

# Military vehicle maker salutes local suppliers

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London suppliers who get more than \$20 million in business from the city's armoured vehicle maker got a big thank-you Friday.

General Dynamics Land Systems Canada honoured 13 suppliers for moving quickly to help upgrade LAV III vehicles for the Canadian Army.

"The LAV upgrade program was on a very aggressive schedule for us. When we work late, on weekends and over the holidays, so do our suppliers. They worked very hard to get this contract completed," said Janet Peters, GDLS Canada's director of supply-chain management.

They hear a lot about things that go wrong when they're working on a tight deadline, and it was time to tell them all they got right, she added.

GDLS Canada was awarded the first of \$1-billion-plus in contracts late in 2011 to upgrade more than 600 Canadian military vehicles, a deal that will go to 2025. The first two vehicles

rolled off the line in December, a very fast timeline.

"This means a lot to us — we take great pride in what we do, day-to-day. It's nice to be appreciated by GDLS," said Brad Brennan, operations manager for Militex on Huron St., which paints vehicles and makes "ballistic lining" for their interiors to prevent mortar and shrapnel fragments from penetrating the armour.

Brennan credited GDLS as a "huge" contributor to the area economy, saying the upgrade alone will give Militex's 130 workers five years of work.

Federal defence contracts create spinoff benefits across the local economy, said MP Joe Preston (C - Elgin-

Middlesex-London), who was on hand.

"Dollar for dollar, every contract government gives to manufacturers has to also be spent in our community," he said.

Last year, however, GDLS Canada and other London military contractors were shut out of a \$1.25-billion deal to supply the Canadian Army with a tactical armoured-patrol vehicle. The Conservative government instead awarded that contract to Textron Systems in the U.S.

The U.S. government, on the other hand, has a Buy America policy when it comes to supplying its military.

In other GDLS Canada news, the plant has won a \$24-million contract to supply 13 LAV-A2 armoured vehicles to the U.S.

Marine Corps, a smaller version of the LAV III. The Marines have ordered 253 LAV-A2 vehicles since 2007.

"For us, repeat orders from existing customers are very important. It validates the performance and our products," said Ken Yamashita, GDLS Canada spokesperson.



## GENERAL DYNAMICS LAND SYSTEMS CANADA

- 100+ London-area suppliers
- Buys more than \$1B in materials a year
- 500+ suppliers nationwide; found in every province
- 9,000+ light armoured

## LOCAL SUPPLIERS SALUTED

- IGD Machine & Tool Ltd.
- Fluid Power House Inc.
- Cantwell Cullen & Co. Inc.
- Advance Manufacturing Technologies ULC
- Blue Sky Machine & Tool Co.

- Abuma Manufacturing Ltd.
- Noordermeer Bros. Inc.
- Militex Coatings Inc.
- Calco Metal Manufacturing Ltd.
- Davwire
- Electrozad Supply Co.
- Hose Headquarters Ltd.