Marinette Marine Facility Expansion To Enhance Lockheed Martin's Littoral Combat Ship Program

PRNewswire
MARINETTE, Wis.

Marinette Marine Corporation, a member of the Lockheed Martin-led Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) industry team, recently broke ground for an expansion to nearly double the size of its main indoor ship construction building -- an investment to support the construction of the U.S. Navy's LCS.

The expansion will provide enough indoor space to simultaneously house two complete LCS hulls and parts for two additional ships. The building enhancements also allow greater use of Marinette Marine's proven modular construction process, which will enable the Lockheed Martin team to construct LCS more cost effectively.

The ground-breaking is the latest in a recent series of investments made by the shipyard's parent company, Fincantieri, as part of its five-year, $100 million plan to modernize its U.S. shipbuilding operations and support the LCS program. In 2009, Marinette Marine installed higher-capacity overhead cranes, plasma-cutting tables and pipe-bending machines to increase efficiency and capacity. In 2008, Lockheed Martin also became a minority partner in the shipyard, while continuing to share its project management and lean manufacturing techniques to meet the LCS program's cost and schedule goals.

"This is a terrific investment by Fincantieri and represents the commitment they're willing to make to continue quality shipbuilding at Marinette Marine," said Senator Herb Kohl of Wisconsin. "It's an investment in the men and women employed there, in the community that is so supportive of this company, and in their ability to give the Navy a well-built LCS at a competitive price."

"This groundbreaking represents a significant milestone in the transformation of Marinette Marine to the premier mid-tier shipyard in the United States," said Giuseppe Bono, Fincantieri's chief executive officer. "The building expansion will allow us to fully complete a large ship such as LCS completely indoors at an even higher degree of completion and quality."

Marinette Marine constructed and launched the nation's first LCS, USS Freedom. Commissioned by the U.S. Navy in 2008, USS Freedom was deployed two years ahead of schedule and recently completed three successful drug interdictions. The shipyard is also constructing the Navy's third LCS, Fort Worth (LCS 3).

"Fort Worth is on cost and on schedule, with 90 percent of its modules under construction and more than 30 percent of the ship complete," said Dan Schultz, vice president and general manager of Lockheed Martin's Ship and Aviation Systems business. "The improvements underway at Marinette Marine increase the team's capacity in meeting the U.S. Navy's need for an affordable, survivable LCS. We've already seen a 30 percent reduction in labor cost from our first ship."

"With investments from Fincantieri and a strong partnership with the state, Marinette Marine continues to move forward as a world leader in high-quality ship building," said Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle. "The recent launch of the USS Freedom is a testament to the hard work and ingenuity of the Marinette Marine Corporation workforce. With this groundbreaking Marinette Marine will become even more competitive, and create more jobs in this community."

Designed to operate in littoral waters, the Lockheed Martin-led team's LCS features semi-planing steel monohull that provides the Navy with a survivable, fast, and agile shallow-draft warship that maximizes mission flexibility and accessibility. With a proven open architecture networked, combat-management system common to other surface combatants in U.S. and international navies, the Lockheed Martin team's LCS provides unprecedented levels of reliability and interoperability with global maritime forces.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that 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 2009 sales of $45.2 billion.

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