



The MPF programme: US Army's Future Armoured Fleet

General Dynamics Land Systems has unveiled its platform for the *Mobile Protected Firepower* (MPF) programme; this platform of GDLS will compete with BAE Systems for the contract with US Army. The programme requires a light tank for the US Armed Forces “to provide adequate protection and firepower along with excellent mobility bridging the gap between the heavy Main Battle Tanks and the future Optionally Manned Fighting Vehicle (OMFV).”

This will provide the Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) with ‘a protected platform capable of delivering overwhelming precision firepower combined with the ability to move rapidly in a variety of terrain conditions.’ Currently IBCT lacks such a platform which can provide the necessary firepower along with adequate protection to engage hardened enemy bunkers, light armoured vehicles, dismounted personnel and sniper positions.

The light tank should be of 30 tones and is one of the five next generation combat vehicles being developed by *Army Futures Command*, the new four star command which will focus on “managing the force against rapidly developing and evolving high

end threats and thus focusing on a vehicle which can provide mobility, lethality and survivability against high intensity threats in multi domain operations.”

There were originally three major competitors: BAE Systems, General Dynamics Land Systems and SAIC, the latter remarked. According to reports, \$375.9 million was awarded to BAE Systems and \$335 million to GDLS; to build 12 prototypes each with delivery starting in 14 months and testing in 16 months. Initially 55 vehicles will be procured every year aiming at a total procurement of 550 units. The targeted fielding for the First Unit Equipped is Fiscal Year 2025.

The offer from BAE Systems is the result of more than 30 years of research and development for an optimised, rapidly deployable, the combat vehicle designed specifically to support light infantry. The technology demonstrator of the Mobile Protected Firepower (MPF) vehicle or ‘light tank’, equipped with the Iron Fist active protection systems (developed by IMI of Israel) was presented at the *Association of the United States Army* (AUSA) Global Force Symposium in Huntsville during 2019. In 2018 it was provided with a contract worth up to \$376 million for the Engineering, Manufacturing, and Development (EMD) phase of the



The GDLS offer