Lockheed Martin MK 41 Vertical Launching System Receives Navy Award For Excellence; Shipboard System Honored For Second Time In Four Years

In a ceremony today attended by Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD), Baltimore County officials and senior U.S. Navy leadership, Lockheed Martin received the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) Excellence Award for consistently exceeding design, production, and quality challenges as the prime contractor for the MK 41 Vertical Launching System (VLS), installed aboard the U.S. Navy's Aegis- equipped cruisers and destroyers.

Capt. Mick Outten, U.S. Navy Program Manager for the MK 41 VLS, said, "I believe that the MK 41 VLS program is one of the great success stories of today's modern Navy." He continued, "The MK 41 VLS program is a model for the rest of the acquisition community and is appreciated most of all by the Sailors who know that they are using one of the most reliable and effective weapon systems ever produced. Additionally, MK 41 VLS has been an extremely safe program, evidenced by the significant accomplishment of having no crew fatalities or serious injuries in several thousand combat and test missile firings."

The MK 41 VLS, a below deck missile launching system developed by Lockheed Martin Naval Electronics & Surveillance Systems-Marine Systems, was originally designed for the Navy's Aegis-equipped guided missile cruisers to provide air threat protection for naval battle groups. Through its evolution into a multi-missile, multi-mission launcher, the MK 41 VLS has revolutionized the way world navies think about naval warfare. No other naval missile launcher is capable of launching missiles for every threat in naval warfare, including: anti-air, anti-submarine, ship self-defense, land attack, and ballistic missile defense. More than 11,000 MK 41 VLS missile cells have been delivered or are on order for 173 ships in 11 navies around the world.

The NAVSEA Program Executive Office for Theater Surface Combatants (PEO TSC) Excellence Award Program was established in 1971 as a means to recognize outstanding performance, dedication, and accomplishments in support of the Aegis Weapon System. Today, the Excellence Award has evolved beyond its original purpose, and is presented to organizations in both government and private industry that have made lasting contributions to the program through exceptional teamwork with partners. Since 1976, the Excellence Award has been presented in the form of a flag, with a new star added to the flag for each successive award. The flag will be flown from Lockheed Martin's Marine Systems business in Middle River for exactly one year.

Rep. Ruppersberger, who as the former Baltimore County Executive is already quite familiar with Lockheed Martin operations in Middle River, said, "With all of the experience gained and proven performance realized by the Lockheed Martin MK 41 VLS team in Middle River, I hope that a strong relationship between the U.S. Navy and Lockheed Martin will continue for many years to come. This makes sense for the Navy and for the taxpayer."

Dale Bennett, vice president and general manager of Lockheed Martin's Marine Systems business, added, "Our team takes great pride in receiving this prestigious award for the second time in four years. Our commitment to the Navy's success remains unwavering and we intend to continue our intense efforts to provide the Navy with the latest technology available to address all of their missile launching needs now and in the future."

Specializing in the MK 41 VLS, systems integration and advanced hull form technologies, Marine Systems is a unit of Lockheed Martin Corporation. 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 company's core businesses are systems integration, space, aeronautics and technology services.

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