

Akima Logistics Services Provides Logistics Support for Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) System

On November 1, 2020, a team of nine Akima Logistics Services (ALS) employees walked onto their new jobsites in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where they would be providing logistics support for the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) Weapon System.



Illustration of the THAAD System

This project is notable for two reasons: The contract launched Akima into a new business area: missile defense, and Akima employees underwent 60 days of intensive training before boarding a flight to their new residence in the Middle East.

THAAD is a mobile missile defense system designed to protect against short-, medium-, and intermediate-range ballistic missiles by intercepting with a hit-to-kill approach. The mobile unit is manufactured by Lockheed Martin, the prime contractor for this project. With a track record as a high quality subcontractor service for Lockheed Martin – thanks to the Akima Technical Solutions (ATS) team on the Special Operations Forces Global Logistics Support Services contract – Akima subsidiary ALS was an easy choice for logistics support on the THAAD Weapon System this year.

Scott Sieger, Director of THAAD Operations at Akima, negotiated the deal, calling it an exciting opportunity that “pushed us into the missile defense space and gives us the ability to build past performance to compete on other contracts in this new market.”

By building relationships and wielding the power of demonstrated excellence, Akima was able to break into a new business area with ease.

However, the transition did not come without challenges. Finding highly qualified employees willing to work in the UAE required Akima to employ rigorous recruiting efforts. By June 2020, just five months before ALS put boots on the ground at the jobsites, Scott had to recruit nine employees who were up to the task. “The incumbent employees had been there since the initial deployment, so they had great relationships already built within Lockheed and the Emirati military” Scott explains. “Our biggest challenge was in the initial relationship building.”

Luckily, Lockheed designed an intensive 60-day training program for the nine new employees to learn everything they needed to know about the THAAD Weapon System. During that time, the team had a chance to team-build and meet with leadership. “These are all super smart guys,” Scott says of the team. “They are helping us to continue our great partnership with Lockheed and grow in this new market.”