Lockheed Martin Begins Deliveries Of Fully Configured KC-130J Tankers To The U.S. Marines Corps

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Lockheed Martin has delivered the first three fully configured KC-130J tanker aircraft to the United States Marine Corps. These aircraft, the first of seven to be delivered this year, will be based at Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station N.C.

The USMC KC-130J program calls for the one-for-one replacement of the entire active duty and reserve fleet of 79 KC-130 F/R/T models. The Marine Corps has 11 KC-130Js on order, with the FY02 President's Budget containing funding for four more KC-130Js. The Marine Corps intends to request aircraft at the rate of at least four per year.

"The good news stories with the C-130J program just keep coming," said Ross Reynolds, Lockheed Martin's C-130J program vice president. "With yet another variant on its way to a customer, the C-130J is living up to the high expectations that users around the world have of this aircraft."

Key enhancements of the KC-130J over previous models include increased performance, survivability and ground safety enhancements, digital technology, improved operational effectiveness, and reductions in required personnel and maintenance costs.

Using only wing and external tanks, the KC-130J has a 57,500 pound (8,455 U.S. gallons) fuel offload capability while performing a 500-nautical mile radius mission, compared with 38,000 pounds (5,588 U.S. gallons) for the current fleet of KC-130Fs. The aircraft is also configured to accept a fuselage tank if desired, adding another 24,392 pounds (3,600 U.S. gallons) of fuel to a mission. The standard probe-and-drogue configuration is suited for helicopters and jet aircraft. Internal provisions for its own refueling probe provide even greater flexibility if required.

The nucleus of the new KC-130J is the Flight Refueling Ltd (FRL) Mk32B- 901E aerial refueling system. It features two electrically driven hose drum units and is microprocessor-controlled (1553B). The FRL system allows fuel delivery to be adjusted at the hose end to better suit various receivers. Ram air turbine driven fuel boost pumps in each pod improve fuel offload. The Mk32B-901E system delivers 270-350 gallons per minute at 50 psig without the need for fuselage tank boost pumps as required in the current fleet. This significant improvement over the current fleet of Marine KC-130s provides greater mission flexibility. Removing the large fuselage tank from the cargo area frees the Marines to conduct simultaneous refueling and cargo missions without sacrificing fuel offload capability.

Worldwide, 111 C-130Js and J-30s have been ordered. Current customers include the Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve Command, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Marine Corps, Royal Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force, Italian Air Force, and the Royal Danish Air Force.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company is a leader in the design, development, systems integration, production and support of advanced military aircraft and related technologies. Its customers include the military services of the United States and allied countries throughout the world. Products include the F-16, F-22, F-117, C-5, C-27J, C-130, P-3, and U-2. The company leads a team competing for the development and production of the Joint Strike Fighter.

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