

Nation's First Littoral Combat Ship Under Way

Freedom (LCS 1) Begins Builder's Sea Trials

History was made today when the nation's first Littoral Combat Ship, Freedom (LCS 1), put to sea for the first time, marking the beginning of Builder's Sea Trials for the first-in-class coastal surface combatant.

The agile 378-foot Freedom, designed and built by a Lockheed Martin-led industry team, is conducting Builder's Sea Trials in Lake Michigan. The trials -- which are a coordinated effort between the U.S. Navy and the Lockheed Martin team -- will include operational testing of the vessel's propulsion, communications, navigation and mission systems, as well as all related support systems.

"Freedom is now under way. Our team is looking forward to this trials period to demonstrate all the capabilities our unique design for LCS will bring to the Navy," said Joe North, director for Lockheed Martin's Littoral Combat Ship program. "We're pleased to be closing in on delivering this advanced warship to the Sailors who protect our nation all over the world."

Following the completion of Builder's Sea Trials, Freedom will return to Marinette Marine to prepare for Acceptance Trials that will be conducted by the U.S. Navy's Board of Inspection and Survey. LCS 1 will be delivered to the Navy later this year and home ported in San Diego, CA.

The Lockheed Martin team's design for LCS is a survivable, semi-planing steel monohull that provides outstanding maneuverability with proven sea-keeping characteristics to support launch and recovery operations, mission execution and optimum crew comfort. Team members also include naval architect Gibbs & Cox, ship builders Marinette Marine, a subsidiary of The Manitowoc Company, Inc. , and Bollinger Shipyards, as well as best-of-industry domestic and international teammates to provide a flexible, low-risk war fighting solution.

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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