

# SMALL UNIT REMOTE SENSING SYSTEM

## DESCRIPTION

The Small Unit Remote Sensing System (SURSS) is a small, unmanned air vehicle that will be employed at the battalion level and below in order to provide “over-the-hill” day and night reconnaissance. These UAVs operate autonomously after launch and gather and transmit video imagery of the tactical situation, in near-real time, at a range of up to ten kilometers.



The Dragon Eye air vehicle is the key component of SURSS. Dragon Eye is a five-pound UAV that flies at 35 knots at altitudes of 300-500 feet above the ground. The vehicle, which is hand-launched by two Marines, flies a preprogrammed route using Global Positioning Satellite waypoints to navigate. Once in the area of interest it uses on-board sensors to gather

and transmit imagery back to the ground control station. The system is man-portable, and can be recovered and reused.

## OPERATIONAL IMPACT

The mission of the SURSS vehicle — Dragon Eye — is to provide day/night reconnaissance/surveillance of a target or small area and relay this information in near-real time back to a company-level or smaller unit. Dragon Eye can also be used in the urban environment to provide additional security to a patrol in their area of coverage and during convoy operations to provide route reconnaissance. This system will provide information that a battalion could previously gather only by patrolling or outpost activities, thus saving Marine lives and resources.

## PROGRAM STATUS

The program is in the System Design and Development phase. A final operational assessment took place in spring 2003, and source selection is currently underway for production contract award in the first quarter of FY 2004. Initial operational capability is planned for the second quarter of FY 2004. The procurement target is for 324 systems – 1,026 air vehicles, including spares.

### PROCUREMENT PROFILE:

Quantity:

FY 04

19

FY 05

50

### DEVELOPER/MANUFACTURER

Competitive systems engineering contractors:

AeroVironment, Inc., Monrovia, CA

BAI Aerosystems, Inc., Easton, MD

Production contractor: TBD pending production contract award