

U.S. Army Orders Additional Body Armor From 3M

Advanced materials from 3M provide lightweight, high-performance torso protection

As the U.S. Armed Forces seek to improve agility and mobility, the U.S. Army is making great efforts to reduce the weight soldiers must carry without sacrificing protection. Body armor is vital to that effort. [Ceradyne, Inc.](#), a 3M company, received a contract modification worth \$34 million from the Army to provide 28,000 pieces of body armor under the Soldier Protection Systems Vital Torso Protection program for lightweight enhanced small arms protective inserts (ESAPI).

Worn by U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, ESAPI ceramic armor plates are inserted into outer modular tactical vests to provide torso protection against small arms fire. Ceradyne-produced ESAPI plates reduce weight significantly over the previous generation of inserts while providing the same level of protection.

"We've made it our mission to leverage innovation in advanced materials science to reduce the weight burden carried by soldiers," said Cheryl Ingstad, business manager, Advanced Ceramics Platform – Defense, 3M. "3M's capability to decrease the weight of products, while maintaining or even enhancing performance characteristics, is well-recognized in industries from automotive to apparel. 3M has deep expertise in safety products used by the military, such as Peltor tactical communications systems from 3M, and head, eye, hearing and respiratory protection. 3M is the only provider to supply the U.S. Armed Forces with both body armor and the most advanced helmet available, the enhanced combat helmet (ECH)."

Ingstad added, "Ceradyne has fielded over 100,000 ECHs and 2 million body armor inserts to the U.S. Armed Forces. Our speed in production and delivery is in part due to our major investment in state-of-the-art helmet manufacturing. Just as we invest heavily in research, development and manufacturing, we also have a major effort underway to understand and translate soldier needs in head and body protection to exciting, new developments in our products."

This ESAPI contract modification was issued under the Soldier Protection System Vital Torso Protection program, and covers low-rate initial production. Deliveries are expected to be completed throughout 2016. 3M body armor solutions will be on display with a range of soldier protection solutions at AUSA, Oct. 12 to 14 in Washington, D.C. at 3M Booth 6243.

About 3M

At 3M, we apply science in collaborative ways to improve lives daily. With \$32 billion in sales, our 90,000 employees connect with customers all around the world. Learn more about 3M's creative solutions to the world's problems at www.3M.com or on Twitter [@3M](#) or [@3MNewsroom](#).

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