



Raytheon Competing for Drone Contracts

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It looks more like a bat than a bee.

But Raytheon Co. hopes the "KillerBee" unmanned aircraft will fly as the U.S. Navy's and Marine Corps' next-generation small surveillance-drone system.

Waltham, Mass.-based Raytheon is teaming up with the KillerBee's maker, Swift Engineering Inc. of San Clemente, Calif., to compete with Boeing Co. and perhaps others for the Navy and Marine drone contracts in the coming months. The Navy plans to have an initial version of the craft operating by 2011.

Tucson-based Raytheon Missile Systems will lead the effort to integrate the aircraft and Raytheon control systems.

A team made up of Boeing and Insitu Inc. already supplies the Navy with a small tactical drone, the ScanEagle, under a non-competitive contract awarded in 2005.

The Boeing team is developing a new craft for the contract competition.

Equipped with multiple sensors, the KillerBee is able to provide long-endurance surveillance, intelligence and reconnaissance flights over the battlefield and uses proven, existing technology, Ken Pedersen, vice president of advanced programs at Raytheon Missile Systems, said in a statement.

Having a distinctive, "blended wing" body design with a 10-foot wingspan, Swift's KillerBee is designed to operate ashore or aboard ships with minimal space.