Lockheed Martin F-35 Chief Wins Burnham Manufacturing Award

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The Society of Manufacturing Engineers has awarded its prestigious Donald C. Burnham Manufacturing Management Award to Tom Burbage, Lockheed Martin executive vice president and general manager of the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program. The award, presented on June 11 in Cincinnati, Ohio, recognizes Burbage "for exceptional success in the integration of the infrastructure and process manufacturing."

Burbage was cited for his management success in integrating innovative design and manufacturing technologies into a unique airframe to meet the requirements of a multi-service, supersonic stealth fighter for the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps, as well as the United Kingdom's Royal Air Force and Royal Navy. He also was recognized for his role in integrating prime contractor Lockheed Martin with principal program partners Northrop Grumman and BAE SYSTEMS. On the JSF program, the three companies are intertwined and work together as a single team to achieve program goals.

The F-35 is designed for quick, modular assembly using next-generation manufacturing technology and processes. Assembly time is planned to be less than half that of current-generation fighters.

Burbage graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy with a bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering and went on to a distinguished career in naval aviation, rising to the rank of lieutenant commander. He completed the U.S. Navy Test Pilot School and accumulated more than 3,000 hours in 58 different military aircraft. He retired from the Navy reserves in 1994 as a captain. He also holds master's degrees in aeronautical systems from the University of West Florida and business administration from UCLA.

In 1980, Burbage joined Lockheed Martin and later became manager of business development for U.S. government programs at the Lockheed California Company operations in Burbank, Calif. In December 1987, he was appointed vice president for Washington operations and coordinated the company's relationships with the Department of Defense and the U.S. Congress, as well as the embassies of foreign governments. He moved to Marietta, Ga., in 1990 as vice president for Business Development and Product Support at Lockheed Aeronautical Systems. He was named vice president and AFX program manager in 1992 and vice president and general manager for Navy Programs in 1994.

Burbage was named executive vice president and general manager of the Joint Strike Fighter program in November 2000, after having served in a series of senior management assignments including vice president and general manager of the F-22 program, president of Lockheed Martin Aeronautical Systems Company in Marietta, and executive vice president of customer requirements for Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co.

Three F-35 variants -- conventional takeoff and landing (CTOL), carrier vehicle (CV) and STOVL -- each derived from a common design will ensure that the F-35 meets the performance needs of the U.S. Air Force, Marine Corps, Navy and allied defense forces worldwide, while staying within strict affordability targets.

Lockheed Martin is developing the F-35 in conjunction with its principal industrial partners, Northrop Grumman and BAE SYSTEMS. Companies worldwide are participating in the F-35's development. Among the aircraft the F-35 will replace are the AV-8B Harrier, A-10, F-16, F/A-18 Hornet and the United Kingdom's Harrier GR.7 and Sea Harrier.

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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