



MSA Vermont Facility Secures \$28 Million Army Contract

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PITTSBURGH, Nov. 19 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Mine Safety Appliances Company (Amex: MSA) today announced it has secured a \$28 million contract from the U.S. Army to produce 80,000 protective helmets widely considered to be the next generation in military head protection. The helmets will be produced at MSA's manufacturing facility in Newport, Vt., with an increase in production scheduled to begin in February, 2004.

Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy, a senior member of the Defense Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, worked to lay the groundwork for the contract. The Defense Subcommittee handles the Senate's work in writing the annual defense budget bills.

The helmet model to be manufactured under the contract, known as the Advanced Combat Helmet (ACH), incorporates a new, lightweight design that offers soldiers considerably more protection with greater comfort. The ACH has been credited with saving several lives in the recent military actions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Currently they are used by Special Operations and elite airborne forces working throughout the world in the war on terrorism and will soon be available to many more soldiers in the general forces.

William Lambert, president of MSA North America, said the company is proud to be able to expand on its longstanding history of providing protective equipment to all branches of the U.S. military.

"Today, there is no greater need than to provide the most advanced personal protective equipment available to America's fighting forces who face ongoing acts of terrorism in Iraq, Afghanistan and indeed around the world," Lambert said. "Throughout our 89 years of business, MSA's mission of protecting people's health and safety has been intertwined with the needs of our nation's military, be it for respiratory protection or head protection. As in the past, we again welcome the opportunity to help protect one of our most important assets -- that of American men and women in uniform. We are also grateful for the support of Senator Leahy, which has been a catalyst for expanded use and availability of the ACH within the Army."

In a statement announcing the contract, Senator Leahy said, "The helmets are priceless for the families and friends of soldiers serving on these battlefields. Vermonters are proud to produce them, and we also appreciate what this work means to our families in Newport and other communities."

Established in 1914, MSA is the world's leading provider of quality products and services that protect people's health and safety and the environment. The company has annual sales of about \$650 million, manufacturing operations throughout the United States and Europe and 28 international affiliates. Since the company's founding, MSA products for the military have been used in two world wars, as well as in Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, Afghanistan and Iraq.

SOURCE Mine Safety Appliances Company