Italian Air Force And Lockheed Martin Complete Advanced Aircrew Training Facility

The Aeronautica Militare Italiana (AMI, Italian Air Force), joined by Lockheed Martin, today commemorated the acceptance of its National Training Center (NTC) at Pisa Air Base, Italy. Lockheed Martin led a team comprised of Italian industry in the design, building and completion of the facility.

"The National Training Center will substantially increase the speed with which the Italian Air Force can qualify and train their flight crews to fly the C-130J," said Ross Reynolds, vice president of the C-130J program. "This state-of-the-art facility and the equipment being installed will make the NTC the most advanced aircrew training facility in Europe. In addition, it has been very rewarding to work with our Italian industrial partners throughout this entire project."

Although the AMI NTC primarily will be used to conduct C-130J aircrew and maintenance training, it could be transformed over time to meet the changing needs of the Italian Air Force. The initial technology includes an Operational Flight Trainer (OFT) and a Cockpit Avionics Part Task Trainer (CAPTT) designed and built by CAE at its Tampa, Fla., facility. The building's design allows for a second OFT to be installed as required in the future. The NTC has been designed to allow room for growth as it includes classroom and training space for other aircraft programs.

The NTC will serve the Aeronautica Militare Italiana as its national facility to train C-130J pilots and crews. Currently, Italy is Europe's second largest C-130J operator, with a total of 22 aircraft on order. The Italian configuration of the C-130J is among the most sophisticated yet developed for the aircraft. It has a highly advanced suite of communications and defensive systems that include U/VHF combined multiband radios and a laser warning receiver system. In addition, it is the first C-130J "receiver- tanker" built. A receiver-tanker has the ability to both refuel other aircraft as well as being refueled itself during flight -- a true "force multiplier" that provides the operator with greater flexibility in performing strategic or tactical transport missions.

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.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 125,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2002 sales of $26.6 billion.

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