Israel Contract Adds To Lockheed Martin F-16 Firm Backlog

PRNewswire
FORT WORTH, Texas

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics received a contract for 52 F-16 aircraft for Israel on Dec. 19, 2001, significantly extending the firm F-16 production base.

The Foreign Military Sales (FMS) contract for Israel officially exercises the option for 52 additional F-16I aircraft under the Peace Marble V program. Lockheed Martin's contract value for the option is $1.3 billion out of a total program value of approximately $2 billion.

"This contract is very important to us for a number of reasons," said Dain M. Hancock, president of Lockheed Martin Aeronautics. "It completes the deal for a very important customer, it extends the firm F-16 production base through 2008 and it boosts our firm orders for 2001. This buy provides an excellent base for future F-16 sales and provides a solid bridge to JSF production at our Fort Worth facility."

The aircraft will be the same two-seat F-16I configuration as the original 50 aircraft ordered in the Peace Marble V program, which began in January 2000. This brings the total of F-16Is on order to 102. The first F-16I will deliver in 2003. All aircraft will be assembled at the Lockheed Martin Aeronautics facility in Fort Worth, but there will be significant coproduction of airframe and avionics components in Israel.

During the Paris Air Show in June, Israel had announced its intent to exercise the option and in September signed the letter of offer and acceptance (LOA) with the U.S. government.

This is Israel's sixth buy of F-16s. There are now a total of 48 follow- on buys of new F-16s by 14 countries.

Worldwide F-16 firm orders now number 4,347 aircraft, with a firm backlog of 301 aircraft as of the end of 2001.

The F-16 backlog continues to increase. In September of this year, an FMS contract was signed for the Greece III option of 10 Block 52+ aircraft.

Other sales highlights for the year have been the progress on requests by Chile and Oman for new F-16s. Also, Italy signed a lease for 34 inventory USAF F-16A/Bs.

The F-16, the world's most sought-after fighter, is the choice of 23 countries. More than 4,000 aircraft have been delivered, hundreds more are on order for the U.S. and six other countries, and production is expected to continue beyond 2010. Major upgrades for all F-16 versions are being incorporated to keep the fleet modern and fully supportable over the aircraft's long service life.

The F-16 is playing a major role as the durable and versatile "workhorse" in allied peacekeeping operations in the Balkans and Iraq. The F-16 is a key player in Operation Noble Eagle, homeland air defense of the United States, and recently participated in Operation Enduring Freedom, in the War on Terrorism in Afghanistan.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co. 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-35, F-117, C-5, C-27J, C-130, P-3 and U-2.

LM Aeronautics is a unit of Lockheed Martin Corp., headquartered in Bethesda, Md. 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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