

LIGHTWEIGHT 155MM HOWITZER

DESCRIPTION

The Lightweight 155mm Howitzer (LW155), or M777, is the world's first 155mm towed howitzer with a flyweight



of less than 9,800 pounds (with digital fire control). It offers greater ground mobility and improved reaction times compared to the M198 howitzer it is designed to replace.

OPERATIONAL IMPACT

The LW155 towed howitzer system — defined as the howitzer, its prime mover, and associated equipment — will meet the increased operational demands in the areas of lethality, survivability, mobility,

deployability, and sustainability required to support maneuver warfare. The system's operational tempo will increase over that of previous systems, ensuring that greater firepower is available while vulnerability is reduced.

PROGRAM STATUS

The Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition approved the program for low-rate initial production in November 2002. The program will now produce a total of 94 systems over the next two years with initial deliveries supporting continued operational testing. Completion of these tests will enable a full-rate production decision by December 2004. In parallel, the detailed design of the Army funded digital fire control system (DFCS) has been successfully completed and is currently under test. The DFCS will be retrofitted to all Marine Corps howitzers initially fielded with glass and iron sights, and will support joint procurement of an M777A1 with the Army for the balance of production in FY 2005-2007.

PROCUREMENT PROFILE:

Quantity:

FY 04

60

FY 05

97

DEVELOPER/MANUFACTURER

Prime Contractor: BAE Systems, Barrow in Furness, UK

Sub-Contractors:

General Dynamics, ATP, Burlington, VT

Wegmann, USA, Lynchburg, VA

Hydro-Mill, Chatsworth, CA