

Longbow LLC's Data Link Controls UAS From Apache Block III Attack Helicopter For The First Time

ORLANDO, Fla., Nov. 9, 2011 /PRNewswire/ -- The Longbow Limited Liability Company's [Unmanned Aerial Systems Tactical Common Data Link Assembly \(UTA\)](#) recently controlled an unmanned vehicle from an AH-64D Apache Block III attack helicopter, while both were in flight. The Longbow LLC is a joint venture between Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) and Northrop Grumman (NYSE: NOC).

During flight tests, the UTA controlled the payload and flight path of a Gray Eagle (MQ-1C) while both the Apache and unmanned aircraft system (UAS) were airborne. This marks the first time an unmanned vehicle has been controlled from the cockpit of an Apache, a significant accomplishment in manned-unmanned teaming.

"The Apache Block III recently completed dynamic flight testing where the UTA data link system controlled the Gray Eagle UAS, demonstrating full interoperability," said Lt. Col. Bailey, U.S. Army Apache Block III product manager. "This is a true game-changing capability that the Block III will bring to the warfighter."

"UTA enhances situational awareness between Apache pilots, ground commanders and the UAS to create a true net-centric battlespace," said Mike Taylor, Longbow LLC president and director of Longbow programs in Lockheed Martin's Missiles and Fire Control business. "This system ensures operational superiority and increases survivability."

The test program proved the design and provided valuable operational understanding to the Apache crew. All goals of this phase of UTA testing were completed with 100 percent success.

The Longbow UTA is a two-way, high-bandwidth data link for Apache aircrews that allows sensor and flight path control of the UAS. UTA-equipped Apaches enable aircrews to exercise control of UAS at long ranges and receive real-time, high-definition streaming video on their multi-function displays. The UTA is fully integrated into the Block III Apache mission computer.

The U.S. Army's Longbow system consists of either a fire control radar or a UTA, a fire-and-forget radar frequency Hellfire millimeter wave-guided missile, and an all-digital M299 launcher for the AH-64D Apache helicopter. The Longbow UTA will be fielded on the Apache Block III aircraft beginning in 2012.

Northrop Grumman is a leading global security company providing innovative systems, products and solutions in aerospace, electronics, information systems, and technical services to government and commercial customers worldwide.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 126,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The Corporation's 2010 sales from continuing operations were \$45.8 billion.

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