

Automating The Armory: New Weapons Tracker Successfully Tested By U.S. Naval Forces

DENVER, Feb. 23, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- A new, advanced weapons maintenance system developed by Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) and Visible Assets, Inc. that manages, diagnoses and tracks sensitive assets such as munitions could potentially save the U.S. Navy millions by automating the time-consuming process of weapons tracking.

The system, the [RuBee® Weapon Shot Counter](#), addresses the challenge of tracking sensitive munitions remotely. Traditional radio frequency identification (RFID) tags can't always be read or accessed through metals, liquids and other materials; they're also subject to eavesdropping by those wanting access to information about munition supply. In contrast, RuBee operates on the electromagnetic spectrum, rather than the RF spectrum, and is not subject to these deficiencies.

Before the creation of RuBee, munitions at armories had to be tracked manually in a labor intensive process. Early findings from a recent pilot program testing the system with U.S. Navy expeditionary forces found that the system could potentially save a single armory millions of dollars in labor charges annually through automation.

"Most processes for tracking ammunition and scheduling maintenance for weapons are time consuming and manually intensive," said Dr. Rob Smith, vice president of C4ISR for Lockheed Martin. "We worked with select Navy expeditionary forces to demonstrate that the RuBee system could not only increase the accuracy of their inventories, but also reduce costs, improve safety and maximize asset security."

During the multi-phased pilot program, RuBee tags were embedded in select Naval assets to track weapon performance and diagnostic data. The system operated as designed for the duration of the pilot. RuBee successfully provided maintenance and diagnostic data, such as number of rounds fired, rate of fire and calculated barrel temperature. The diminutive sensors also detected performance anomalies, such as gas port erosion and cracked bolts, before they led to potential weapon failure.

RuBee-enabled weapons can be automatically located and identified as they enter or exit a defined perimeter or armory. RuBee's magnetic signal can be read through and around metal and other materials, thus eliminating the need for hands-on inventory scans and allowing the armorer to remotely audit armory. Lockheed Martin is now working to expand this effort from a pilot to a full program that generates cost savings and increases confidence in weapon safety.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, Lockheed Martin is a global security and aerospace company that employs approximately 112,000 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 2014 were \$45.6 billion.

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