

About AeroVironment Small UAS

RQ-11B Raven®, RQ-12 Wasp®, RQ-20A Puma™ and Switchblade™ comprise AeroVironment's Family of Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems. Operating with a common ground control system (GCS), this Family of Systems provides increased capability to the warfighter that can give ground commanders the option of selecting the appropriate aircraft based on the type of mission to be performed. This increased capability has the potential to provide significant force protection and force multiplication benefits to small tactical units and security personnel. AeroVironment provides logistics services worldwide to ensure a consistently high level of operational readiness and provides mission services for customers requiring only the information its small UAS produce. AeroVironment has delivered thousands of new and replacement small unmanned air vehicles to customers within the United States and to more than 30 international governments.

About AeroVironment

AeroVironment is a technology solutions provider that designs, develops, produces, supports and operates an advanced portfolio of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) and electric transportation solutions. The company's electric-powered, hand-launched unmanned aircraft systems generate and process data to deliver powerful insight, on demand, to people and enterprises engaged in military, public safety and commercial activities around the world. More information about AeroVironment is available at www.avinc.com.

Safe Harbor Statement

Certain statements in this press release may constitute "forward-looking statements" as that term is defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. These statements are made on the basis of current expectations, forecasts and assumptions that involve risks and uncertainties, including, but not limited to, economic, competitive, governmental and technological factors outside of our control, that may cause our business, strategy or actual results to differ materially from those expressed or implied. Factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from the forward-looking statements include, but are not limited to, our ability to perform under existing contracts and obtain additional contracts; our reliance on sales to the U.S. government; changes in the timing and/or amount of government spending; changes in the supply and/or demand and/or prices for our products and services; changes in the regulatory environment; the activities of competitors; failure of the markets in which we operate to grow; failure to expand into new markets; failure to develop new products or integrate new technology with current products; and general economic and business conditions in the United States and elsewhere in the world. For a further list and description of such risks and uncertainties, see the reports we file with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and Quarterly Reports on 10-Q. We do not intend, and undertake no obligation, to update any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

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