Lockheed Martin's Camden Operations Awarded Shingo Silver Medallion For Manufacturing Excellence

Lockheed Martin's facility in Camden, AR, has been selected as a recipient of the of the 2008 Shingo Silver Medallion for demonstrating excellence in manufacturing.

The Shingo Silver Medallion is awarded to companies that demonstrate a system-driven level of business transformation, and recognizes operational excellence in companies that have challenged traditional business paradigms in order to face the challenges of today's global economy. Lockheed Martin's Camden Operations was one of only three businesses throughout North, Central and South America that received the Silver Medallion this year.

This award, along with the plant's recent INDUSTRYWEEK magazine award for being named one of the "Top Ten Best Plants" in North America, places Lockheed Martin's Camden facility among a select group of World Class Lean Manufacturing companies focused on manufacturing excellence.

"To be recognized by the Shingo Board of Examiners with the Silver Medallion demonstrates Camden Operations' commitment to Lean Manufacturing and continuous improvement," said Glenn David Woods, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control's Camden site director. "We have an excellent team that is fully engaged and focused on delivering disciplined performance in support of our Soldiers, and this award is a confirmation for everyone involved in that endeavor."

Applicants for the Shingo Award are selected based upon scoring criteria of documentation provided by the applying facility in the categories of Leadership Culture and Infrastructure, Manufacturing Strategies and Systems, Non-Manufacturing Support Functions, Quality, Cost and Delivery, and Business Results. Applications are reviewed by a team of Shingo auditors, and the companies that provide adequate evidence of World Class and Lean Manufacturing processes are subsequently engaged in a two-day site visit and validation audit.

"It is truly an honor for the Camden facility and its employees to be recognized among such a prestigious group of world-class manufacturers," said Ron Beaver, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control's Shingo Prize project leader. "This level of achievement substantiates the Lean Manufacturing processes embedded in the Camden philosophy, and the continued dedication of our management and workforce in support of the Warfighter."

In addition to this facility, Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control plants in Archbald, PA, and Troy, AL, were awarded the Shingo Prize for Excellence in Manufacturing in 2005 and 2002 respectively.

Lockheed Martin's Camden Operations, which employs approximately 450 in southern Arkansas, is the final assembly site for the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) line of launchers and precision-strike rockets, the transformational High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS) launcher and the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) Missile, the world's only fielded, combat-proven terminal air defense missile employing hit-to-kill technology. Additionally, the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) launcher will be produced in Camden beginning in 2009.

Through the implementation of Lean/Six Sigma principles, the average total production lead time on these complex systems has been reduced from 18 months to 12 months, from customer contract award to first delivery. This is significant considering the fact that lead time is driven not only by Lockheed Martin's internal processes, but also by domestic and foreign major subcontractors and suppliers, who produce critical components. Camden Operations' personnel worked closely with the supplier base to assure that manufacturing efficiencies were driven down to all levels of the supply chain.

"We base our existence on delivering products that meet or exceed contractual commitments and customer requirements, while adhering to the highest ethical and professional standards," said Woods. "We don't just pay lip service to quality here in Camden ... it's ingrained in our culture at every level. And that includes our suppliers and subcontract partners."

Lockheed Martin's Camden Operations has a voluntary annual turnover rate of only one percent, significantly below the national averages for manufacturing plants. Additionally, the facility has been recognized by the National Safety Council and the Arkansas Department of Labor for its incredible track record of work hours without a lost-time accident, which has now exceeded 2.5 million hours and more than 1,050 days.

Camden fully embraces the Performance Management Team structure in which 100 percent of the production employees at the facility participate in empowered or self-directed work teams. These teams of employees are encouraged to make daily plant-floor/production-level improvement decisions that increase efficiency, speed assembly and enhance quality.

The Shingo Prize is named in honor of the late Dr. Shigeo Shingo, an engineering genius who helped create the Toyota Production System and other related Lean Manufacturing processes.

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. The Corporation reported 2007 sales of $41.9 billion.

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