News Release

Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency

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DARPA, ARMY SELECT UNMANNED COMBAT ARMED ROTORCRAFT PHASE II CONTRACTORS

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) and the U.S. Army have awarded funding to Lockheed Martin Systems Integration (Owego, N.Y.) teamed with Bell Helicopter Textron Inc. (Fort Worth, Texas) ($9,430,000) and Northrop Grumman Systems Corp. (San Diego, Calif.) ($8,700,000 awarded on July 16) to continue into the second phase of the Unmanned Combat Armed Rotorcraft (UCAR) program.

The goal of the joint DARPA/Army UCAR program is to demonstrate the technical feasibility, military utility, and operational value for a UCAR system to effectively and affordably perform armed reconnaissance and attack missions within the emerging Army Objective Force system-of-systems architecture. The enabling technologies are survivability, autonomous operations, command and control, and targeting/weapons delivery. Rather than employing a dedicated mission control station, the UCAR system will be controlled from existing command and control platforms, such as Comanche, the Army Airborne Command and Control System, or ground-based command and control systems. The UCAR system will be capable of autonomous collaboration with manned and unmanned air and ground systems, and will operate at low altitude in close proximity to manned systems, relying on a human controller primarily for tasking and final weapons release authorization.

During Phase I, the participating teams each conducted mission effectiveness and affordability trades to develop and optimize an objective system design. This culminated in a UCAR Objective System (UOS) conceptual design review and a UCAR Demonstration System (UDS) requirements review. In addition, each team prepared an initial risk management and mitigation plan providing a roadmap of technology validation and risk reduction activities required to mature their objective system. The products of the Phase I effort as well as the teams' Phase II technical proposals were used as a basis for the Phase II downselect.

"All four teams worked hard and did an excellent job in Phase I, but we believe that we have selected the two teams with the most innovative and compelling concepts to take forward into Phase II," commented Don Woodbury, DARPA UCAR program manager.

The primary objectives of Phase II are to continue refining the UOS, evolve the UDS requirements into a UDS preliminary design, and complete development of the risk management

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and mitigation plan initiated during Phase I. At the conclusion of Phase II, in September 2004, DARPA and the Army expect to select one team to continue into Phase III to fabricate two demonstrator systems and perform risk reduction demonstrations of critical system attributes.

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