

AERO INDIA 2013



Fresh Order For Additional Six C-130J Tactical Transport Aircraft Has Been Placed And Is Being Processed – Lockheed Martin

The Indian Air Force, which is already flying six C-130J transport planes purchased from the US firm Lockheed Martin, has proposed the acquisition of another six aircraft.

James R Gribbon, Regional President for South Asia, Lockheed Martin, has confirmed that the U.S. government has received a request for an additional six aircraft with a letter of Offer and Acceptance. He has said that the process of finalizing the order "is at an advanced stage between the two governments."

On the occasion of the Aero India 2013, James Gribbon stated that the C-130J aircraft Hercules "is the most advanced

airlifter built. The C-130J combines the latest in aerospace technology with a proven, rugged airframe design, resulting in an aircraft that gives an operator more capability and options with greater operational efficiency."

Expressing his optimism about the sale of further C-130J planes to the Indian armed forces, Gribbon said the plane could perform very well in many other roles in addition to 'Special Operation Requirements.'

He described the HC-130J having been successfully flown by the U.S. Coast Guard for several years now. In this context he expressed his confidence that the Lockheed Martin have solutions that meet or exceed the anticipated requirement

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of the Indian Navy and Coast Guard.

Describing the versatility of the aircraft, he said it had also applications in the civil sectors like disaster management and cyclone probing for more accurate weather forecast.

Several top officials of the Lockheed Martin have been speaking about increasing the company's footprint in India and trying to form joint venture companies. This has happened with the formation of the a JV company with Tata Advanced Systems for manufacture of airframe components for the C-130J and other forms of cooperation.

As a result of the formation of this JV, it has started successful production work at its new facility in India. The U.S. company was very pleased with the quality of the product and the ability to maintain schedule.

Gibbon said Lockheed Martin was committed to continuing work with "our industrial partners and Indian defence industry to develop long-term, high-value projects that bring mutual benefits and sustainable business to India. He said "India's potential as manufacturing hub in the aerospace and defence sector is just being realized. India is an important and attractive destination for a company such as Lockheed Martin which is interested in a long-term partnership with Indian industry and services," he added.

Besides the transport planes, Gibbon said that his company was having discussions with the Indian armed forces and the industry to have a better understanding of the

Unmanned Aerial Systems requirements and the potential for collaboration. He said Lockheed Martin was working with the U.S. Government for requirements of the U.S. armed forces.

MARITIME HELICOPTERS FOR INDIA

Gibbon said his company was planning teaming with Indian Defence and Aerospace organizations, the acquisition of the Multi-mission 'Romeo' and 'Sierra' aircraft which had proven maritime helicopter capability and could greatly enhance the Indian Defence and Aerospace partners' capability. The acquisition of 'Romeo' and its sister aircraft, the MH-60 'Sierra' provide a total maritime capability across all warfare and logistic support domains. The US Navy was committed to technology insertion throughout its service life and these insertions will ensure the 'Romeo' stays out in front of evolving maritime threats.

The MH-60 'Romeo' is a proven 21st Century multi-mission maritime helicopter, operational with the U.S. Navy and recently selected by two international Navies as their premier maritime helicopter. With more than 150,000 flight hours, it is a mature, low risk solution that provides state-of-the-art common cockpit avionics systems as well as enhanced multi-mission fully integrated mission systems. The MH-60R will be in service with the US Navy for the next three decades ensuring full life cycle support and obsolescence management for our international customers, he said. ■