Lockheed Martin Successfully Demonstrates Open Architecture For Aegis Weapon System

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Lockheed Martin has successfully migrated key elements of the Aegis Weapon System to an open architecture environment, a move that will significantly enhance the capabilities and service life of the U.S. Navy's premier surface combat system while also reducing its cost.

Open architecture systems exploit commercial computing technology, allowing the Navy to install software and other technology upgrades faster and more cost effectively throughout the life of a ship, aircraft or submarine.

"Spiraling Aegis into an open architecture weapon system gives the Navy the ability to continue to adapt Aegis for new and more complex missions - and do it faster and at lower cost," said Orlando Carvalho, vice president of Lockheed Martin Maritime Systems & Sensors' Surface Systems line of business. "The success of these initial demonstrations confirms that the Navy's high expectations for open architecture are achievable - not just on Aegis ships, but on the Navy's next generation of warships, such as LCS, DD(X) and CG(X)."

The Lockheed Martin demonstrations, completed in late February, focused on the Aegis SPY-1 radar, and included tactical scenarios tracking more than 100 contacts. The two demonstrations, one on a traditional closed computing environment and the second on the Navy's new Open Architecture Computing Environment, successfully demonstrated the ability to seamlessly transition the radar's software from one environment to the next - highlighting the "openness" of the newly-architected SPY software.

"It should be clear to everyone that we are not only talking open architecture, but demonstrating it as well," said Rear Adm. Charles T. Bush, the Navy's program executive officer for Integrated Warfare Systems. "These demonstrations marked a key milestone as we aggressively pursue a vision for developing open architecture components and systems."

Lockheed Martin's approach to open architecture is built on nearly a decade of "open system, rapid capability" deliveries to the Navy, including combat system, sonar, communications and electronic warfare capabilities. For example, Lockheed Martin's Acoustic Rapid Commercial Off-The-Shelf Insertion (ARCI) Program provides open architecture solutions for the Navy's submarine force. Since 1998, more than 50 ARCI systems have been installed on 40 submarines, consistently on schedule and under budget.

Aegis Open Architecture will ensure fleet and joint interoperability, provide shorter technology introduction cycles, enable earlier system testing and performance measurement, and reduce acquisition and certification risk and cost.

The recent demonstrations represent key milestones on the disciplined spiral approach to evolve the current architecture and computing environments. The first step, to be completed next year, will upgrade the radar control architecture and computing environment for all SPY-1 radar systems, beginning with SPY-1B/D radars. Subsequent work will focus on system architecture improvements and integration of the radar, weapons, navigation, undersea warfare and display systems.

Headquartered in Bethesda, MD, Lockheed Martin employs about 130,000 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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