

Precision Delivery

An Ultra Lightweight System That's Not Light On Technology

A revolution is occurring in the skies over the battlefield. This revolution is in the technology of parachutes and today's emphasis is on precision. Whether the mission is delivering supplies to remote regions such as the mountains of Afghanistan, or bringing humanitarian relief to dangerous situations like the crisis in Darfur, precision counts to ensure the safety of the mission.

In a world of regional conflicts, military tactics and equipment constantly adjust to a changing battlefield environment and a new generation of GPS guided parachutes is changing the rules. Using gliding ram-air parachutes, these systems can land a significant distance and altitude from their point of release. Traditional cargo delivery systems require aircrews to fly at 1,000 feet or lower to be accurate, within the range of small-arms fire. This increased capability allows distances that keeps the deploying aircraft and crew safe from and reduces the vulnerability of the ground troops receiving the supplies.

Air dropping supplies requires the ability to resupply a range of load sizes and weights. In the Ultra-lightweight category (ULW) carrying low weights of 100 to 700 lbs, a revolutionary *commercial of the shelf* equipment delivery system is making its way to the battlefield. With over 20 systems fielded around the world, this ULW system dubbed "MicroFly", emphasizes ease of use, flexibility and is fully compatible with the 2K and 10K platforms selected by the US Army. .

In a combat situation, simplicity is critical. The MicroFly requires no specialized training and packing the canopy is identical to packing a personnel canopy. Operating the unit requires almost no instruction to set the coordinates. MicroFly does not require a Mission Planner or wind sonde to capture readings before the actual drop is made. It's operation is so simple that it is just pushed out of the aircraft. Even if the operator forgot to turn the unit on, it turns itself on automatically after exit!

MicroFly's interoperability makes it very flexible. The system can be configured to operate with a variety of military ram air canopies such as the MC-5, Hi-Glide 380, Intruder 360 and MP360. Since the system and the jumpers are under the same canopy, it can be used to accompany inserting HALO (High Altitude Low Opening) jumpers. The MicroFly can exit the aircraft first, guiding the jumpers to the target while remaining in close proximity with the jumpers during the insertion. Using internal GPS guidance, the system can fly autonomously to the IP (Impact Point) or can be remotely controlled with a Remote Guidance Unit by a jumper in the air if needed.

One of the most important elements of the MicroFly is the software guidance system. Aside from being the easiest to use, it is the same proven software as the US Army's JPADS (Joint Precision Aerial Delivery System) selected as the standard for 2K and 10K platforms. This interoperability can be critical during a combat mission and it ensures that the same degree of CLS (Contractor Logistical Support) provided to the Army's main

JPADS (Joint Precision Aerial Delivery System) program will also be provided for the MicroFly.

According to JC Berland, the chief designer of the MicroFly; “We understand the importance of a revolutionary parachute system design, but we also know that simplicity, flexibility and compatibility are equally as important on the battlefield. We never forget who we are building this product for”.

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