Lockheed Martin To Build High Altitude Airship Under $149.2 Million Missile Defense Agency Contract

Lockheed Martin will build a prototype High Altitude Airship (HAA(TM)) under a $149.2 million contract awarded by the Missile Defense Agency (MDA). This contract marks the beginning of the program's third phase, leading to prototype delivery and flight in 2009.

"The HAA delivers a persistent surveillance capability unmatched by any other platform," said Ron Browning, Lockheed Martin business development director responsible for the High Altitude Airship. "The HAA combines a variety of advanced technologies to support air and ground missile defense needs and provides a near-space, multi-mission guardian in the sky that is easy to relocate and can be stationed where needed most."

Under the contract, Lockheed Martin will build an airship prototype based on the design developed during the program's second phase. Operating at 60,000 feet, the prototype will demonstrate launch and recovery, station-keeping and flight-control capabilities while carrying mission re-configurable payloads. It will be about 400 feet long and 140 feet in diameter, and will have a volume of 3.7 million cubic feet. It will be built in Lockheed Martin's facility in Akron.

Lockheed Martin is a world leader in systems integration and the development of air and missile defense systems and technologies, including the first operational hit-to-kill missile defense system. It also has considerable experience in missile design and production, infrared seekers, command and control, battle management, and communications, precision pointing and tracking optics, as well as radar and signal processing. The company makes significant contributions to all major U.S. missile defense systems and participates in several global missile defense partnerships.

Headquartered in Bethesda, MD, Lockheed Martin employs about 135,000 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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