Lockheed Martin Receives $16 Million Contract To Provide MK 41 Vertical Launching Missile Systems For Australian And Spanish Navies

Lockheed Martin recently received a $16 million contract to provide four MK 41 Vertical Launcher System (VLS) ship sets to the Australian and Spanish navies. The contract for the below-deck missile launching systems is a modification to an existing Foreign Military Sales contract with the U.S. Naval Sea Systems Command.

The fixed-price contract modification covers the labor associated with production of MK 41 Baseline VII VLS ship sets for three Royal Australian Navy Hobart-class Air Warfare Destroyers (AWD) and one launcher ship set for an Alvaro de Bazan-class Spanish F-105 frigate. The work will be performed at Lockheed Martin's facility in Middle River, MD.

The contract is the latest milestone for the AWD program. Currently, the Australian government is in the process of selecting the AWD ship design in support of final program approval. The MK 41 VLS will equally support either of the ship designs under evaluation.

The MK 41 VLS will ultimately be installed on 15 Royal Australian Navy ships in three different ship classes and five Spanish Alvaro de Bazan-class frigates.

"The Aegis Weapon System is the ultimate naval surface defense system and the sale to Australia and Spain is quintessential in obtaining the Chief of Navel Operations' vision of a 1000 ship Navy," said Captain Robin Russell, the Navy's Program Manager, International Programs.

Lockheed Martin has continuously upgraded the MK 41 VLS's capabilities through a series of product improvement initiatives. In 2004, the company rolled out the MK 41 VLS Baseline VII, a state-of-the-art upgrade to the module electronics, enabling improved life cycle maintenance through a cell- based architecture utilizing commercial off-the-shelf technologies and open architecture.

"With more than 3,500 successful missile firings, the MK 41 VLS is a reliable, combat proven system that is being used by 12 navies around the world," said Dan Schultz, vice president and general manager of Lockheed Martin's Littoral Ships & Systems line of business. "We look forward to continuing our strong relationship with the Spanish and Australian navies and appreciate the confidence they have shown in us and the MK 41 VLS."

The MK 41 VLS is capable of launching missiles for every threat in naval warfare, including anti-air, anti-submarine, ship self-defense, land attack and ballistic missile defense. More than 11,000 MK 41 VLS missile cells have been delivered or are on order. MK41 VLS cells are either in service or on order for 186 ships in 19 different ship classes around the world.

Headquartered in Bethesda, MD, Lockheed Martin employs about 140,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services.

SOURCE: Lockheed Martin

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