Ball Aerospace-Microsoft Team Completes Demonstrations of Cloud-Based Data Processing, Exploitation and Dissemination

BOULDER, Colo., May 19, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Ball Aerospace, in collaboration with Microsoft, successfully completed a series of demonstrations showing the viability of using commercial cloud computing to process and securely deliver actionable information quickly to those who need it, whether they are in a ground station, command center or on the battlefield.

Enabled by the Defense Innovation Unit's (DIU) fast-paced commercial solutions process, the demonstrations support the United States Space Force Space and Missile Systems Center's (SMC) Commercially Augmented Space Inter-Networked Operations (CASINO) Program Office, which serves as the SMC focal point for proliferated Low Earth Orbit (LEO) technology and prototyping.

"Our tests showed that the cloud is, in fact, a viable solution for data processing, exploitation and dissemination of data that is not only fast, but also flexible, secure, scalable and resilient," said Steve Smith, vice president and general manager, Systems Engineering Solutions, Ball Aerospace. "For years, the military has envisioned an agile and connected force structure. During the demonstration, the CASINO team proved that we are ready to field low-latency links today, which moves this vision much closer to reality."

For the demonstrations, simulated data from Overhead Persistent Infrared (OPIR) was pushed to Microsoft's AZURE cloud where it was processed using Ball-developed event-driven architecture, and then disseminated to multiple end points. In the final demonstration, Telesat joined the Ball-Microsoft team to successfully complete a direct downlink of data from its network of LEO satellites to a Ball-built electronically steerable Ka-Band phased array affixed to a tactical vehicle in order to prove that actionable information could be delivered to the warfighter in the field.

"Direct satellite-to-cloud communication and accelerated ground data processing allows the Department of Defense to gain advanced analytics capabilities enabling predictive modelling and new actionable insights capable of reshaping the future as they advance their mission," said Tom Keane, corporate vice president, Azure Global, Microsoft. "By combining satellite data with other sources directly in Azure, the Microsoft-Ball Aerospace team has demonstrated an innovative approach for ground processing which also opens the possibilities for a huge range of commercial applications."

Ball Aerospace has more than 30 years of data processing experience, including developing unique and accurate exploitation algorithms for satellite systems. Ball also has five decades of experience delivering electronically-steered phased array, antenna solutions for commercial, military and government customers and two decades experience delivering flat panel antennas and terminals.

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