Lockheed Martin Receives $61 Million Contract For Multifunction Utility/Logistics And Equipment Vehicle

Lockheed Martin has received a $61 million plus-up to the Multifunction Utility/Logistics and Equipment (MULE) System Development and Demonstration (SDD) contract as a result of the recent Future Combat System (FCS) restructure. The contract modification was issued by the FCS Lead System Integrator (LSI), The Boeing Company.

This modification increases the number of prototypes being delivered from 17 to 19, with the first prototypes delivered in the third quarter of 2010. Deliveries will consist of Transport, Armed Robotic Vehicle - Assault Light (ARV-A(L)) and Countermine variants, with final deliveries in spring 2011.

"The MULE is a key component of the FCS system of systems with its high versatility and unique mobility," said Gene Holleque, director of Unmanned Systems at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control. "This family of vehicles will increase the warfighters' survivability and the efficiency of the total force by complementing, not replacing, man and manned platform functions. Lockheed Martin is at the forefront of new, advanced technologies, and our goal is to provide warfighters with the necessary equipment to safely accomplish their missions."

The FCS LSI selected MULE to move into the SDD phase in 2003, and ultimately into production. The SDD phase is anticipated to be a $290 million-plus program.

The MULE/ARV-A(L), a 2.5-ton class vehicle for the FCS, offers an extraordinary capability that will support the U.S. Army's transformation to a lighter and more mobile fighting force. The vehicle's unique mobility will enable it to go everywhere the soldier can go and more. It will allow soldiers of the transformed Army to use technology to do the dull, dirty and dangerous jobs of the current forces, freeing them to focus on the success of their missions. It provides for future growth through spiral development and possesses an open architecture designed to take full advantage of the rapid evolution of technology.

The MULE/ARV-A(L)'s highly mobile platform is a unique, highly advanced 6x6 independent articulated suspension. Coupled with in-hub motors powering each wheel, the suspension system provides extreme mobility in complex terrain, far exceeding that of vehicles utilizing more conventional suspension systems.

It will climb at least a 1-meter step and provides the vehicle with the mobility performance and surefootedness required to safely follow dismounted troops over rough terrain, through rock and debris fields and over urban rubble. This technology also allows the vehicle to cross 1-meter gaps, traverse side slopes greater than 40 percent, ford water to depths over 0.5 meters and overpass obstacles as high as 0.5 meters, while compensating for varying payload weights and center of gravity locations.

The Transport MULE configuration is designed to support the Future Force soldier by providing the volume and payload capacity to carry the equipment and supplies to support two dismounted Infantry Squads. Multiple tie-down points and removable/foldable side railings will support virtually any payload variation. It is suited to support casualty evacuation needs as well.

The ARV-A(L) version will be armed with a line-of-sight gun and an anti- tank capability. It is designed to provide immediate, heavy firepower to the dismounted soldier.

The Countermine variant is designed to provide detection and neutralization of mines, and marking of cleared lanes through minefields, greatly increasing the safety and mobility of the infantryman.

Lockheed Martin's experience in unmanned systems is unmatched with proven capabilities across all domains including -- air, land, sea and space. An integrated system-of-systems approach allows Lockheed Martin to meet the challenges of network-centric warfare where both manned and unmanned technologies work collaboratively, increasing the affordability of the technology, the efficiency of the total force and ultimately, the success of their missions.

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.

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