Lockheed Martin KC-130J Given Approval After Intensive Testing By Marine Corps

PRNewswire-FirstCall
MARIETTA, Ga.

The U.S. Marine Corps announced today that the commander of Operational Testing and Evaluation (OT&E) has "recommended full fleet introduction of the Lockheed Martin KC-130J for operational use."

Referring to the April 23 U.S. Marine Corps Operational Evaluation Report, the Marine Corps announcement states: "The KC-130J possesses a significant capability increase over the legacy KC-130 fleet and outperformed the KC-130T in five mission representative profiles, including fixed and rotary-wing aerial refueling missions, rapid ground refueling missions and aerial delivery cargo missions."

"We are proud of the performance of the KC-130J," said Ross Reynolds, C-130J program vice president. "The aircraft is transforming the ability of the war fighter, and the Marine Corps' announcement is further justification of the aircraft's capability, viability and necessity in the U.S. inventory."

Operational testing was conducted from October 4, 2003 to January 9, 2004 and assessed the effectiveness and suitability of the KC-130J for several critical operational requirements. The KC-130J will replace aging KC-130 aircraft in the active USMC fleet, the oldest family of aircraft in Marine Corps inventory, some nearing 40 years of service.

A copy of the Marine Corps press release can be found at http://www.usmc.mil/

This Marine Corps validation of the KC-130J's performance is another example of the tremendous progress in the C-130J program. Last week operators from around the world took part in the first-ever airlift exercise featuring only C-130Js, Exercise Combined Strength, at RAF Lyneham, England. In addition, the active-duty U.S. Air Force took delivery of its first C-130J at Little Rock Air Force Base on April 16.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the first flight of the C-130. More than 2,260 Hercules aircraft of all types in more than 70 different variants have been delivered to 60 countries since the program began. Today, 67 countries, counting those that bought used aircraft, fly the Hercules. The C-130J is the latest version to come off the longest, continuous, active military aircraft production line in history.

A total of 179 C-130Js have been ordered, with 112 delivered to date. In the United States, Air Force Reserve Command and Air National Guard units fly C-130Js. The Marine Corps operates KC-130J tankers and the Coast Guard is now introducing the HC-130J into service. International C-130J operators include the Royal Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force, Italian Air Force and the Royal Danish Air Force. The capabilities and performance of the C-130J in supporting light, fast and lethal combat operations make it a true transformational asset.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co., a business area of Lockheed Martin, is a leader in the design, research and development, systems integration, production and support of advanced military aircraft and related technologies. Its customers include the military services of the United States and allied countries throughout the world. Products include the F-16, F/A-22, F-35 JSF, F-117, C-5, C-130, C-130J, P-3, S-3 and U-2. The company produces major components for the F-2 fighter, and is a co-developer of the C-27J tactical transport and T-50 advanced jet trainer.

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. The corporation reported 2003 sales of $31.8 billion.

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