

Lockheed Martin's HIMARS Successfully Completes Two Production Qualification Tests

System Successful in Ground and Flight Tests

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Lockheed Martin's High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) completed two Production Qualification Tests (PQTs) on November 19, successfully demonstrating performance in an operational environment.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20031124/DAM028-a>
<http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20031124/DAM028-b>)

The first test was conducted at Fort Sill, OK. During the exercise a HIMARS vehicle was flown into Fort Sill's East Range area by a C-130 aircraft. The vehicle was offloaded in less than five minutes, drove to a firing point, received a digital firing command and fired six Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) practice rockets. The joint exercise included a U.S. Army MLRS crew from Fort Sill, a command and control team from the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Air Force crew who piloted the C-130 aircraft.

During the second test, conducted at White Sands Missile Range, NM, an Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) Block II missile was successfully fired from the launcher. All test objectives were achieved.

To support the qualification testing, seven HIMARS launchers produced under the maturation contract have been upgraded to the Low-Rate Initial Production (LRIP) configuration. Upgrades include adding the Low-Cost Fire Control Panel (LCFCP), the Improved Weapons Interface Unit (IWIU), a modified azimuth resolver, an upgraded Position Navigation Unit (PNU) executive processor, an upgraded Launcher Interface Unit (LIU) and a V.24 communication interface.

"Qualification testing is important because it allows the customer to demonstrate and test launcher performance in an operational environment before the system is delivered to the user," said Dick Moyer, Lockheed Martin's HIMARS program director. "We are focused on successfully completing this series of PQTs and meeting the first unit equipped date -- on-time and on-budget."

All missiles and rockets in the MLRS family of munitions, including the Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) will be fired from the upgraded launchers over the next several months.

HIMARS is being produced for the U.S. Army and the U.S. Marine Corps under an LRIP contract received in March 2003. During LRIP, the Army plans to buy 89 HIMARS launchers and the Marines will buy four launchers. Total joint procurement of this expeditionary system is expected to be more than 900 launchers. HIMARS can accommodate the entire family of MLRS munitions, including the ATACMS missile and the Guided MLRS rocket. The First Unit Equipped (FUE) is on schedule for early calendar year 2005.

Additionally, Lockheed Martin also produces the battle-proven ATACMS missile. ATACMS is manufactured at the company's facilities in Grand Prairie, Texas, with final assembly at Horizon City, Texas, near El Paso. To date, more than 2,500 ATACMS missile have been delivered to the U.S. and allied armies.

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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