Joint Precision Airdrop System (JPADS)

INVESTMENT COMPONENT

- **Modernization**
- Recapitalization
- Maintenance

MISSION

To provide the warfighter with precision airdrop ensuring accurate delivery of supplies to forward operating forces, reducing vehicular convoys, and allowing aircraft to drop cargo at safer altitudes and off-set distances.

DESCRIPTION

The Joint Precision Airdrop System (JPADS) integrates a parachute decelerator, an autonomous guidance unit, and a load container or pallet to create a system that can accurately deliver critical supplies with great precision. The system is being developed in two weight classes: 2,000 pounds and 10,000 pounds, with potential future requirements for 30,000 pounds, and an objective system of 60,000 pounds. The guidance system uses military global positioning satellite data for precise navigation and interfaces with a Mission Planning module on board the aircraft to receive real-time weather data and compute aerial release points. JPADS is being designed for aircraft to drop cargo from altitudes of up to 24,500 feet mean sea level. It will release cargo from a minimum off-set of 8 kilometers from the intended point of impact, with an objective capability of 25 kilometers off-set. This off-set allows aircraft to stay out of range of many anti-aircraft systems. It also enables aircraft to drop systems from a single aerial release point and deliver them to multiple or single locations, thus reducing aircraft exposure time. Once on the ground, the precise placement of the loads greatly reduces the time needed to recover the load. Exposure to ground forces is minimized as well.

SYSTEM INTERDEPENDENCIES

None

PROGRAM STATUS

- **3QFY07–4QFY08:** Testing for 2,000-pound variant completed
- **1QFY08:** Milestone B (permission to enter system development and demonstration phase) received for 10,000-pound variant
- **1QFY08:** Testing began for 10,000-pound variant
- **4QFY08–1QFY09:** Milestone C (full-rate production and fielding decision) preparation underway for 2,000-pound variant

PROJECTED ACTIVITIES

- **2QFY09:** Milestone C for the 2,000-pound variant subsequent, with production contract
- **4QFY09:** Fielding begins for 2,000-pound variant and will continue until FY12, assuming projected funding remains
- **1QFY11:** Complete testing of the 10,000-pound variant
- **2QFY11:** Milestone C (full-rate production and fielding decision) for 10,000-pound variant with subsequent award production contract
- **4QFY11:** Fielding begins for 10,000-pound variant

ACQUISITION PHASE

Technology Development | Engineering & Manufacturing Development | **Production & Deployment** | **Operations & Support**

Joint Precision Airdrop System (JPADS)

Airborne Guidance Unit (AGU)

FOREIGN MILITARY SALES
None

CONTRACTORS
Airborne Systems North America
(Pennsauken, NJ)