Lockheed Martin And MD Helicopters Form Team To Enter U.S. Army's Light Utility Helicopter Competition

Lockheed Martin and MD Helicopters Inc. (MDHI) have joined forces to compete for the U.S. Army's Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) program.

The team will offer the MD Explorer(R) twin-engine helicopter with the NOTAR(R) no-tail-rotor anti-torque system. The program calls for the production of 322 new LUH helicopters between 2006 and 2015 to perform a wide range of general support missions in the United States and overseas, including transport of personnel and supplies, disaster relief operations, medical evacuation, reconnaissance, drug interdiction and homeland security.

Lockheed Martin Systems Integration in Owego, NY, will lead the team as prime contractor, overseeing aircraft assembly at MDHI's production facility in Mesa, AZ, and providing training, simulation devices and contractor logistics support.

"The Lockheed Martin/MD Helicopters team will offer the U.S. Army and Army National Guard a proven commercial-off-the-shelf aircraft, and the training and logistics support to ensure long-term aircraft flight readiness," said Jeff Bantle, Lockheed Martin's vice president and general manager of Multi- Mission Solutions.

The teaming agreement comes just weeks after Patriarch Partners, LLC, a New York-based financial firm, acquired a controlling interest in MDHI. The transaction ensures that MDHI will have adequate working capital to continue production of existing product lines to meet commercial backlog and fulfill LUH production requirements.

"MD Helicopter's objective is to provide FAA-certified helicopters to Lockheed Martin, a recognized world leader in systems integration and turn-key military systems," said Henk Schaeken, chief executive officer of MDHI. "The MD Explorer(R) helicopter offers enhanced safety features, and with the largest cabin in its class, is ideally suited to meet the requirements for the LUH missions."

The FAA-certified MD Explorer(R) uses twin Pratt & Whitney 207E turbine engines, and provides Instrument Flight Rules capability for day, night and night vision goggle operations. A crashworthy frame, energy absorbing crew seating and a crash-resistant fuel system meet military needs. With 30 square feet of usable flat floor, the aircraft has the largest cabin in the light twin class, with space for six passengers.

The MD Explorer(R) helicopter features the patented NOTAR(R) system in place of the traditional tail rotor blades. Besides reducing pilot workload and external noise levels, the system enables the MD Explorer(R) to fly safely in confined areas usually off-limits to other helicopters.

Lockheed Martin Systems Integration-Owego is the Rotary Wing Center of Excellence for Lockheed Martin. The company serves as the prime contractor for the new VH-71 Presidential Helicopter program and the United Kingdom's Royal Navy Merlin (EH101) helicopter program, and as avionics prime system integrator for the U.S. Navy's MH-60R helicopter fleet.

MD Helicopters, Inc., Mesa, AZ, manufactures and supports the MD 500(R), MD 600N(R) and MD Explorer(R) series helicopters for commercial and military applications. The MD Explorer(R) is operated by U.S. federal agencies such as the Drug Enforcement Agency and is in extensive use by emergency medical services and police operators around the world. The MD500s(R) and MD600s(R) are used by military and law enforcement agencies worldwide.

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 websites:
http://www.lockheedmartin.com/
http://www.mdhelicopters.com/

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