Lockheed Martin Awarded $35.8 Million Navy Contract To Expand Submarine Communication Capabilities

Lockheed Martin has been awarded a $35.8 million contract by the U.S. Navy to design and produce antenna buoy systems that will significantly expand the communications capabilities of submarines while they are submerged.

The Navy's Communications at Speed and Depth (CSD) program will use expendable submarine and air-launched communications buoys to enable submarines operating below periscope depth and at tactical speeds to communicate with surface ships and land-based assets via satellite networks. All classes of U.S. Navy submarines will be equipped with this capability.

Under the contract, a Lockheed Martin-led industry team will develop three types of expendable communications buoys: two submarine-launched tethered buoys that provide real-time chat, data transfer and e-mail capabilities via either Iridium or UHF satellites; and an untethered, acoustic-to-radio frequency gateway buoy that can be launched from a submarine or maritime patrol aircraft to enable two-way data transfer between a submerged submarine and surface assets. The contract also includes production of associated shore and onboard equipment needed to support the systems. If all options are exercised, the cumulative value of the contract is estimated at $177.9 million.

The Lockheed Martin-led team, which includes Ultra Electronics Ocean Systems and ERAPSCO, collectively has more than 50 years of experience in the design and development of expendable devices. Ultra Electronics Ocean Systems Inc., headquartered in Braintree MA, is a world-leading developer and provider of special purpose expendable devices for U.S. Navy submarines and surface ships as well as major allied navies. ERAPSCO, a joint venture between Sparton Electronics Florida, Inc. in DeLeon Springs, FL and Ultra Electronics - USSI in Columbia City, IN, is a leading designer and manufacturer of expendable underwater transducer and sensor products for the U.S. Navy and its allies.

"Having the ability to communicate at speed and depth will truly transform submarine communications," says Captain Dean Richter, Program Manager - PEO C4I / Submarine Integration Program Office (PMW 770). "With this capability, submarines become a fully-integrated fleet asset with on-demand access to the Global Information Grid."

"Delivering this capability eliminates a traditional limitation of submarines by giving them the ability to communicate with maximum tactical flexibility and maneuverability," says Joe Rappisi, vice president and general manager of Lockheed Martin's Marion-based business. "We are partnered with the industry's best to give submarines the same access to communication networks as the rest of the U.S. Navy's fleet."

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 146,000 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 2008 sales of $42.7 billion.

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