

Patriot systems maintain job security at Letterkenny Army Depot



Scott Jackson and Letterkenny Army Depot commander Col. Cheri A. Provancha snip a ribbon Thursday at a ceremony marking the completion of a new missile assemble facility at the depot. (By Kevin G. Gilbert, Staff Photographer)

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CHAMBERSBURG, Pa.—

Letterkenny Army Depot and Franklin County officials celebrated a milestone Thursday that they say will ensure that between 300 and 400 jobs stay in Chambersburg through 2013.

Depot commander Col. Cheri A. Provancha recognized the men and women at Letterkenny for completing two separate systems — a [Patriot](#) Launcher and a Patriot Guidance Enhancement Missile, or GEM-T, during two ribbon-cutting ceremonies at the depot.

Provancha said the two programs are not creating new jobs, but will maintain job security.

"This is taking advantage of current expertise in the **work force** so it's not creating jobs for us, but what it is allowing us to do is maintain a steady state," Provancha said.

Letterkenny partnered with the Massachusetts-firm [Raytheon](#) to develop both systems.

Raytheon Integrated Defense Systems is the prime contractor for Patriot — a long-range, high-altitude, all-weather system — and the systems integrator for the PAC-3 missile, according to Raytheon's website.

"We're here to recognize a milestone in our pursuit of excellence in the pursuit of our U.S. and allied war fighters," Provancha said.

Crews at the depot began assembling the Patriot Launcher in 2010, according to officials at Letterkenny.

"The success of this program is a testament to the depot as a whole. It has introduced new processes in virtually every area — new paint processes, shipping, receiving. It has tested the flexibility and adaptability of the depot," said Maj. Daniel Cody, logistics management specialist at the depot.

Letterkenny crews have manufactured six launchers with a total of 37 to be completed by 2013 at a cost of \$12.4 million, Provancha said.

The second ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrated the completion of the first Patriot GEM-T Missile assembly at the depot.

"Things of this magnitude do not happen in the blink of an eye. It takes planning, dedication, hard work, communication and above all teamwork," Provancha said.

The first production line for 226 missiles is scheduled for completion in August 2013, according to Letterkenny officials.