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“Aussie Thunder” Self Propelled Howitzer – new standards in cost and quality

CANBERRA – 16 October, 2008: Having developed what it considers to be the most advanced self-propelled howitzer (SPH) in the world, backed by world-class quality and production standards, Raytheon Australia is also confident that the AS-9 “Aussie Thunder” can be delivered at the right price.

The AS-9 is the joint Raytheon Australia/Samsung Techwin solution for the Australian Army’s LAND 17 Artillery Replacement Program that offers a local prime with a world class capability.

“The basic acquisition cost is obviously important—and we believe we are extremely competitive there — but cost effectiveness is about much more than that,” said Raytheon Australia’s Managing Director, Ron Fisher. “We agree with the Commonwealth that value for money is driven by the total cost of ownership across the life of the program.

“With AS-9, we are proposing what is probably the best protected SPH in the world, bringing terminal effects unmatched by any other platform,” said Fisher. “We’ve spent over 18 months ensuring full interoperability with the Army’s planned command and control architecture, and our team has worked hard to drive down the total cost of ownership across the system.”

AS-9 can be operated by as few as four crew, enabling considerable reductions in personnel costs over the planned life of type, and the scale of Samsung Techwin’s production capacity allows lower costs to be leveraged from the large Korean fleet.

“The Korean variant of AS-9 is in production until at least 2019, and Samsung Techwin has committed to providing spares to the Korean Army for ten years beyond that,” said Fisher. “That has allowed us to offer fixed price spares and certainty of long-term support to the Commonwealth.

“It’s a situation that will only get better as export opportunities are fully explored and more of our regional and coalition partners field the AS-9.”

LAND 17 self-propelled howitzers (SPH) will bring ground commanders a land-based indirect firepower system able to fight and communicate in the digital battlespace. They will be linked to the broader Australian joint fires environment, providing precision terminal effects at long ranges and unprecedented situational awareness to minimise the risk to friendly forces and enable a fast and lethal response to authorised targets. Gun crews will be protected under armour and the platforms will be fully interoperable with Australia's likely coalition partners.

With facilities located across the country, Raytheon Australia is a highly capable prime contractor with an engineering and technical workforce of 1300 backed by world-class management and quality systems. This local presence is bolstered by strong relationships with small and medium sized enterprises and access to the global resources of Raytheon Company.

Raytheon Company, with 2007 sales of \$21.3 billion, is a technology leader specialising in defence, homeland security and other government markets throughout the world. With a history of innovation spanning 86 years, Raytheon provides state-of-the-art electronics, mission systems integration and other capabilities in the areas of sensing; effects; and command, control, communications and intelligence systems, as well as a broad range of mission support services. With headquarters in Waltham, Mass., Raytheon employs 72,000 people worldwide.

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