

Lockheed Martin Delivers Aerostat Surveillance System To U.S. Army For Deployment In Iraq

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Lockheed Martin has delivered a 56,000-cubic-foot tethered aerostat surveillance system to the U.S. Army for deployment in Iraq. The aerostat, equipped with various sensors, will provide a persistent surveillance capability in the defense of ground forces and high-value assets in Baghdad. Lockheed Martin integrated the aerostat, sensors, ground station and mooring system at its facility in Akron.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20040608/PHTU001>)

The U.S. Army will test the aerostat surveillance system at Yuma Proving Grounds in Arizona before transporting it to Iraq.

"We awarded this sole source contract to Lockheed Martin based upon the Army's urgent requirement and the company's ability to deliver a capability in 120 days after contract award," said Steve Kostek of the Army's Robotic Unmanned Sensors (RUS) office at Fort Monmouth, NJ.

"For the warfighter in Iraq, this complements the existing security systems while adding capability," said Dan Howard, vice president and general manager at Lockheed Martin's Akron facility.

Aerostats and other lighter-than-air systems provide low-cost, long- endurance surveillance capabilities not possible with other types of aircraft. Attached by a high-strength cable to a mooring system, aerostats may carry different types of surveillance sensors to conduct multiple missions. They are filled with helium and stay airborne around-the-clock.

Lockheed Martin has extensive experience with aerostats, serving as the systems integrator, and operations and maintenance provider for the Tethered Aerostat Radar System (TARS) operated by the U.S. Air Force along the southern U.S. border. TARS uses Lockheed Martin's larger 420K (420,000 cubic feet) tethered aerostats and L-88 radar in support of air sovereignty and counter- drug operations conducted by North American Aerospace Defense Command, U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Customs Air and Marine Interdiction Coordination Center.

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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