Lockheed Martin Opens Next Generation Interceptor Facility in Courtland, Alabama

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New 88,000-square foot facility expands advanced manufacturing capacity and supports rapid delivery of homeland defense capability.

COURTLAND, Ala., June 1, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Lockheed Martin (NYSE: LMT) today inaugurated an 88,000-square foot, purpose-built Missile Assembly Building 5 (MAB-5) in Courtland, Alabama. The state-of-the-art plant will produce the Next Generation Interceptor (NGI) for the Missile Defense Agency (MDA) and bolster the nation's layered missile defense architecture.

MAB-5 consolidates Lockheed Martin's most sophisticated digital manufacturing tools and smart processes, enabling high efficiency, repeatable production. The plant draws best practices from high-reliability programs like Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) and hypersonics and adopts a "digital twin" methodology that reduces risk from design through sustainment. Automation and data driven workflows guarantee consistent, high-quality output.

By bringing together digital engineering and modern manufacturing techniques, this facility is designed to accelerate production while maintaining the highest standards of quality and reliability.

In a statement, Director of Golden Dome for America Gen. Mike Guetlein, who leads the Department of Defense's effort to develop a next-generation missile defense shield, hailed the facility as a critical asset to national security.

"You are not just building infrastructure, you are building the Arsenal of Freedom," Gen. Guetlein said. "We are moving with purpose, with urgency, and we are moving out…we are forging the shield to secure the Homeland together."

Smarter, More Agile Defense

NGI is an open system interceptor that meshes seamlessly with a layered defense network of space-based sensors, radars, command and control systems and other interceptors.

"Think of this as deterrence through defense," said Christopher Jewell, NGI vice president and program manager at Lockheed Martin. "It sends a clear signal that threats can be detected, tracked and defeated before they ever reach their intended target."

Its modular architecture also allows rapid incorporation of new technologies. Unlike legacy systems, NGI upgrades can be performed while the missile remains in its silo, avoiding costly removal and replacement.

"NGI was designed from the start to adapt," added Jewell. "Its digital foundation allows new technologies to be integrated more quickly, ensuring the system can stay ahead of emerging threats."

Real Progress Underway

"Golden Dome for America is real, and it is not theoretical. We are building it right now in Courtland," Gen. Guetlein said. "We are taking proven, world-class capabilities, combining them with next-generation space-based tracking and advanced interceptors, and fusing them together with Artificial Intelligence."

Supporting that momentum, NGI is moving from design to production, with key elements of the system advancing through development test and integration. Core technologies, including the interceptor's engagement capability, sensors, software and propulsion, are demonstrating system-level performance and operation ahead of Critical Design Review (CDR).

MAB-5 will streamline workflows, cut unnecessary handling and support tighter tolerances required for complex components. Integrated digital tools link design data directly to the factory floor, bolstering configuration control, quality assurance and repeatability as production scales.

"These facilities were intentionally designed around the system they produce," Jewell said. "By aligning the factory to the product at the onset of development, we can improve quality, increase efficiency, adapt and ramp up production quicker as the system evolves."

Continued Investment in Alabama

The opening of MAB 5 underscores Lockheed Martin's longstanding commitment to North Alabama as a hub for deterrence and defense. The company has been present in the region since 1963 and has been producing defense systems in Courtland since 1994.

Lockheed Martin's Troy, Alabama, facility will also support NGI production through hardware integration and large-scale manufacturing. Together, the Troy and Courtland campuses form the core of the company's commitment to national missile defense readiness.

"The talent in north Alabama is the engine behind the next generation of our nation's defense systems, and this project will create high-skill jobs and new career pathways while strengthening our local economy," said U.S. Rep. Dale Strong. "This state-of-the-art facility will play a major role in protecting our homeland as well as reshaping Courtland's role as a steady source of quality jobs and growth for the Tennessee Valley."

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