Lockheed Martin Selected For Next Stage Of United Kingdom Nimrod 'R' Upgrade Program

'Project Helix' Will Upgrade Reconnaissance Capabilities

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Lockheed Martin announced today that it has been selected by the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defence (MoD) for an assessment phase contract to compete for a major upgrade of the Royal Air Force (RAF) fleet of Nimrod R Mk1 aircraft. Designated 'Project Helix,' this intelligence upgrade to the British Nimrod platform focuses on maintaining the capability of the Nimrod R out to 2025 and includes upgrades to the aircraft mission systems, associated ground stations and training facilities.

"We look forward to working with the Ministry of Defence to ensure that the Nimrod platform is upgraded with leading-edge reconnaissance technologies and remains an integral component of our mutual defense. Our technologies are highly complementary to the mission needs of the Helix program. With our decades of experience developing intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance technologies, many of our innovative capabilities are readily transportable to this effort," said Jerry Lindfelt, vice president for Lockheed Martin's Surveillance & Reconnaissance Systems.

The Project Helix program has a projected value in excess of 400 million pounds Sterling (approximately US$700m) over a 13-year period. The Nimrod R is the RAF electronic reconnaissance aircraft that examines routine radio and radar emissions and provides electronic combat support to military commanders.

The first part of the assessment phase will last for nine months, followed by a down-select to two contractors for a requirements and system stage in 2005. A single team will then proceed to a risk reduction stage in 2006. This first increment of the implementation phase -- worth approximately 200 million pounds (US$370m) -- will be awarded in early 2007.

"We are delighted the MoD has selected Lockheed Martin for the next phase of Project Helix," said Ian Stopps, chief executive, Lockheed Martin UK. "This is a program that capitalizes on our ability to 'reach-back' to advanced technologies developed in our businesses in the US and support these capabilities with our proven systems integration and program management skills, which were developed here in the UK on programs such as Merlin, Soothsayer and CEC. We will be teaming with the best UK companies to offer a fully compliant, cost-effective bid to the MoD which will be effective, affordable, supportable and low-risk."

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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