PRESS RELEASE

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TEAM LM LAUNCHES "FIRE SHADOW" TO MEET THE UK MOD LOITERING MUNITION REQUIREMENT UNDER THE IFPA PROGRAMME

Team LM, led by MBDA, is unveiling its *Fire Shadow Weapon System* at the DSEI exhibition in London this week. The weapon system is being presented as a solution for the UK ground forces' requirement for a low cost, all-weather, 24 hour capability to carry out precision attacks against surface targets which may be difficult to engage and time sensitive.

Team LM is a "best in class" mix of traditional complex weapons suppliers, non- traditional complex weapons defence companies, SMEs (Small and Medium size Enterprises) as well as academia. With MBDA at its head, Team LM comprises Blue Bear Systems Research, Cranfield Aerospace, Cranfield University, Lockheed Martin UK INSYS, Marshalls SV, Meggitt, QinetiQ, Roxel, Selex SAS, Thales UK, Ultra Electronics and VEGA.

Team LM is leading the Complex Weapons Sector in putting into industrial practice the requirements outlined by the UK MoD's Defence Industrial Strategy (DIS) launched at the end of 2005. DIS identified an overcapacity in the UK complex weapons industrial sector and called for a partnership approach between MoD and industry to meet future complex weapons requirements and ensure sovereign capability is maintained. The outcome was the formation of Team Complex Weapons (Team CW) which aims to establish a Strategic Partnering Agreement for UK industry with the MoD under the leadership of MBDA and MoD, to jointly manage all future complex weapons capability, research and technology and in-service support. At Farnborough 2006, Lord Drayson announced a change in the procurement strategy for the IFPA loitering munition system, saying that it would be single-sourced to Team CW, subject to an enduring requirement for this capability, affordability and the ability to clearly demonstrate value for money.

Explaining how Team LM is a prime example of how Team CW can meet the UK's DIS requirements, MBDA UK Managing Director, Steve Wadey, said: "The loitering munitions programme is the ideal catalyst not only in cementing the formation of Team CW but also in putting the Defence Industrial Strategy into practice. Team LM has already invested significantly in risk reduction work; it has established a partnering framework with the customer and has come up with an effective and highly cost-effective loitering munition solution. The Team LM approach in partnering with UK MoD is aimed at working with the customer to deliver an early and affordable step change in capability to the front line within an overall through life acquisition framework. Very excitingly our early risk reduction work maintains the potential to introduce an initial capability into service within as little as five years".

Recent combat experience, where for example the enemy only reveals its position fleetingly, has highlighted the need for a low cost weapon that can be launched over a battle zone, loiter for several hours and then rapidly strike a suitable target when it appears while still conforming to increasingly demanding rules of engagement. The potential need for a loitering munition, among a mix of other weapons, became apparent during the assessment phase of the UK's IFPA (Indirect Fire Precision Attack) programme concluded in 2005. This need was reiterated by the UK's Minister of State for Defence, Equipment and Support, Lord Drayson, at the Farnborough Airshow in 2006.

Fire Shadow will meet the UK's requirement for a weapon system with an operating range of more

than 150km and sub-metric precision (a CEP or Circular Error of Probability of less than 1 metre). To meet complex rules of engagement, Fire Shadow also features MITL (Man In The Loop) operation so that the weapon always remains under the control of an operator who can divert the weapon at the last moment should, for example, non-combatants suddenly appear near the intended target.

Following Fire Shadow's launch over the battle zone, the weapon will be able to receive real-time target information from a range of sources in a potentially network or info-centric enabled environment. These sources could be from ISTAR (Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance) aircraft or from surveillance UAVs (Unmanned Air Vehicles) such as the UK's Watchkeeper when it enters service or even from an operator on the ground. Fire Shadow will feature high operational flexibility and be effective in complex battle scenarios such as urban environments. The cost per munition for Fire Shadow will be kept to around that of current generation guided rockets. However, unlike guided rockets, Fire Shadow will be able to loiter for around 10 hours over the battle zone, waiting for the enemy to appear.

Notes to editors

The IFPA Assessment Phase 1 concluded in 2005 that a Loitering Munitions Weapon System was an effective element of the force mix. Early indications from IFPA Assessment Phase 2 suggest that a Loitering Munitions Weapon System remains an effective element of the force mix in a wider range of scenarios. The Loitering Munitions Assessment Phase is expected to commence in 2008 and lead to a Main Gate decision in 2011.

Following the Ministerial announcement, Team LM has been working closely with the Artillery Systems IPT (the UK MoD's Integrated Project Team) to conduct baseline studies in preparation for the Assessment Phase Business Case Approval in early 2008 in advance of an Assessment Phase starting late 2008.

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