Lockheed Martin Successful In First SCALPEL Flight Test

Lockheed Martin successfully conducted the first SCALPEL(R) weapon system release in a recent flight test at the Naval Air Warfare Center Weapons Division China Lake test range in California. This was the first in a series of tests as part of the U.S. Navy/Marine Corps/Lockheed Martin demonstration flight test program.

Three inert SCALPEL weapons were captive-carried and released from two AV-8B Harriers from the U.S. Navy's Air Test & Evaluation Squadron VX-31. The weapons were released from various altitudes and distances from their targets, demonstrating the range and accuracy of the system. The enhanced seeker accurately guided each SCALPEL to its target, and the advanced guidance and control system consistently demonstrated its precision.

SCALPEL is a small weapon system that offers precision engagement while minimizing the potential for collateral damage in close air support and urban environments. It is a spiral development program incorporating the existing Enhanced Laser Guided Training Round airframe, minimal aircraft integration costs and development efforts, low technical and schedule risks, and affordable unit cost. SCALPEL can be employed on F-16, F/A-18, AV-8B, medium and large UAV aircraft, and other domestic and international aircraft platforms.

"We successfully demonstrated the capability of our next-generation seeker with a number of first-time events in this mission and are very pleased with its demonstrated performance," said Joe Serra, Precision Guided Systems senior program manager at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control. "Our team is now focusing on the next development phases including warhead effectiveness demonstrations, in order to provide this critical precision-strike capability to our Warfighters."

The team is reviewing weapon system parameters collected during the flight test to assess maximum system performance. The next phase of the flight test program will demonstrate the warhead lethality and limited collateral damage.

In addition to the SCALPEL weapon system, Lockheed Martin's Northeastern Pennsylvania facility designs and manufactures paveway II Laser Guided Training Rounds, paveway II Laser Guided Bomb kits, paveway II Dual Mode Laser Guided Bomb kits, specialized instrumentation and control systems, and provides manufacturing services such as state-of-the-art metal crafting and electro-mechanical assemblies.

Paveway is a generic term, developed by the U.S. Air Force, for laser guided weapon systems. Lockheed Martin is a fully-qualified provider of paveway II Laser Guided Bomb kits and provides these systems to the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy and international customers. Lockheed Martin also supports paveway weapon systems by being the sole-source provider of the paveway II Enhanced Laser Guided Training Round.

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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