

SIKA International Rolls Out TRACER/FSCS Chassis

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The automotive chassis for the SIKA International's TRACER (Tactical Reconnaissance Armored Combat Vehicle Requirement)/FSCS (Future Scout and Cavalry System) Technology Demonstrator was rolled out recently at a ceremony in Sterling Heights, Michigan.

TRACER/FSCS is an international joint development program between the United Kingdom and the United States established to develop a Replacement Armored Reconnaissance System for both countries. This jointly developed automotive chassis demonstrator is the first in a series of integration activities to produce a "Fully Integrated System Demonstrator" for the Joint Program. Follow-on system integration activities will include high performance reconnaissance and targeting sensors, leading edge C4I technology and advanced integrated survivability systems.

"This roll-out reflects the commitment and dedication of the SIKA Team to fulfilling the needs of the US/UK cavalrymen on future battlefields," said Roland Asokolis of the Joint Program Office. The chassis was produced under contract to SIKA International, the prime contractor for the TRACER/FSCS program. SIKA International is a joint venture between Lockheed Martin and British Aerospace Systems, with General Dynamics Land Systems and Vickers Defence as principal subcontractors.

The TRACER/FSCS chassis is transportable by C-130 aircraft and boasts unprecedented high-speed mobility performance for a tracked vehicle. It's the first combat vehicle designed to employ the use of a band track, which weighs half of a conventional track and is remarkably quieter.

The chassis rollout is a major milestone for the SIKA Team and the TRACER/FSCS Joint Program Office. The TRACER/FSCS program will complete the advanced technology demonstrator phase in July 2002. Following the roll-out in Michigan, the chassis will be flown via C-130 to the SIKA team's site in Orlando, Florida, for integration of the elevated sensor suite and a series of final System Integration milestones.

The full-up "Scout" system will then be flown via C-130 for testing and demonstration at the U.S. Army maneuver range in Fort Carson, Colorado, in May and June 2002. On the range, the SIKA TRACER/FSCS system will demonstrate, in a dynamic environment, the reconnaissance capabilities required to operate and survive while gathering and disseminating data on real targets in a tactical environment.

The innovative system integration and packaging of advanced technologies developed and matured by the SIKA Team have created a completely new combat vehicle in the past 36 months. The advanced design for the TRACER/FSCS program includes; leading edge C4I architecture, high performing elevated sensors, the advanced automotive chassis, turret and cannon development, and advanced survivability characteristics. The vehicle has been designed and developed with the active participation of soldiers from the UK and US, who were provided virtual prototypes and constructive simulations of the system during development.

The very successful joint program was started over three years ago with a joint Memorandum of Agreement and the Joint Program Office. The program predated the initiatives on Transformation in the US and Future Rapid Effects System (FRES) in the UK. With the subsequent change in national strategy, the TRACER/FSCS program will complete the PD/ATD Phase and will not proceed into the subsequent EMD phase. It is expected that both countries will leverage the accomplishments and investments of the program into the programs for Future Combat Systems (FCS) in the United States and FRES in the UK.

Employing more than 8,500 people, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control is headquartered in Dallas, Texas, with additional base operations in Orlando, Fla., and manufacturing and assembly facilities in Sunnyvale, Calif., Chelmsford, Mass., Camden, Ark., Horizon City and Lufkin, Texas, Ocala, Fla., White Sands Missile Range, N.M., and Troy, Ala. The company is a business unit of Lockheed Martin Systems Integration in Bethesda, Md.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin is a global enterprise principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced-technology systems, products and services. The Corporation's core businesses are systems integration, space, aeronautics and technology services.

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