Lockheed Martin Awarded NASA Contract For Space Exploration Studies

Lockheed Martin was awarded a contract for space exploration concept studies by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) on Sept. 1. The initial value of the contract is $3 million for the first six months with an option for another six-month, $3 million study in the next phase. Lockheed Martin is one of 11 companies NASA selected to provide concepts for the development of a Crew Exploration Vehicle (CEV) as well as overall architecture concepts for human exploration of the moon. The CEV will carry future astronauts to space and provide transportation for astronauts to explore the moon and Mars. Among the key factors that Lockheed Martin will keep foremost in all of its concepts and recommendations are safety, reliability, sustainability, affordability and evolvability.

"There's no question that this is an important step forward for NASA and it is an exciting time for all of us," said John Karas, vice president of space exploration at Lockheed Martin Space Systems. "We are working together to put the most talented minds in the industry and in the science community to work on combining new ideas with the absolute best technical solutions for how we will explore space for the next 20 to 30 years and beyond."

The contract is a result of NASA's Concept Exploration and Refinement (CE&R) Broad Agency Announcement issued in June 2004 and is one of the first study contract awards issued by the agency as part of the nation's Vision for Space Exploration. The vision provides a focus on a sustained and affordable human and robotic space exploration program.

"It is impressive to see how NASA is engaging not only industry for the best combination of new ideas and technically sound solutions early in this phase of the process, but NASA also is seeking ideas and expertise from a broad range of talent among scientists, technicians, program managers, those in academia and others," said Mike Coats, vice president and deputy of space exploration at Lockheed Martin Space Systems. "NASA wants everyone's new ideas and creative technical solutions, which is one of the things that the Aldridge Commission called for. NASA is taking a very smart and methodical approach to moving forward," added Coats.

As part of the study contract, Lockheed Martin will develop concepts using its expertise in the "system of systems" approach in two areas. The first calls for concepts that define an overall architecture for human lunar exploration in the 2015 to 2020 timeframe. The second area will result in a Crew Exploration Vehicle concept that includes design elements, launch considerations, launch vehicle integration and technology requirements. The focus is on risk reduction, including a flight demonstration by 2008 and the goal of a crewed flight in 2014.

"For nearly 50 years, we have had the benefit of so many successes in human and robotic space exploration, and yes, the challenges that have come with each step forward," added Karas. "But this is just the beginning. Our heritage and achievements have provided a solid jumping off point for the next great strides that we must take. And in terms of what the future holds for the next generation, it is very clear that one of the important aspects of our nation's space program is that it inspires a whole new generation of young people to get into technical fields of study, like math and science. What I want to convey to those young people is that we're working with NASA right now on what our future can and should look like, and it is very exciting."

Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company, headquartered near Denver, Colo., is one of the major operating units of Lockheed Martin Corporation. Space Systems Company designs, develops, tests and manufactures a variety of advanced technology systems for space and defense. Chief products include space launch systems, defense systems, interplanetary and science spacecraft, spacecraft for commercial and government customers, fleet ballistic missiles and missile defense systems.

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.

For additional information, visit our website: http://www.lockheedmartin.com/ .

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