Germany Approves Nine-Year MEADS Design And Development Program

MEADS International (MI) announced that Germany has approved entry into the Design and Development (D&D) phase for the tri-national Medium Extended Air Defense System (MEADS).

"We are very pleased that the German Parliament has thoroughly reviewed and voted to fund the MEADS design and development program," said MI Executive Vice President Axel Widera. "This is an important endorsement -- not only does it recognize the nations' requirements for this advanced air and missile defense system, it also underscores the importance of continuing the transatlantic cooperation to develop MEADS." Dr. Widera directs the MEADS Design and Development program for Germany's EADS/LFK and also guides their support to the program.

MI President Jim Cravens added, "This new contract removes the final constraint to full development of MEADS. MEADS is a significant new generation of air and missile defense that will cost far less to own and maintain, will quickly move to the areas it must protect, will provide complete 360-degree defense with netted-distributed communication and will address the full threat spectrum. The real winners are the future soldiers and airmen who will maintain and operate this advanced system."

MEADS, under development by Germany, Italy and the United States, includes a lightweight launcher, 360-degree fire control and surveillance radars and plug-and-fight battle management command and control abilities not found in current systems. With its enhanced mobility and advanced technologies, MEADS will offer warfighters significant improvements over existing systems.

"The Design and Development contract recognizes that MEADS is the model for successful transatlantic development of advanced weapon systems," said Pietro Ragonese, MI technical director. "We've all contributed to the successful development of the system prototypes, and this contract recognizes the meaningful progress of our efforts. Our nations are sharing significant cost savings and greater interoperability by developing this advanced missile defense system together."

In September 2004, the NATO MEADS Management Agency (NAMEADSMA) awarded MI a letter contract valued in then-year terms at approximately $2.0B plus 1.4B euros to design and develop the system, with an initial period of performance for which the overall maximum financial ceiling was approximately $54.5 million plus 54.8 million euros. This was done under the authority of the MEADS Design and Development Memorandum of Understanding, which was signed by the United States and Italy in September 2004. The signatures of the U.S. and Italy allowed the D&D phase to proceed on a "limited basis." Full acceptance and signature of the Design and Development Memorandum of Understanding by Germany enables NAMEADSMA to sign the approximately nine-year MEADS D&D contract.

Germany agreed in principle to the MEADS Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in September 2004, but was formally unable to become a signatory until Parliamentary approval was obtained this month. The MoU also addresses technology transfer procedures and allows for participation by other countries in the MEADS effort.

MEADS is a mobile air defense system designed to replace Patriot systems in the United States and Germany and Nike Hercules systems in Italy. It also meets the requirements of Germany's "capabilities oriented" air defense concept. MEADS incorporates the battle-proven hit-to-kill PAC-3 missile in a system that includes 360-degree surveillance and fire control sensors, netted- distributed battle management/communication centers and high-firepower launchers. The system combines superior battlefield protection with unprecedented flexibility, allowing it to protect maneuver forces and to provide homeland defense against tactical ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles and aircraft.

During the MEADS design and development phase, MI will finalize designs for equipment and complete their integration into the 21st century air and missile defense system. The system's six major equipment items are: Multifunction Fire Control Radar; Surveillance Radar (MFCR); Battle Management, Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence (BMC41); Certified Missile Round (PAC-3 missile and canister); Launcher; and Reloader.

In Orlando, the MEADS program will significantly expand its technical employment as a result of the contract. The MEADS program will expand at EADS/LFK, Lockheed Martin, MBDA and MI locations that currently participate in development of the advanced air and missile defense system. Lockheed Martin will perform contract work at its locations in Orlando, FL; Dallas, TX; Huntsville, AL; and Syracuse, NY. EADS/LFK will perform work on the BMC4I,

launcher, Surveillance Radar and MFCR elements at plants in Munich, Germany. MBDA's Italian operating company, MBDA Italia, will perform work on the BMC4I, MFCR and launcher/reloader elements in Rome, Italy. The development work will be allocated in accordance with national funding. The United States funds approximately 58 percent of the MEADS program and European partners Germany and Italy provide approximately 25 percent and 17 percent respectively.

MEADS will provide capabilities beyond any other fielded or planned air and missile defense system. It will be easily deployed to a theater of operations and once there, will keep pace with fast-moving maneuver forces. When completed, MEADS will be the only air defense system able to roll off tactical transports with the troops and very quickly begin operations. More importantly, its open architecture will provide for 21st century air defense system-of-system integration capabilities that allow operational mission- tailoring for homeland defense or defense of maneuver forces. MEADS will also provide greater firepower with less manpower than current systems, producing dramatic operation and support cost savings.

In 1999, MEADS International, Inc., was selected by NAMEADSMA, a chartered organization of NATO, to develop MEADS. A multinational joint venture headquartered in Orlando, FL, MEADS International's participating companies are MBDA Italia, the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS) and Lenkflugkorpersysteme (LFK) in Germany and Lockheed Martin in the United States. Together, these companies have focused an international engineering team in Orlando to develop systems and technologies for the MEADS program, which continues as a model for collaborative transatlantic development.

http://www.meads-amd.com/

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