Lockheed Martin Highlights Necessity And Value Of 5th Generation Fighters And Next Generation Airlift

Senior executives from Lockheed Martin today emphasized the crucial role that 5th Generation fighters and next generation tactical airlifters play in forging an interdependent U.S. military structure with significantly increased capability over the legacy force.

A unique panel presentation at the Air Force Association's 22nd Annual Air Force Warfare Symposium brought together Lockheed Martin executive leadership and program general managers for three major U.S. Air Force (USAF) aircraft programs -- the F-22 Raptor, F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and C-130J tactical airlifter -- along with the company's business development chief for aeronautics. The panelists reviewed current performance statistics, the necessity of advanced capabilities and value provided to the USAF, and new aeronautics business opportunities.

F-22 Raptor

Performance success for the F-22, which achieved Initial Operational Capability in December, continues with its first homeland defense mission -- Operation Noble Eagle over the skies of our nation's capital. From a production standpoint, 2005 was a record year for aircraft deliveries, and cost reductions continue in the program that is providing both unmatched capability for the U.S. Air Force and a significant value to taxpayers.

"The Raptor not only combines the capabilities of several legacy aircraft by delivering air dominance, lethal intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, but it does so without adversaries even knowing the aircraft is out there -- as proven this past year," said Larry Lawson, executive vice president and F-22 program general manager. "As the world's only 5th Generation fighter aircraft in operation, it has overwhelming capability to ensure USAF air dominance for the next four decades."

F-35 Joint Strike Fighter

The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program - the only other 5th Generation fighter now in development for U.S. and allied nations - has posted very successful performance with numerous achievements this past year and even more planned for 2006, according to Dan Crowley, executive vice president and general manager of the F-35 program. "The F-35 program is on a solid development track with first flight planned for Fall 2006. This will initiate the most comprehensive and complex flight-test program in history. Currently, the first F-35 is preparing to exit the factory floor for the flight line. We are executing to schedule and will have eight planes being assembled by the end of the year."

The single-engine F-35 JSF will be manufactured in three versions: a conventional-takeoff-and-landing (CTOL) variant for the U.S. Air Force, an aircraft-carrier version (CV) for the U.S. Navy, and a short-takeoff/vertical landing (STOVL) version for the U.S. Marine Corps, the United Kingdom Royal Air Force and Royal Navy.

"Assembly of the first F-35 is our most visible achievement to date," said Crowley. "Initiation of electrical power and arrival of the F135 Engine, slated for installation in February, were also significant achievements for the program. We have already started major assemblies on the first three STOVL aircraft, which all incorporate the weight reductions and structural improvements of the updated 'optimized' design. Assembly of the first optimized CTOL aircraft also is under way. Most recently, the F-35 program was approved to proceed to the Air System Critical Design Review for the F-35 STOVL and CTOL variants, Feb. 14-17, a positive reflection of the program's developmental progress."

The F-35 has been selected as a U.S. Department of Defense pilot program for Performance Based Logistics (PBL), the operation, support and sustainment model that shows great promise for driving down aircraft ownership costs while improving availability. "The JSF program is enhancing this PBL model by operating a suite of Prognostics and Health Management capabilities that monitor the status of aircraft systems and automatically transmit technical information to maintainers on the ground, improving efficiency and diagnostic processes and procedures to sustain the aircraft," according to Crowley.

C-130J Tactical Airlifter

The interdependent force would not be complete without airlift. As a key asset in the Global War on Terror, the C-130J is demonstrating its transformational capabilities for intra-theater operations in daily combat missions. "The C-

130J is redefining tactical airlift with overwhelming performance in a variety of mission scenarios around the world," said David Haines, vice president C-130 programs. "It's proving to be one of the most reliable platforms in theater and is setting the standard and benchmark for future airlift."

"The C-130J's performance in combat, humanitarian and peacekeeping missions around the world has been outstanding," said Haines. "In combat operations, the J is outperforming older C-130s, especially in high, hot and humid conditions with mission capable rates well above the norm. In fact, two 'Js' are routinely moving the same amount of troops and equipment as three older E or H models. This provides the combat commander with additional resources for other missions.

5th Generation Aircraft

Rob Weiss, vice president of domestic and international business development, provided a look at what's next as the U.S. incorporates 5th Generation fighters into the fleet and leverages the capabilities of the latest technology in airlift.

"These battle-changing systems -- the F-35 and F-22 -- provide a quantum leap in capability and survivability over legacy aircraft at a significantly lower cost when you factor in the inherent savings in operations and support," Weiss said. "Fifth generation fighters are the best value for the money today and the only fighters that can survive and defeat the threats of tomorrow."

"In a variety of simulated scenarios, legacy fighters incurred five times more losses than F-22s and F-35s, required a prohibitive number of tanker/transport aircraft and required a large logistics infrastructure and untenable basing footprint," said Weiss. "5th Generation fighters are designed to span all air dominance mission requirements. The F-22 is optimized for air- to-air scenarios but will also have formidable air-to-ground capabilities. The F-35 is optimized for air-to-ground scenarios, but will have significant air- to-air capability. Continued investment in a mix of these 5th Generation fighters is essential to ensure air dominance for future U.S. military and joint forces anytime, anywhere."

C-130J New Business Opportunities

For the C-130J, new business opportunities include both domestic and international prospects. "We're working closely with the U.S. Air Force, Marine Corps and the special operations commands to help address their requirements," said Weiss. For example, the USAF has a stated requirement for C-130Js. At the conclusion of the first multi-year C-130J contract, the Air Force and Marine Corps will still be short of those requirements.

Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) published a strategic plan outlining the requirement for Combat Rescue Tanker aircraft and a desire to "grow and recapitalize the HC-130 fleet. "We responded to a Request for Information with a detailed description of a new HC-130J aircraft, and we will continue to work closely with AFSOC as requirements and plans mature," said Weiss.

In addition to domestic new business opportunities, Lockheed Martin is pursuing a number of international opportunities for the C-130J. Weiss said that countries like Canada, France, Germany and India have expressed interest in the aircraft. Currently seven services in five countries fly the C-130J -- the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, Australia, Denmark, the U.K. and Italy.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 135,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2005 sales of $37.2 billion.

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