Nation's Seventh Littoral Combat Ship Takes Shape As Lockheed Martin Team Lays The Keel

MARINETTE, Wis., Nov. 8, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- A Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT)-led industry team officially laid the keel for the U.S. Navy's seventh Littoral Combat Ship (LCS), the future USS Detroit. The event was part of a time-honored keel laying ceremony that took place at the Marinette Marine Corporation shipyard in Wisconsin.

(Logo: http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20121108/NE09610)

The Lockheed Martin LCS team is building the futuristic Freedom-variant LCS for the U.S. naval fleet. With the first two ships delivered, two additional ships in production and two more in early material procurement, the industry team is addressing the Navy's need for an affordable, highly-networked and modular ship unlike any other in the world. This new class of combatants is designed to support a wide variety of missions including anti-submarine, surface and mine countermeasure warfare, shipping lane protection, and humanitarian aid.

"It's an honor to participate in this event for the future USS Detroit," said Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich. "The keel laying ceremony marks a great milestone for the program and the naval fleet. These ships are vital to our national defense strategy and their production contributes significantly to the Wisconsin and Michigan economies."

During the ceremony ship sponsor Barbara Levin authenticated the keel by having her initials welded into a sheet of the ship's steel. She was assisted by the Navy's Program Executive Officer – Littoral Combat Ships Rear Admiral James Murdoch.

"This ceremony marks the beginning of my commitment to supporting the future USS Detroit and the brave crews that will serve aboard her to defend our country," said Barbara Levin. "It is a very moving moment for me, as I am very proud to serve as the sponsor of this powerful ship which honors my native city."

The Lockheed Martin-led LCS team includes ship builder Marinette Marine Corporation, a Fincantieri company, naval architect Gibbs & Cox, as well as hundreds of domestic and international suppliers, including approximately 30 small businesses in Wisconsin and Michigan.

"Marinette Marine Corporation's shipbuilding expertise, coupled with Lockheed Martin's integrated and automated systems that bring the capability to fight, operate and support the ship, make the Freedom-variant LCS a powerful vessel," said Joe North, vice president of Littoral Ship Systems for Lockheed Martin's Mission Systems & Sensors business. "The LCS team continues to invest in shipyard improvements and has applied best practices to ensure we continue to be more efficient and more innovative with each new ship we build."

By 2013, industry investment will total approximately $94 million, which includes nearly $70 million to date from Marinette Marine Corporation's Italian parent Fincantieri-Cantieri Navali Italiani for shipyard improvements.

Lay the keel is a shipbuilding term that marks the beginning of the module erection process, which is a significant undertaking that signifies the ship coming to life. Modern warships are now largely built in a series of pre-fabricated, complete hull sections rather than a single keel, so the actual start of the shipbuilding process is now considered to be when the first module for the ship is erected in place and is often marked with a ceremonial event.

About Lockheed Martin

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that employs about 120,000 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 net sales for 2011 were $46.5 billion.

About Fincantieri

Fincantieri is one of the world's largest shipbuilding groups, which in over 200 years of maritime history has built more than 7,000 vessels. It is world leader in cruise ship construction and a reference player in other sectors, from naval vessels to cruise ferries, from megayachts to special high value-added vessels, and ship repairs and conversions. Headquartered in Trieste, the Group has over 10,000 employees and eight shipyards in Italy alone. Fincantieri operates in the United States through its subsidiary Fincantieri Marine Group (FMG). This company, which serves both civilian and government customers, including the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard, has three

shipyards (Marinette Marine, Bay Shipbuilding, Ace Marine), all located in the Great Lakes region. Since 2002 Fincantieri has built or has orders to build more than 100 ships, worth a total of € 22 billion, and has developed numerous prototypes in each of its business segments.

For additional information about Lockheed Martin, visit:
http://www.lockheedmartin.com/ms2/ and http://www.lmlcsteam.com

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