Taiwan Agrees To Purchase Lockheed Martin's Battle-Proven Hellfire II Missiles

The U.S. Army has executed a letter of agreement with Taiwan, setting the stage for the sale of more than 400 AGM-114M blast-fragmentation Hellfire rounds under a foreign military sales contract (FMS). The value of the Taiwan order is in the range of $50 million.

The Taiwanese Hellfire purchase comprises the largest part of the U.S. government's Hellfire missile Buy 10 contract award to Lockheed Martin . The new contract equates to approximately six months of activity on the Hellfire production line at Lockheed Martin's manufacturing plant in Troy, AL.

The total U.S. Government contract will include more than 600 AGM-114M blast fragmentation and AGM-114K high-explosive anti-tank (HEAT) rounds. It represents the largest single sale of the AGM-114M to date, either domestically or internationally. The Taiwan portion represents approximately 70 percent of the rounds to be delivered; between 5-10 percent are earmarked for Israel under FMS, with the balance going to the U.S. Army. Work on the missiles began earlier this year.

"Hellfire's lethality and combat-proven performance, coupled with its precision-strike capability, provides the Taiwanese armed forces with the best air-to-ground weapon system in the world," said Mark Stenger, director of the Air-to-Ground Missile Systems program area at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control in Orlando. "In Afghanistan and Iraq, Hellfire not only proved to be superior against buildings, but was extremely effective against ships, light armor and urban targets."

Hellfire II and Longbow Hellfire have been used in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), with more than 600 Hellfire rounds fired to date. At one point, the Lockheed Martin Hellfire team was asked to accelerate delivery of 84 blast fragmentation rounds, from six months to less than two weeks, to support the war effort; the missiles arrived a day ahead of schedule.

Army users reported excellent Hellfire II missile performance and durability in the desert environment: According to the Hellfire II Durability Field Report from OIF, "With the amount of dust, impact shock from bouncing on the metal floor of a truck traveling at 30, 40, 50...mph across bumpy, off- road terrain, being dropped or thrown down, seeker domes exposed to dust/wind, fins grabbed in awkward ways, etc. ...the missiles ... have been superb!"

Taiwan's decision to purchase Hellfire ensures its military's interoperability with the U.S. Army, Marine Corps and Special Operations Forces' deployed worldwide. With more than 18,000 rounds produced for U.S. and international customers, Hellfire has been successfully integrated with every leading attack helicopter in the U.S. and Allied fleets. It is approved for international sales both through the foreign military sales system and direct commercial sales.

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.

For additional information, visit our web site:

http://www.lockheedmartin.com/

SOURCE: Lockheed Martin

Web site: http://www.lockheedmartin.com/
