Lockheed Martin's Sniper XR Targeting Pod Advances Into QT&E

Lockheed Martin's Sniper XR(TM) Advanced Targeting Pod was approved by the U.S. Air Force to advance into Qualification Test & Evaluation (QT&E), a major milestone for the program.

QT&E is under way on an F-16 Block 50 aircraft at Nellis Air Force Base, NV, and will continue with the F-16 Block 30 through January 2004. Qualification Operational Test & Evaluation is planned for March 2004.

U.S. Air Force approval for QT&E followed a series of successful flight tests of Sniper XR at Nellis AFB, Edwards AFB, CA, Eglin AFB, FL, and the Air Force Reserve Test Center. Flight evaluation began in June 2003 with a series of familiarization and operational utility evaluation flights. U.S. Air Force pilots at the four test sites flew 37 sorties of the Sniper XR pod on both F- 15E and F-16 aircraft to complete a comprehensive performance assessment and to verify operational and tactical test objectives.

"Sniper XR successfully passed a series of stringent evaluations by the Air Force to qualify for this critical milestone," said Kenneth Fuhr, program director for Sniper XR. "We are confident that the pod will continue to demonstrate superior performance during QT&E."

Sniper XR is the world's most advanced targeting pod, featuring exceptional stability, extremely long-range identification of tactical targets, outstanding image processing and precision targeting. The lightweight and affordable Sniper XR is designed for current and future fighter aircraft.

Incorporating a high-resolution, mid-wave 3rd generation Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR), a dual-mode laser and a charge-coupled device (CCD)-TV, along with a laser spot tracker and laser marker, Sniper vastly improves target detection and identification. Sniper XR is the U.S. Air Force's choice to aid them in defining moments during battle. The advanced image processing algorithms, combined with rock-steady stabilization techniques, deliver unparalleled performance.

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.

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