Lockheed Martin's Sniper Demonstrates Outstanding Performance During Deployment In Iraq

U.S. Air Force Aeronautical Systems Center Commander Lt. Gen. William R. Looney praised Lockheed Martin's Sniper(R) Advanced Targeting Pod, recognizing the system's recent successful deployment in Iraq.

In a recent address to Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control employees in Orlando, FL, General Looney praised Sniper as "the greatest pod the world has ever seen and the greatest one the Air Force is flying today." General Looney commended the dedication of program employees in contributing to the Air Force's operational success.

Ten of the U.S. Air Force Sniper pods were shipped to Lakenheath, England, and installed aboard Air Force F-15Es. These Sniper pods have flown in more than 450 missions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"We have been able to maintain eight pods fully mission capable throughout this whole deployment, and most of the time all 10," said General Looney. "They (pilots) are so in love with that capability, they don't want to go anywhere without a Sniper pod. There is no comparison between any other pod in the world and the capability that Sniper brings."

New and enhanced capabilities that Sniper pods provide to aircrews include a high-resolution, mid-wave third-generation Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR), a dual-mode laser and a CCD-TV along with a laser spot tracker and a laser marker. The Sniper pod vastly improves long-range target detection /identification. The advanced image processing algorithms, combined with rock-steady stabilization techniques, provide cutting-edge performance. Designed as an affordable precision targeting system in a single, lightweight pod, Sniper is fully compatible with the latest J-series munitions and precision-guided weaponry. Its superior detection ranges are vital to pilots, helping keep them out of range of threat air defenses during their defining moments.

"We have successfully integrated Sniper on U.S. Air Force fighters as well as the Navy F/A-18C/D," said Ken Fuhr, Sniper program director at Lockheed Martin. "Sniper's superior performance and availability have helped it quickly become the warfighters' targeting pod of choice for the Air Expeditionary Force's scheduled deployments."

The Sniper ATP program has achieved several major milestones, including the successful operational deployment and completion of Phase 1 Qualification Testing and Evaluation (QT&E) and Phase 1 Qualification Operational Testing and Evaluation (QOT&E) flight testing at Eglin AFB, FL; Nellis AFB, NV; and the Air National Guard Air Force Reserve Test Center in Tucson, AZ. Sniper pods are now flown on the U.S. Air Force F-15E and F-16 blocks 30/40/50, plus the A-10, incorporating the precision engagement upgrade program. In addition, Sniper is being integrated on the B-1 aircraft.

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