

## **BELL HELICOPTER JOINS WITH CANTON'S ELECTRO-NATIONAL FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PROJECT**

Bell Helicopter Textron Inc., of Fort Worth, Texas and Electro-National Corporation of Madison County, Mississippi announce they will work jointly in a three-year Department of Defense Mentor-Protégé Program, which teams large defense contractors with small business subcontractors.

“This mentoring program is expected to produce about \$7.3 million in new sales for Electro-National and more jobs for Mississippians,” Mississippi Senator Trent Lott said. “This agreement certainly bodes well for Electro-National’s future, and speaks well for Bell Helicopter’s commitment to team with smaller subcontractors and provide ‘best value’ for hardware for America’s military - saving taxpayer dollars while fostering small business development.”

Mississippi Senator Thad Cochran stated:

“I am pleased that the Department of Defense has approved this three-year technical assistance program between Bell Helicopter-Textron and Electro-National Corporation of Canton. This program will allow Bell Helicopter to transfer engineering and expertise to Electro-National for the procurement of military aircraft equipment important to national defense and to economic growth in Madison County.

Specifically, the agreement calls for Bell Helicopter to transfer tiltrotor/rotocraft tubing systems technology to the minority-owned Electro-National for just-in-time manufacturing at Electro-National’s 40-employee facility in Canton. The tubing systems manufactured by Electro-National will consist of more than 2,250 part configurations for stainless steel, aluminum and titanium tubing for fuel, hydraulic and air systems used on commercial and military aircraft and motorized vehicles.

As its name suggests, the agreement will provide Electro-National employees with training to support production of Bell/Boeing’s new V-22 Osprey tiltrotor aircraft and all other Bell Helicopter programs. The agreement further calls for Bell Helicopter to provide business development support to Electro-National, consulting with emerging minority-owned business in a number of areas, including strategic planning, engineering and information systems.

The sponsoring military agency for the program is the U.S. Naval Air Systems Command, Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland. Bell Helicopter Textron is a leading producer of commercial and military helicopters. Textron, Inc. is a multi-faceted company with operations in the aircraft, automotive and finance industries.