

Ball Aerospace, Loft Federal and Microsoft to Collaborate on SDA's NExT Program

Team consisting of Ball Aerospace, Loft Federal and Microsoft will deliver 10 experimental Space Development Agency payloads to orbit

BROOMFIELD, Colo., April 11, 2023 [/PRNewswire/](#) -- Ball Aerospace, Loft Federal and Microsoft today announced that they are working together on the Space Development Agency (SDA)'s experimental testbed program, called NExT, that will carry 10 satellites with experimental payloads into orbit.

SDA announced the contract award on Oct. 10, 2022. Ball Aerospace is the prime contractor, leading payload and spacecraft integration and test. Ball Aerospace selected Loft Federal to perform spacecraft integration and testing, procure commercial launch services and oversee the launch campaign, and operate the constellation on orbit. Microsoft will provide Azure Government cloud and ground station infrastructure with secure satellite operations post launch as well as productivity solutions to drive mission critical communications.



"Ball Aerospace is leveraging our strong relationships with Loft Federal and Microsoft, which will enable us to streamline our assembly and integration process and move quickly to deliver capabilities to SDA," said Dave Kaufman, president, Ball Aerospace. "Our combined, experienced delivery team establishes a supplier-agnostic rapid delivery pipeline that enables mission success."

Loft Federal will use Loft Orbital's turnkey satellite platform and satellite operations software, called Cockpit, for a secure, fast and simple path to orbit. This satellite platform leverages the flight-proven Longbow bus with over 500 examples on orbit and comes from Loft Orbital's inventory of over 30 pre-ordered buses. Loft Orbital's modular payload interface allows rapid integration and will be operated using Cockpit. By integrating industry proven components and cutting-edge software, Loft Federal is able to quickly deliver assets to Low Earth Orbit (LEO) to meet SDA NExT mission requirements.

"Loft Federal is adapting our commercially-proven space infrastructure to support our national security space customer base," said John Eterno, general manager of Loft Federal. "Leveraging Loft Orbital's COTS products allows us to provide SDA with a fast and proven path to orbit in line with the commercial market's expectations."

SDA NExT builds upon [Microsoft's Azure Space](#) products and partnerships. Central to Microsoft's solution for NExT is the combination of Azure Orbital Ground Station and [Azure Government air-gapped clouds](#), which will allow SDA to do their mission work in a secure cloud environment. Through NExT, together the SDA and U.S. Space Force will securely operate a government owned satellite constellation with Azure Orbital Ground Station's global network [for the first time](#). Additionally, Microsoft 365 will also provide them with productivity tools to enable personnel to share information, which will help ensure a coordinated response.

"Our continuing relationships with trailblazers like the SDA, Ball and Loft gives the U.S. Space Force secure options for resilient and high-bandwidth satellite ground stations to support their mission," said Stephen Kitay, senior director, Azure Space at Microsoft. "Our Azure Government cloud will enable SDA to extract spaceborne data insights from the cloud to the ultimate edge and to scale innovation faster and better meet the critical needs of the Guardians and strengthen national security."

The SDA's charge is to create and sustain effective and affordable military space capabilities that provide persistent, resilient, global, low-latency surveillance to deter or defeat adversaries. Recognized as the Department of Defense's constructive disruptor for space acquisition, SDA will quickly deliver needed space-based capabilities to the joint warfighter to support terrestrial missions through development, fielding, and operation of the Proliferated Warfighter Space Architecture.

Powered by endlessly curious people with an unwavering mission focus, **Ball Aerospace** pioneers discoveries that enable our customers to perform beyond expectation and protect what matters most. We create innovative space solutions, enable more accurate weather forecasts, drive insightful observations of our planet, deliver actionable data and intelligence, and ensure those who defend our freedom go forward bravely and return home safely. Go Beyond with Ball.® For more information, visit www.ball.com/aerospace or connect with us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

About Ball Corporation

Ball Corporation (NYSE: BALL) supplies innovative, sustainable aluminum packaging solutions for beverage, personal care and household products customers, as well as aerospace and other technologies and services primarily for the U.S. government. Ball Corporation and its subsidiaries employ 21,000 people worldwide and reported 2022 net sales of \$15.35 billion. For more information, visit www.ball.com, or connect with us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

About Loft Federal

Loft Federal LLC provides the US national security space community with a rapid, affordable, and simplified path to orbit for any smallsat mission. Loft Federal is a US-incorporated, wholly-owned subsidiary of Loft Orbital Solutions, Inc, a company with headquarters in Golden, Colorado.

Forward-Looking Statements This release contains "forward-looking" statements concerning future events and financial performance. Words such as "expects," "anticipates," "estimates," "believes," and similar expressions typically identify forward-looking statements, which are generally any statements other than statements of historical fact. Such statements are based on current expectations or views of the future and are subject to risks and uncertainties, which could cause actual results or events to differ materially from those expressed or implied. You should therefore not place undue reliance upon any forward-looking statements and they should be read in conjunction with, and qualified in their entirety by, the cautionary statements referenced below. Ball undertakes no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. Key factors, risks and uncertainties that could cause actual outcomes and results to be different are summarized in filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, including Exhibit 99 in Ball's Form 10-K, which are available on Ball's website and at www.sec.gov. Additional factors that might affect: a) Ball's packaging segments include product capacity, supply, and demand constraints and fluctuations and changes in consumption patterns; availability/cost of raw materials, equipment, and logistics; competitive packaging, pricing and substitution; changes in climate and weather and related events such as drought, wildfires, storms, hurricanes, tornadoes and floods; footprint adjustments and other manufacturing changes, including the startup of new facilities and lines; failure to achieve synergies, productivity improvements or cost reductions; unfavorable mandatory deposit or packaging laws; customer and supplier consolidation; power and supply chain interruptions; changes in major customer or supplier contracts or loss of a major customer or supplier; inability to pass through increased costs; war, political instability and sanctions, including relating to the situation in Russia and Ukraine and its impact on Ball's supply chain and its ability to operate in Europe, the Middle East and Africa regions generally; changes in foreign exchange or tax rates; and tariffs, trade actions, or other governmental actions, including business restrictions and orders affecting goods produced by Ball or in its supply chain, including imported raw materials; b) Ball's aerospace segment include funding, authorization, availability and returns of government and commercial contracts; and delays, extensions and technical uncertainties affecting segment contracts; c) Ball as a whole include those listed above plus: the extent to which sustainability-related opportunities arise and can be capitalized upon; changes in senior management, succession, and the ability to attract and retain skilled labor; regulatory actions or issues including those related to tax, environmental, social and governance reporting, competition, environmental, health and workplace safety, including U.S. Federal Drug Administration and other actions or public concerns affecting products filled in Ball's containers, or chemicals or substances used in raw materials or in the manufacturing process; technological developments and innovations; the ability to manage cyber threats; litigation; strikes; disease; pandemic; labor cost changes; inflation; rates of return on assets of Ball's defined benefit retirement plans; pension changes; uncertainties surrounding geopolitical events and governmental policies, including policies, orders, and actions related to COVID-19; reduced cash flow; interest rates affecting Ball's debt; and successful or unsuccessful joint ventures, acquisitions and divestitures, and their effects on Ball's operating results and business generally.

SOURCE Ball Aerospace

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