

## **Air Force Awards Two Contracts For New Intercontinental Ballistic Missile Weapon System**

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KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. -- The Air Force announced Aug. 21 the award of two Technology Maturation and Risk Reduction contracts for its Ground Based Strategic Deterrent intercontinental ballistic missile weapon system program. Contracts were awarded to Boeing Company, Huntsville, Alabama, and Northrop Grumman Systems Corporation, Redondo Beach, California.

The GBSD program office is part of the ICBM Systems Directorate at Hill AFB, Utah. The center is responsible for synchronizing all aspects of nuclear materiel management on behalf of Air Force Materiel Command in direct support of AFGSC.

The GBSD is the weapon system replacement for the aging LGM-30 Minuteman III ICBM.

"We are moving forward with modernization of the ground-based leg of the nuclear triad," said Secretary of the Air Force Heather Wilson. "Our missiles were built in the 1970s. Things just wear out, and it becomes more expensive to maintain them than to replace them. We need to cost-effectively modernize."

The Minuteman III first became operational in the early 1970s. While certain components and subsystems have been upgraded over the years, most of the fundamental infrastructure in use today is the original equipment supporting more than 50 years of continuous operation.

"Airmen must always be ready in this no-fail mission," said Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. David Goldfein. "As others have stated, the only thing more expensive than deterrence is fighting a war. The Minuteman III is 45 years old. It is time to upgrade."

The aging Minuteman III system will continue to face increasingly significant operational and sustainment challenges until replaced.

"The Minuteman III is the enduring ground-based leg of our nuclear triad. However, it is an aging platform and requires major investments to maintain its reliability and effectiveness," said Gen. Robin Rand, commander of Air Force Global Strike Command. "GBSD is the most cost-effective ICBM replacement strategy, leveraging existing infrastructure while also implementing mature, modern technologies and more efficient operations, maintenance and security concepts."

For the GBSD acquisition effort, the Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center is focused on developing and delivering an integrated GBSD weapon system, including launch and command-and-control segments. The weapon's developers will pursue a modular systems architecture, which will encourage continued competition across the lifecycle of the program. Additionally, a

modular system will make the GBSD weapon system responsive to the challenges posed by the pace of technological change and new threat environments.

“The new GBSD weapon system will meet the combatant commander’s current requirements, while having the adaptability to affordably address changing technology and emerging threats through 2075,” said Maj. Gen. Scott Jansson, AFNWC commander and the Air Force program executive officer for strategic systems.

Two contracts, valued at no more than \$359 million each, were awarded after a full and open competition. The companies selected were determined to provide the best overall value to the warfighter and taxpayers based on the source selection’s evaluation factors. The period of performance for each TMRR contract is approximately 36 months.

“I am proud of the hard work, professionalism and dedication of the GBSD program office members. We would not have gotten here without them,” said Col. Heath Collins, GBSD program manager for AFNWC. “Over the last year, we have executed a thorough and fair source selection while also putting in place the tools, infrastructure and analytic capability to execute the GBSD program. We are ready, excited and honored to begin working with our industry partners to develop and deliver an affordable, low-risk ICBM replacement, guaranteeing uninterrupted nuclear deterrence capabilities for the nation.”

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Headquartered at Kirtland AFB, the center has about 1,100 personnel assigned to 17 locations worldwide, including at Hanscom AFB, Massachusetts; Hill AFB, Utah; Eglin AFB, Florida; Tinker AFB, Oklahoma; and at Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

<http://www.hill.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1286085/air-force-awards-two-contracts-for-new-intercontinental-ballistic-missile-weapo/>