



DoD Presents S&T Transition for Affordability Award

The Department of Defense presented today the first Science and Technology (S&T) Transition for Affordability Award to government and industry team members from the Army's Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) Advanced Technology Demonstration program.

The award recognizes and honors individuals most responsible for outstanding technical accomplishments and contributions, both government and private sector, in achieving technology transition for affordability into a military system. Delores M. Etter, acting director for Defense Research and Engineering, presented the award at the 2001 S&T Affordability Conference at the Fairview Park Marriott, Falls Church, Va.

The guided MLRS advanced technology demonstration improved the accuracy and extended the range of an existing rocket system that was used in Operation Desert Storm. Although the system was very effective in delivering large quantities of destructive firepower, the military commanders returned from the Gulf War asking for one improvement: increased range.

Upon execution of this program, it was discovered that it was necessary to also improve the accuracy of the rocket because of the inherent delivery inaccuracies that occur with extended ranges of 32 to 45 kilometers.

The Army's Missile Command, Redstone Arsenal, Ala., responded to the challenge to design, develop, and successfully flight test an affordable, extended range MLRS. Cost-effective non-developmental or commercial components were used, in particular the Honeywell HG-1700 inertial measurement unit, to design the guidance and control section of the rocket. This section was then fabricated, tested, and incorporated into the nose of the previously free-flight MLRS rocket. The guided MLRS is now able to fly greater than 45 kilometers and has at least a twenty-fold improvement in delivery accuracy. The affordability benefits of this improved system are a six- to ten-fold reduction in the number of rockets required to defeat a target, with an 80 percent reduction in the cost of ammunition expended on a target due to the improved accuracy of the system.

As a result of meeting all guided MLRS exit criteria goals, a four-year international, cooperative-guided MLRS engineering, manufacturing, and development program was approved in 1998 and is now underway.

The work was performed by a government/industry team with the prime contract executed by the Army Aviation and Missile Research, Development and Engineering Center.

More information on the 2001 S&T Affordability Conference and related links may be found on the Web at <http://www.affordability.org>.

Editor's Note: This information is in the public domain at <http://www.defenselink.mil/news>.