Lockheed Martin Team Moves Forward In "Elite Eight" Following DARPA Robotics Challenge Trials

HOMESTEAD, Fla., Dec. 23, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) Advanced Technology Laboratories (ATL) recently completed the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) Robotics Challenge trials at the Homestead-Miami Speedway. The Lockheed Martin-led team, which includes the University of Pennsylvania and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, guided an Atlas humanoid robot through a number of tasks designed to simulate disaster response scenarios.

Lockheed Martin is one of eight teams to move forward onto the next phase of the Challenge. In 2014, the team will continue to refine and expand its robotic system concept in preparation for the DARPA Robotics Challenge finals. The final winner will receive a $2 million prize.

"The DARPA Robotics Challenge presented an exciting competition for our team," saidBill Borgia, director for ATL's Intelligent Robotics Lab. "It helped us further our expertise in developing robotic autonomy. We'll continue to move that technology forward both in this challenge and our other efforts."

As a top qualifier in DARPA's Virtual Robotics Challenge held earlier this year, the Lockheed Martin team received an Atlas robot to combine with advanced control algorithms and an operator station. The team developed a conceptual system and programed Atlas to perform a series of disaster relief tasks. Tasks included driving a vehicle, walking over various hazards, climbing a ladder, walking over debris, opening doors, drilling a shape in a cement wall, closing various valves and attaching a hose to a hydrant.

This wasn't Lockheed Martin's first participation in a DARPA challenge. in 2007, for example, Lockheed Martin ATL competed in the DARPA Urban Challenge in Victorville, Calif., where autonomous cars navigated through a 60-mile urban course in less than six hours. Out of hundreds of initial entrants, the Lockheed Martin car was the fourth to finish the course.

ATL is Lockheed Martin's applied research and development facility that specializes in advanced computing technologies, and transitions them throughout the company, military services and service laboratories. Technology focus areas include autonomy and artificial intelligence, network-centric operations, cognitive computing, information exploitation and spectrum technologies.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that employs about 116,000 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 2012 were $47.2 billion.

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