Lockheed Martin Awarded Contract To Upgrade Four U.S. Customs Aircraft

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Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co., a business area of Lockheed Martin Corp, was recently awarded a $27 million contract to upgrade U.S. Customs Service (USCS) P-3B Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft numbers 1 through 4.

Once upgraded, these AEW aircraft will have extensive commonality with the USCS P-3 "Slick" Interceptor aircraft, enhancing the ability of USCS aircrews to safely and effectively fly both aircraft interchangeably.

"We continue to be the supplier of choice for the USCS P-3s and a key provider of services and upgrades to the U.S. Navy P-3 fleet as well as numerous International P-3 operators," said John Norris, Lockheed Martin's USCS program manager. "We're also pursuing new production opportunities for the Orion and are competing for the U.S. Navy's Multi-Mission Maritime Aircraft program. We've been in the P-3 business for 40 years and will be in it until the last plane retires."

The airplane and mission systems configuration will be modified to a configuration that duplicates that of AEW No. 7, which Lockheed Martin upgraded in 2001. Some of the changes include a new common glass cockpit featuring a new flight management system, dual-channel digital autopilot, digital engine instruments, tactical display, updated mission system and upgraded radar. A common communications and navigation system update also will be added.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics will serve as the prime contractor, with Lockheed Martin Aircraft & Logistics Centers in Greenville, S.C., performing all modification work. Lockheed Martin Naval Electronics & Surveillance Systems, Eagan, Minn., and Lockheed Martin Naval Electronics & Surveillance Systems, Syracuse, N.Y., are providing the mission avionics suite and the APS- 145 radar for the upgrade, under existing contracts with the USCS. Modification work is scheduled to begin in July 2002 and is expected to be completed by September 2003.

"The U.S. Customs P-3 aircraft has long been an effective tool against illegal narcotics trafficking, and since September 11th has also been providing surveillance support for our nation's homeland security efforts," said David J. Posek, president of Lockheed Martin Aircraft & Logistics Centers. "Lockheed Martin is proud to continue its role in this very important program."

Over the last 18 years, Lockheed Martin has successfully modified eight AEW aircraft and eight Slicks for the USCS, the last of which was delivered in February 2002.

The USCS AEW aircraft are P-3Bs that have 24-foot rotodomes mounted on top of the fuselage that house the APS-145 radar antenna. These aircraft are used primarily for long-range surveillance and drug interdiction with a primary mission to detect, identify, classify and track aircraft and maritime surface craft. The aircraft have a 4,400-nautical-mile range and can stay aloft for up to 14 hours.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co., headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, 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 JSF, F-117, T-50, C-5, C-27J, C-130, C-130J, P-3, S-3 and U-2.

Lockheed Martin Corp., headquartered in Bethesda, Md., 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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