

## Light Utility Helicopter (LUH)

### Executive Summary

- The Light Utility Helicopter (LUH) is a commercial off-the-shelf aircraft that has been certified by the Federal Aviation Administration for use in civil airspace.
- LUH units will perform Homeland Security and medical evacuation missions in permissive environments. The Army intends to employ the LUH worldwide, but only in non-hostile operational environments.
- The Army selected the European Aeronautic Defence and Space Company (EADS) North America, UH-145 helicopter as the LUH.



### System

- The LUH is a commercial aircraft certified by the Federal Aviation Administration for use in civil airspace.
- The Army plans to procure 322 systems beginning in May 2007 to replace UH-1H and OH-58 A and C model aircraft in the Active Army and National Guard inventory.
- The LUH is certified for instrument flight with a Global Positioning System to operate in day, night, and adverse weather conditions.
- The LUH must support a variety of configuration options to include night vision goggles; nuclear, biological, and chemical gear; Air Warrior ensemble; 600-pound hoist; fire bucket; external loads; and patient litters.

### Mission

- LUH units will perform Homeland Security and medical evacuation missions in permissive environments. The Army

intends to employ the LUH worldwide, but only in non-hostile operational environments.

- LUH-equipped units will provide general aviation support, respond to terrorist events, conduct civil search and rescue, support damage assessment, support test and training centers, perform medical evacuation, and provide support to counter-drug operations.
- LUH units will provide general administrative aviation and aerial sustainment missions, as well as execute tasks as part of an integrated effort with joint forces, government agencies, and nongovernmental organizations.

### Activity

- The Army conducted a Source Selection Performance Demonstration during January - May 2006 for each of the four potential helicopters. Army pilots flew candidate aircraft for approximately 30 hours each to evaluate performance and handling characteristics.
- DOT&E approved the Test and Evaluation Master Plan (TEMP) on March 31, 2006. This TEMP contains an adequate test strategy to support the LUH full-rate production decision.
- The Army selected the EADS North America UH-145 helicopter on June 30, 2006, as the LUH.

### Assessment

- The current TEMP and the test plan for the IOT&E, scheduled for February 2007, are adequate to confirm operational effectiveness and suitability in order to support the full-rate production decision.

- Production plans are to move current UH-145 production from Donauwörth, Germany, to Columbus, Mississippi. The initial LUHs will be built in Germany and shipped to Columbus for final assembly. The Mississippi plant will undergo a major expansion to accommodate the LUH program. The plant will begin with partial assembly, followed by full assembly, and finally the subsequent U.S. manufacture of major subsystems. The Army predicts that full-up assembly capability of the Columbus, Mississippi, plant will be achieved by August 2007.
- The UH-145 LUH is not a covered system for Live Fire test and evaluation because the Army intends for the aircraft to operate only in non-hostile environments.

### Recommendations

- Status of Previous Recommendations. No FY05 report was submitted on LUH.

## ARMY PROGRAMS

- FY06 Recommendations. The Army should:
  1. Conduct the LUH IOT&E in accordance with the DOT&E-approved TEMP or resubmit a modified TEMP after analysis of LUH reliability and performance using existing commercial data, vendor data, data from source selection flights, or additional flight testing by Army pilots.
  2. Ensure production and assembly of the LUH at the EADS North American Columbus, Mississippi, facility duplicates the production build of the Donauworth, Germany, production line.