Lockheed Martin C-130J To Participate In Critical Peacekeeping Mission

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company and the Aeronautica Militare Italiana (AMI, Italian Air Force) have successfully completed the first series of tests that will enable the C-130J to participate in the Treaty on Open Skies, an international agreement designed to ensure compliance with international arms control efforts through aerial observation.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company is a business area of Lockheed Martin Corporation.

"I am extremely proud to announce that the world's most advanced airlifter, the C-130J, will soon play a significant role in one of the world's most valuable peacekeeping activities," said Ross Reynolds, vice president, C-130J program. "Already adapted to all weather combat delivery, in-flight refueling, search and rescue, Special Forces and firefighting missions, the C-130J will now add Open Skies missions to its growing list of capabilities. The aircraft's advanced range and performance capabilities will certainly enhance the quality and success of each Open Skies mission."

The Special Avionics Mission Strap-on-Now (SAMSON) C-130 Open Skies Pod System (COPS) used in the tests was previously developed by LM Aero for the C-130H. SAMSON COPS consists of a roll on/roll off control console and mission pod. The integration of SAMSON COPS with the C-130J was requested and funded by the AMI.

Italy belongs to a consortium of nations that currently use the C-130H equipped with SAMSON COPS to fulfill the Open Skies requirements. The other nations in the consortium include Belgium, France, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Canada.

The AMI will be the first air force to utilize SAMSON COPS with the C-130J. The AMI C-130Hs currently used for SAMSON COPS missions are being replaced by C-130Js in its fleet. Testing will continue in order to ensure Italy's participation in treaty missions in 2003.

The Treaty on Open Skies, involving 27 nations, was first conceived during the Cold War to promote greater openness and transparency of military activities of the former Warsaw Pact and the Western European Union (WEU). The treaty was ratified by most of the participant countries in Helsinki, Finland in March 1992 and went into effect in January 2002 when the last two signatories, Russia and Belarus, ratified the treaty.

Under the terms of the Treaty on Open Skies, member nations may fly over specific military facilities in order to verify compliance with the terms of the treaty. The treaty outlines strict requirements for any flight and the equipment used. Any mission photos or videotape recordings are provided to all treaty participants.

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/A-22, F-35 JSF, F-117, T-50, C-5, C-130, C-130J, P-3, S-3 and U-2.

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co. 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. Employing about 125,000 people worldwide, Lockheed Martin had 2001 sales of $24 billion.

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