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A MIM-104 Patriot Advanced Capability-2 missile is fired during a live-fire exercise at Jioupeng Military Base in Pingtung County in an undated photograph.

Photo courtesy of the Ministry of National Defense

The US has agreed to transfer titanium investment casting process technology to Taiwanese companies, providing them the capability to produce aerospace and military-grade titanium, a senior Ministry of National Defense official said yesterday.

Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control has agreed to provide the technology transfer and technical know-how and training in the areas of radiographic and penetrant inspection, hot isostatic pressure processing, pyrometric control, weld inspection methodology and aerospace standard certification, said the official, who declined to be identified.

The US firm's industrial cooperation project with Taiwan seeks to assist the local defense industry in enhancing and upgrading existing capabilities, the official said.

The project is part of an arms deal, in which the US has agreed to transfer technologies related to the Patriot Advanced Capability-3 (PAC-3) upgrade package for the MIM-104 Patriot surface-to-air missile system, the official added.

The arms package consists of six sets of PAC-3 missile systems and upgrade packages to convert three sets of PAC-2 systems to PAC-3 specification at a total cost of NT\$179.1 billion (US\$5.96 billion), the official said.

The missile deliveries and upgrades are expected to conclude by 2021, the official added.

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Taiwan could apply the technology to its domestically produced missiles and aircraft, as well as key precision equipment, the official said, adding that it would provide an indeterminable boost to the nation's defense technologies.

The US firm, the primary contractor for the PAC-3 package, said it has received approval from the US government for the technology transfer.

The company's representative has already submitted a technology transfer proposal to the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the official said.

"We will invite all eligible aerospace companies to attend an event at which pertinent information regarding the technology transfer would be made available," the official said.

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