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The custom-designed shelter system, shown here mounted on a trailer, is made by Mobile Medical International Corporation. Courtesy of Mobile Medical International Corp.

St. Johnsbury firm lands shelter deals worth millions

By Dan McLean
Free Press Staff Writer

August 23, 2006

A St. Johnsbury company has won millions of dollars in contracts for its combat zone-ready medical shelters that will likely lead to the company's hiring another half-dozen employees.

Mobile Medical International Corp. on Tuesday announced a \$7.1 million order for its 21st Century Military Hospital System, on top of another \$7 million deal signed with the government of Oman earlier this month.

The company expects to complete two prototypes for each of the three types of shelters within a year, President and Chief Executive Rich Cochran said. "No one, but no one, has ever developed anything like this."

The shelters can be assembled quickly near the front line and are typically used to provide surgical and medical support teams with high-quality shelters to house surgeries and other medical facilities.

A huge market has opened for the shelters now that military thinkers are considering using the units as command and control centers, Cochran said. "So, now we are seeing a much broader opportunity."

This \$7.1 million deal announced by Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., on Tuesday brings the total from the U.S. military to \$15 million, Cochran said.

The newest version, the inflatable 400-square-foot Mobile Single Pallet Unit, holds 10 cots and sets up in about 10 minutes. The unit can be used as a medical facility or a command post.

At 88-by-108 inches folded up, it is half the size of similar shelters. "That is where the line generals really get excited," Cochran said of its size, explaining that five of the units can be loaded into a C-130 transport plane.

None of the newest versions have been deployed in combat theater yet, Cochran said, but demonstrations at several military bases have generated excitement.

The Royal Oman Police and the Royal Army of Oman have ordered a combined 10 units of the 21st Century Military Hospital System units, Cochran said.

Mobile Medical's two other models in the 21st Century Military Hospital System are the Universal Support Shelter, which can house up to 32 people, and the Mobile Surgery Unit 2, which can hold four patients in an intensive care unit.

The self-contained units have power, lighting, medical gas and air filtration systems and can be

connected to house hundreds of beds. Cochran said the units will most likely be used in smaller, forward operation settings, and eventually replace the Army's current field hospital.

Mobile Medical will manufacture the shelters in St. Johnsbury, but the company may need other plants to keep up with demand, Cochran said. The company anticipates \$13 million in revenue in 2006, and Cochran expects that to increase 69 percent in 2007.

"Our company is pretty much on a growth curve," he said. "and we see that only growing faster each year."

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Company profile COMPANY: Mobile Medical International Corp.

FOUNDED: 1994

EMPLOYEES: 25

HEADQUARTERS: St. Johnsbury

OTHER OFFICES: Dubai, United Arab Emirates

REVENUES: 2004: \$4 million; 2005: \$9.5 million; 2006: projected \$13 million; 2007: \$22 million projected.

ON THE WEB:

www.mobile-medical.com

Source: President and CEO Rick Cochran