MEADS Program Receives Hardware Design Approvals, Enters System-Level CDR

PRNewswire
ORLANDO, Fla., MUNICH and ROME

The Medium Extended Air Defense System (MEADS) program has successfully completed Critical Design Reviews (CDRs) for all major components, clearing the way for production of radars, launchers, tactical operation centers, and reloaders needed for system tests at White Sands Missile Range, NM.

Under its design and development contract, MEADS International will provide six Battle Management, Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence Tactical Operations Centers, four launchers, one reloader, three surveillance radars, three multifunction fire control radars, and 20 PAC-3 Missile Segment Enhancement missile rounds for the tests, expected to begin in 2012.

"We have already produced and qualified a significant portion of the subsystem hardware, providing increased confidence in our major end item products," said MEADS International President Steve Barnoske. "These timely approvals keep all MEADS system elements on schedule for integration and testing and ultimately for deployment to U.S. and allied forces."

MEADS will meet challenging new requirements not addressed by any previous or planned Air and Missile Defense system. Under development by Germany, Italy and the United States, MEADS is a mobile system that will replace Patriot in the United States and Nike Hercules in Italy. It will replace Hawk and Patriot systems in Germany. The system is designed to permit full interoperability between the U.S. and allied armies, and it is the only medium-range air defense system to provide full 360-degree coverage.

With completion of the component-level design reviews, the MEADS program has successfully met criteria to begin a series of system-level CDR events. The tri-national AMD system continues to demonstrate significant progress toward final design approval expected next year.

"Entering the system CDR phase is a significant milestone for the MEADS program," said Executive Vice President Klaus Riedel. "MEADS is an extraordinary system that will provide superior protection for maneuver forces and critical assets against tactical ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, aircraft and unmanned aerial systems. We are ready to demonstrate that the MEADS system design has matured to the requirements set out by Germany, Italy and the United States."

A total of 15 system-level CDR events will be completed in the year ahead and permit final evaluation of MEADS survivability, logistics, safety, integration and test, life cycle cost, and performance. The final system-level CDR event will be held in August 2010 in accordance with government direction. Initial flight tests are planned for 2012.

MEADS is a mobile Air and Missile Defense System that will incorporate the hit-to-kill PAC-3 Missile Segment Enhancement (MSE) Missile in a system that includes 360-degree surveillance and fire control sensors, netted-distributed battle management/communication centers and high-firepower launchers. The system will combine superior battlefield protection with extensive flexibility, allowing it to protect maneuver forces and critical assets against tactical ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, unmanned aerial vehicles and aircraft.

MEADS will provide capabilities beyond any other fielded or planned air and missile defense system. It will be easily deployed to a theater of operations and once there, will keep pace with fast-moving maneuver forces. MEADS will provide an open architecture for 21st century air and missile defense system-of-system integration capabilities that allow operational mission-tailoring. MEADS will also provide greater firepower with less manpower than current systems, producing dramatic operation and support cost savings.

A multinational joint venture headquartered in Orlando, FL, MEADS International's participating companies are MBDA in Italy, LFK in Germany and Lockheed Martin in the United States. Today, 1900 employees from these companies are completing final engineering designs for MEADS program, which is closely watched as a model for collaborative transatlantic development.

The United States funds 58 percent of the MEADS program, and European partners Germany and Italy provide 25 percent and 17 percent respectively as partners in the NATO Medium Extended Air Defense System Management Organization (NAMEADSMO). Its program management agency NAMEADSMA is located in Huntsville, AL.

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SOURCE: Lockheed Martin

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