

MEADS International Submits Proposal, Readies For Design And Development Of Multi-National Air Defense System

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MEADS International (MI) has submitted its business management proposal to begin the Design and Development (D&D) phase of the Medium Extended Air Defense System (MEADS).

Submitted to the NATO MEADS Management Agency (NAMEADSMA) in Huntsville, AL, the proposal culminates five months of activity to provide cost and management information to develop MEADS, the advanced air and missile defense system for Germany, Italy and the United States. The D&D contract is planned to begin in 2004 and would extend the program, currently completing the Risk Reduction Effort phase, for seven years.

"MEADS will be the premier mobile air and missile defense system in the world," said MI president Klaus Riedel. "The system will protect warfighters by countering the entire threat spectrum including tactical ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles, aircraft and weapons of mass destruction."

Designed to replace Patriot systems in the United States and Nike Hercules systems in Italy, MEADS also meets the "capabilities-oriented" requirements of Germany's air defense concept. The mobile air defense system incorporates the combat-proven hit-to-kill PAC-3 (Patriot Advanced Capability-3) missile and includes surveillance and fire control sensors, battle management as well as communication centers and high firepower launchers.

"Through technological contributions of Lockheed Martin, EADS/LFK and MBDA-Italy, MEADS International is developing a system that meets the most challenging multi-national requirements for air and missile defense in line with the priorities of the participating nations," said Riedel.

MEADS will combine superior battlefield protection with unprecedented flexibility to provide greater firepower with less manpower than current systems, producing dramatic operation and support costs savings. The system will enable protection of maneuver forces and provide homeland defense against tactical ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles and aircraft. MEADS is being designed to roll off transports with the troops and immediately begin operations with high tactical performance. Its open architecture will establish the pattern for subsequent 21st century air defense systems and enable air defense asset allocation to be mission-tailored for homeland or maneuver forces defense.

NAMEADSMA, a chartered organization of NATO, selected MEADS International, Inc., to develop the system in 1991. Headquartered in Orlando, Fla., this multinational joint venture's participating companies include MBDA Italia, EADS European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company, Germany's LFK- Lenkflugkorpersysteme (LFK, a subsidiary of EADS and MBDA) and Lockheed Martin in the United States. This project serves as a model for collaborative transatlantic development.

The U.S., Germany, and Italy are financing the program in shares of 55, 28 and 17 percent, respectively.

SOURCE: MEADS International, Inc.