Lockheed Martin Delivers First Super Hercules Built Under Multi-Year Acquisition Contract

Lieutenant General Michael A. Hough, Deputy Commandant for Aviation, Headquarters Marine Corps, Accepts KC-130J Tanker

Lockheed Martin has delivered the first KC-130J Super Hercules aircraft ordered under a joint United States Air Force/U.S. Marine Corps multi-year acquisition program. The KC-130J for the Marine Corps was formally accepted by Lt. Gen. Michael A. Hough, Deputy Commandant for Aviation, Headquarters Marine Corps. The aircraft will be delivered to Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 252 (VMGR-252) at the Cherry Point, North Carolina, Marine Corps Air Station.

"A weapon system bought under a multi-year program is a weapon system that is of little risk. This means the price has been finalized and therefore you can buy a lot of them ... people have a lot of trust, faith and confidence in this not only because it works, but because it's going to work for many, many years to come. The C-130 is without a doubt the world's best transport," said General Hough, during ceremonies at Lockheed Martin.

"The reason we're still building this airplane, and improving upon it, is because there's no airplane that can do what it does and nothing has been invented that can do it better, especially in the business we are in today where we're in a war on terror," Hough said. "It's a credit to everybody that works here and to this leadership to build this airplane for this country. It's a national asset."

In 2002, the Department of Defense entered into a $4.3 billion contract with Lockheed Martin for a multiyear program to buy 60 Super Hercules aircraft for the U.S. Air Force and Marine Corps. The contract includes 40 C-130J airlifters for the Air Force and 20 KC-130J tankers for the Marine Corps to be delivered between 2004 and 2009. There is currently a requirement for 51 KC- 130Js, of which 33 have been ordered and 14 delivered.

The KC-130J is the tanker variant of the C-130J. Using only wing and external tanks, the KC-130J has a 57,500-pound (8,455 U.S. gallons) fuel offload capability while performing a 500 nm radius mission, compared with 38,000 pounds (5,588 U.S. gallons) for the current, and nearly 40-year-old, KC-130F fleet. The aircraft's propulsion system offers a key enhancement for rapid ground refueling, including a function that feathers the props while the turbines continue to run and pump fuel. This eliminates prop blast behind the aircraft so ground forces can operate in relative calm. The KC-130J can offload up to 600 gallons of fuel per minute -- nearly four times the current offload rate.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the first flight of the C-130. More than 2,270 Hercules aircraft of all types in more than 70 different variants have been delivered to 60 countries since the program began. Today, 67 countries, counting those that bought used aircraft, fly the Hercules. The C-130J is the latest version to come off the longest, continuous, active military aircraft production line in history.

A total of 180 C-130Js have been ordered, with 118 delivered to date. In the United States, Air Force Reserve Command and Air National Guard units fly C-130Js. The Marine Corps operates KC-130J tankers and the Coast Guard has introduced the HC-130J into service. International C-130J operators include the Royal Air Force, Royal Australian Air Force, Italian Air Force and the Royal Danish Air Force. The capabilities and performance of the C-130J in supporting light, fast and lethal combat operations make it a true transformational asset.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Lockheed Martin Aeronautics, 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 Corp. 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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