

Artist conception of the Long Endurance Multi-intelligence Vehicles (LEMV). Photo artist rendering



Long

Endurance

Multi-Intelligence

Vehicle

LEMV

AGREEMENT SIGNED

By John Cummings, USASMDC/ARSTRAT

REDSTONE ARSENAL, Ala. - On June 14, the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command signed an agreement to develop a state-of-the-art hybrid airship that will provide persistent time-on station for additional intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance to the theater commander.

The agreement was awarded to Northrop Grumman for the Long Endurance Multi-Intelligence Vehicle (LEMV) technology demonstrator.

The base year of the agreement, for approximately \$154 million and up to \$517 million if all options are exercised, provides for the design, development and testing of a long-duration hybrid airship system within an 18-month time period, and then transport the asset to Afghanistan for military assessment. The agreement also includes options for procuring two additional airships.

“We are doing this to protect the soldiers on the ground,” said Marty Sargent, LEMV Project Manager. “We are on a tight schedule but we want this to be successful for the Army and all services.”

The football field-sized hybrid airship’s design requirements include the capability to operate at 20,000 feet above mean sea level, a 2,000 mile radius of action, and a 21-day on-station

availability; provide up to 16 kilowatts of electrical power for payload; be runway independent; and carry several different sensors at the same time. LEMV will be a recoverable and reusable multi-mission platform. It can be forward located to support extended geostationary operations from austere locations and capable of beyond-line-of-sight command and control.

LEMV is being awarded as an Other Transaction Agreement (OTA). OTA’s for Prototype Projects are called agreements because they differ from a traditional Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) contract in that many of the federal laws and regulations governing procurement contracts are waived.

“We utilized the OTA to access commercial technology; while Northrop Grumman is primarily a U.S. defense contractor, High Altitude Vehicles, Ltd. (HAV), who partnered with Northrop Grumman, is not,” stated Cathy Dickens, USASMDC/ARSTRAT Principle Assistant Responsible for Contracting. “The technology that we needed to reach out for in the airship business was primarily commercial,” Dickens continued.

The timeline for LEMV is an 18 month schedule that includes vehicle inflation at about month 10 with first flight planned in month 12 or 13. Additional operational characterization will occur at Yuma Proving Ground, Ariz., in month 16.



Ron Dillon, contracting officer at USASMDC/ARSTRAT, signs the long endurance multi-intelligence vehicles (LEMV) agreement with Northrop Grumman. The agreement provides for the design, development and testing of a long-duration hybrid airship system within an 18-month time period, and then transport of the asset to Afghanistan for military assessment.

Photo by Michael L. Howard, USASMDC/ARSTRAT