Lockheed Martin Delivers Mine Neutralization System To Navy Ahead Of Schedule

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Lockheed Martin recently delivered seven Airborne Mine Neutralization Systems (AMNS) to the U.S. Navy ahead of schedule under a Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC) contract. The system deliveries were followed by successful testing of AMNS, which is the only production-ready remote mine neutralization system currently available to the Navy.

AMNS is an expendable, remotely operated mine neutralization device, deployed from MH-53E helicopters, to provide identification and neutralization of bottom and moored mines. Because the system is operated from the air, AMNS provides the Navy with the capability to destroy mines in the littoral battle space without endangering mine countermeasures (MCM) ships.

"We are pleased to provide the Navy with this critical mine neutralization capability that is needed for deployment now," said Jim Weitzel, vice president of Lockheed Martin Maritime Systems & Sensors' Ocean Systems line of business. "The system's performance during testing was excellent and satisfied a significant milestone in the AMNS program. AMNS will be a key element in enabling the Navy to remove personnel from the minefield and neutralize these threats remotely."

The recent testing was conducted in Panama City, FL, and consisted of both inert and live fire open water missions. As part of the RDC contract, Lockheed Martin also incorporated significant product improvements and a technology refresh to the existing engineering development model design. In addition, the AMNS team streamlined the procurement process and employed innovative production techniques to deliver AMNS to the Navy at an accelerated pace.

The SEAFOX neutralizer, an unmanned underwater vehicle that is a primary component of AMNS, is provided by Atlas Elektronik. The neutralizer is cued by mine detection and classification data previously gathered from an MCM platform. The neutralizer can then automatically re-acquire the target using onboard sensors. Alternatively, the AMNS operator can maneuver the vehicle manually to the target. Real-time sonar data and video from the neutralizer is used for guidance and target identification. Mines are neutralized by firing the self-contained shaped explosive charge into or near the mine.

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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