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The U.S. Army Selects Photo-Sonics To Design Portable Missile Tracking Prototype

The Army has tapped California-based Photo-Sonics with a \$15 million contract to design optical tracking system prototypes needed to improve soldier training against portable missile threats.

Under the contract, awarded May 22, 2018 and announced Wednesday, Photo-Sonics will work with the National Security Technology Accelerator (NSTXL), an Army partner program, to build new systems for identifying threats from shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles and track vehicle-mounted missiles.



“Shoulder-fired missiles with infrared seekers are the greatest threat faced by slow-moving Army helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft,” NSTXL officials said in a statement. “The project will help produce countermeasures to the threat.”

Photo-Sonics is tasked with producing a portable prototype for the Army within the next few months that focuses on high-precision, high-accuracy ability to detect specific missile threats. The prototype will then undergo a review and Army officials will determine whether to continue testing and move to possible deployment.

“We are honored to be working with the Army on such an important project and we are confident that our technical solution will help address and mitigate the dangerous threat faced by Army pilots,” Philip Kiel, president of Photo-Sonics, said in a statement.

The deal was executed under DoD’s Other Transaction Authority to bring in non-traditional partners and embrace experimentation in prototyping. NSTXL provides support for companies operating under an OTA.

“Since we primarily work with smaller companies that have either done very little business or never done business with the DoD before at all, NSTXL helps to provide support services ranging from back-office support such as invoicing into the government systems to providing programmatic support on issues during the life of the prototype project, such as negotiating extensions to period of performance or altering project scope based on technology needs,” Tim Greeff, CEO of NSTXL, told Defense Daily.

NSTXL is currently working with 14 other Army prototyping programs, according to Greeff.

“This TReX project is a critical initiative to protect the warfighter that we couldn’t be prouder to support. NSTXL looks forward to supporting Photo-Sonic through the development process,” Greeff said in a statement.