

Ohio Ordnance Works Expands its Reach with Unidef



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MSI TDR: Could you please give us an overview about OOW as a company and its major products?

Jerry HURD: OOW is a small business located just outside of Cleveland, Ohio. We have been in business for about a little over 30 years. Over the last 10 years, we have shifted our focus to military products, specifically light, medium and heavy machine guns, with a focus on international sales. We have about 57 employees right now. Our three major products are the OOW249, which is the light machine gun, the OOW240, which is the medium machine gun and M2HB which is the heavy machine gun. All three products are built with several variations. Our sales are all over the world. Our primary focus right now is the Middle East, specifically United Arab Emirates and Oman. Also, Turkey and Western Europe are important markets. We do have some sales in South America as well as Asia, but the largest sales are in the Middle East.

MSI TDR: Which products and solutions are you displaying in IDEF?

Jerry HURD: We are showcasing all three of our machine guns. We have products in other booths as well, such as BMC, FNSS, Katmerciler and Nurok Makina. Some of the vehicles of these firms have OOW produced guns on their remote controlled weapon stations (RCWSs).

MSI TDR: What would you like to say about the cooperation between Unidef and OOW?

Jerry HURD: We met Unidef 4 years ago. They approached us at a trade show and were interested in selling our products in Turkey. We started our cooperation and had several low-volume sales that were very successful over first 2 years. Last year and this year we have been extremely successful with them. We have a partnership as well as friendship. We are very eager to continue working with Unidef.

Ohio Ordnance Works (OOW) manufactures firearms for supply to different foreign and domestic government agencies. Cooperating with Unidef, OOW has become an important partner for Turkish armed and security forces. Now, OOW and Unidef look to expand and deepen their collaboration further. OOW attended IDEF 2017 with Unidef and during the exhibition, we had a chance to talk with Jerry Hurd, Vice President of International Sales at OOW about Unidef cooperation and future plans.

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MSI TDR: There was a kind of restriction or problem on obtaining export license for the weapons which were going to be procured for Turkish National Police in last October. Could you mention a little bit about that period? What did you do both Unidef and OOW to overcome this challenge?

M2HB 12.7x99 mm heavy machine gun



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OOW's machine guns, labelled with Unidef brand, were showcased at the stands of Katmerciler (on the left) and BMC (top).

Jerry HURD: It was this time last year. We had an export licence for the Turkish National Police and it was declined by the US Department of State. We worked through the American-Turkish Council (ATC), and with the Undersecretariat for Defence Industries (SSM) in Turkey. We were able to identify that there was a mistake made by US Department of State. Once we brought it to their attention, they corrected it immediately. It took actually 20 minutes to fix and approve and we have had no problems since.

MSI TDR: Which products of OOW are in the inventory of Turkey?

Jerry HURD: All three, in several variations. Turkey has been using OOW machine guns for about 3 years now. Each model has an infantry version, a coaxial version which is used in vehicles or tanks, an aircraft version and a Navy version. For Turkey, we are delivering coaxial versions for vehicles. We are working nearly all of the suppliers including ASELSAN, Nurol Makina, BMC, and Fotoniks and they install our machine guns to their RCWSs Also, Turkish National Police

and Gendarmerie are buying infantry versions.

MSI TDR: Do you have any plans for industrialization, coproduction or joint design and development in Turkey for the future? If so, do you consider that Turkey can be one of your future production bases for its neighbouring countries?

Jerry HURD: I actually met with Prof. Dr. İsmail Demir, Undersecretary for Defence Industries in Abu Dhabi during IDEX. We discussed the exact thing. We will at some point have an offset

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OOW240 7.62x51 mm medium machine gun



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ment of State. Two, there are certain countries that Turkey is very close. For example we are selling through Unidef to Bahrain. Production in turkey and export to Bahrain would work very well for us.

We will probably start production in Turkey with the medium machine gun. It is the easiest to produce among the three. Obviously there is a lot of history and learning curve to build the gun but with our assistance we feel that Turkey could build a very well made product. There are techniques and manufacturing processes that have to be mastered. The light and heavy weapons are slightly harder to produce.

MSI TDR: We would like to hear about your IDEF assessments...

Jerry HURD: This is my third time at IDEF. It is a very good show. It allows us to get some of our customers that we do not see in US and in Middle East shows. We get a different variety of customers here. It is a large show. We have high ranking delegations. Other than the challenges of Istanbul - it takes many hours to get there - it is a lovely visit. Food is amazing. People are wonderful. Everybody speaks English, which is great for us. I can order food or drinks in Turkish. The language is easy to speak.

There is no hesitation to come here. We will attend in the future.

MSI TDR: Is there anything you want to add?

Jerry HURD: I would like to stress our cooperation with Turkish companies, specifically ASELSAN and Nurol Makina. They visited our factory, we visited their factory. We have a huge potential to continue a lot of business. Not just in Turkey but in the entire region. The partnerships we are developing in Turkey are important for us. These are world-wide partnerships. They are good companies to work with and we are happy to work with them. There are companies in other countries that can be stressful to work with. They place a lot of restrictions on us. They have requirements that are very difficult. Everybody here is "People like us." We like to work with people like us.

On behalf of our readers, we would like to thank Jerry Hurd Vice President of International Sales at OOW, for taking the time to answer our questions and for providing us with such valuable information.

obligation here, which forces us to do that. We have looked at it already. We know that we can produce parts in Turkey. We know Turkey would be very happy to have us produce parts here. The issue here is we are a very small business and proud of our products. So to have our product produced anywhere outside of our factory, whether in US or Turkey or in any other country, there is a little bit hesitation because of our pride. We want it to be our product. But at the same time we are aware that we need to work with other countries to lower our cost and satisfy offset obligations and have Turkish people have their pride in their products. For us, starting with some of the accessories like the bipod, the buttstock and the heat shields - the parts that are not critical - is the best solution. But eventually we see full production here. Not only for Turkey but also for export. Exports depend on two things. One, there is the technology transfer permit that we aim to grant from US Depart-



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OOW249 5.56x45 mm light machine gun

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