“Aiming to Please”
A Look at Military Contracts Awarded to Grand Rapids Area Companies
Introduction

News stories about military and civilian companies receiving contracts from the military for services related to the war on terror have become common place, with a majority of citizens in the United States having at least heard of the massive amount of money being made by companies such as Halliburton and Bechtel. However, information about local companies receiving military contracts has not been widely available, with the exception of a few articles appearing in *The Grand Rapids Press* and the local television media.

This report functions as a substitute for the lack of reporting on the issue from the mainstream media. By covering the period from January 2002 to December 2004, this report reveals the local companies who have made a considerable amount of money as a result of the “war on terror” as well as revealing what weapons systems are being made locally and used on civilians in Iraq. With an ongoing occupation and estimates of civilian casualties running between 15,600 and 100,000, it is not a stretch to describe weapons systems as being used on civilians in Iraq, and indeed this report reveals local contributions to weapons systems such as the M1A1 tank, the F-16, the F-15, and numerous other systems. We have included a representative sample of contracts rather than listing every contract awarded to particular company, as such a list would generate considerably more pages. Moreover, while we have attempted to identify where components made in the Grand Rapids area are going, the vague nature of government documents often makes this difficult and more research is needed.

More importantly than just revealing companies with military contracts in the Grand Rapids area, this report should be a catalyst for action within the local antiwar and peace communities. It is our hope that the information contained within will be used to provide more focus to antiwar and anti-occupation efforts in the Grand Rapids area. The fact that numerous companies in the area produce components required for offensive weapons that are used daily in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other countries in the “war on terror” provides an easily understood local connection to what is going on overseas and possible targets for local organizing.

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Borisch Manufacturing was founded in 1994 by Jonathan Borisch who was previously employed at Technical Systems, a military contractor based in Grand Rapids and founded in 1969. Borisch is particularly proud of their work with the military, portraying themselves as supporting the troops in a time when it is unpopular and helping in the war effort. As such, Borisch has been featured in the local media with company representatives openly discussing their work manufacturing parts for Abrams tanks, Paladin cannons, 105mm howitzers, the Stryker, and the Globemaster transport aircraft. In 2003 the company touted the fact that 57% of their work was done under contracts from the United States military.

Aside from the semi-frequent congratulatory articles trumpeting Borisch’s contributions to the military in the local media, Borisch Manufacturing also has ties to conservative religious institutions and considers themselves a model Christian business. Underneath the word “Borisch” in the company’s logo are the words “Psalm 115.1,” a citation to a Psalm that founder Jonathan Borisch believes holds the company to a high standard. One of the ways Borisch functions as a Christian company is by giving employees time off for mission trips—every two years employees are allowed a two-week paid mission trip. In addition, Jonathan Borisch is a member of LIFE International (www.lifeinitatives.org) an anti-abortion group that works to establish “abortion alternatives” such as counseling and religious conversion in non-western countries. Borisch also sponsors a scholarship at Cornerstone University, a small, conservative Christian college in Grand Rapids.

Tax Breaks

In December 2004, the Kentwood City Commission granted Borisch an eight-year tax abatement for equipment and a 12-year tax break a 25,000 square foot, $1.9 million dollar expansion of its Kentwood manufacturing facility. A previous 20,000 square foot, $350,000 expansion was given a six-year tax abatement.
Recent Contracts

December 17, 2004: $92,698.79 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for a gun simulator assembly.¹³

October 27, 2004: $213,571.08 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for circuit assembly.¹⁴

October 21, 2004: $90,000 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for electric power and distribution equipment.¹⁵

June 20, 2004: $407,028.64 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for printed circuit card assembly.¹⁶

June 9, 2004: $423,233.40 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for fire control computing sights and devices.¹⁷

May 26, 2004: $34,650.00 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for circuit cards.¹⁸

May 21, 2004: $846,466 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command to upgrade 120 electronic units for the M1A1 tank.¹⁹

March 30, 2004: $435,940 contract from the U.S. Army's Tank-Automotive and Armaments Command for electrical control equipment.²⁰

February 14, 2004: $48,939.30 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for electric power and distribution equipment.²¹

December 11, 2003: $973,080.00 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for electrical control equipment.²²

November 5, 2003: $30,212.99 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for guns.²³

August 26, 2003: $25,269.05 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for “guns through 30mm.”²⁴

July 1, 2003: $126,624 contract from the U.S. Army Tank & Automotive Command for electrical assemblies.²⁵

July 1, 2003: $828,247 contract from the U.S. Army Tank & Automotive Command for electrical control equipment.²⁶

March 19, 2003: $580,703 contract for fire control computing sights and devices.²⁷

December 26, 2002: $283,405 contract the U.S. Army Materiel Command for cables, cords, wire assemblies and communications equipment.²⁸

December 16, 2002: $42,000.00 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for cable, cord, wire assemblies, and communications equipment.²⁹

April 22, 2002: $1.22 million contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for fire control computing sights and devices.³¹

November 7, 2002: $25,383.24 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for vehicle maintenance.³²

October 31, 2002: $80,214.12 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for switches.³³
October 9, 2002: $98,084.00 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for electronic components.\textsuperscript{34}

October 10, 2002: $64,735.44 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for electronic power equipment.\textsuperscript{35}

October 10, 2002: $56,899.92 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for electronic components.\textsuperscript{36}

October 9, 2002: $207,882.78 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for electronic components.\textsuperscript{37}

April 30, 2002: $99,980.00 contract from the U.S. Army Tactical Command for relays and solenoids.\textsuperscript{38}

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**D&M Midwest LLC**

**General Information**

2571 20 Mile Road  
Cedar Springs, MI 49319

www.dmmidwest.com

D & M Midwest is a small company that specializes in supplying industrial spare parts for procurement by the Department of Defense. According to their web site, D & M Midwest is “woman owned and operated” and one of the largest government contractors in West Michigan.

**Recent Contracts**

- **April 27, 2004:** $52,250 contract for engine coolant radiators.\textsuperscript{39}
- **April 26, 2004:** $41,512 contract for brake caliper assembly.\textsuperscript{40}
- **March 22, 2004:** $50,401 contract for shaft assembly.\textsuperscript{41}
Eaton Aerospace

General Information

3675 Patterson Avenue
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49588

www.aerospace.eaton.com

Eaton Aerospace is an avionics company that produces components for both civilian and military aircraft. Eaton’s corporate headquarters are in Irvine, California, but it operates a large factory in Grand Rapids. Eaton manufactures components used in a wide variety of military aircraft including the F-15 Eagle, the F-18 Hornet, the P-3 Orion, UH-60 Black Hawk, the CH-56 Sea Knight, and the SH-60 Seahawk. Parts manufactured by Eaton include fuel system components, hoses, gasket materials, and components used in on-board missile systems.

In 2002 Eaton was praised by The Grand Rapids Press for their role in providing components for the C-17 cargo plane, planes which were used to drop humanitarian aid in Afghanistan. According to The Grand Rapids Press, “Some 350 Grand Rapids-based employees of Eaton Aerospace could take part of the credit when US planes dropped packets of food and medical suppliers[sic] to refugees in Afghanistan.”

Recent Contracts

April 27, 2004: $96,264 contract from the U.S. Naval Inventory Control Point for electro-magnetic actuators.


June 16, 2003: $175,674 contract from the U.S. Naval Inventory Control Point for electro-mechanical actuators.


May 20, 2002: $123,714 contract from the U.S. Naval Inventory Control Point for electro-mechanical actuators.

May 13, 2002: $115,080 contract from the U.S. Naval Inventory Control Point for electro-mechanical actuators.

April 22, 2002: $360,756 contract from the Defense General Supply Center for sensor assemblies.

April 1, 2002: $246,456 contract from the U.S. Naval Inventory Control Point for electro-mechanical actuators.

Evans Tempcon Inc.

General Information

701 Ann St. NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

www.evanstempcon.com

Evans Tempcon is a relatively small local company that specializes in heating and air conditioning systems.

Tax Breaks

Evans Tempcon saves $100,000 annually on taxes as a part of its Renaissance Zone designation.55

Recent Contracts

February 3, 2004: $218,271 contract from the Defense Supply Center for fluid regulating valves.56

January 20, 2004: $237,650 contract from the Defense Supply Center for fan clutch actuators.57

December 6, 2003: $53,692 contract from the Defense Supply Center for shutter control assembly.58

October 2, 2003: $99,233 contract from the Defense Supply Center for shutter assembly.59

June 28, 2003: $41,982 from the Defense Supply Center for fluid regulating valve.60

Grand Valley State University

General Information

Unlike many other universities around the country, Grand Valley State University (GVSU) does relatively little research for the military. Its main connection comes in a partnership with SORDAL, A Holland base company that develops high-tech products for commercial and government applications.61
Recent Contracts

June 17, 2004: A $100,000 Phase 1 Small Business Technology Transfer Grant was awarded to Sordal Inc. and GVSU to develop an insulating foam for use on satellites that track ballistic missiles as part of the United States ballistic missile defense system.  

L-3 Communications Avionics Systems

General Information

5353 52nd St SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49512-9702

www.as.l-3com.com

L-3 sells mainly to the Department of Defense and other government agencies. In 2003, L-3 ranked 12th out of the top 100 defense contractors and 89.3% of its sales were to the military. It bought B.F. Goodrich Avionics System for $188 million in February of 2003.

L-3 makes components for a variety of military aircraft including the F-16 Falcon, the F-18 Hornet, the P-3 Orion, and the UH-60 Blackhawk. These components include flight instruments, antennas, radio equipment, and meteorological equipment.

Recent Contracts

December 30, 2004: $109,655 contract for an attitude indicator.


September 1, 2004: $8,268,480 firm fixed price contract to provide for 440 each, Displacement Gyroscopes.


June 15, 2004: $36,324 contract for attitude indicators.

May 27, 2004: $821,918 contract for attitude indicators.

May 24, 2004: $60,894 contract for turn indicators.

April 20, 2004: $56,394 contract from the U.S. Naval Inventory Control Point for attitude indicators.

March 30, 2004: $387,632 contract from the Naval Inventory Control Point for altitude indicators.

March 19, 2004: $54,393 contract for an antenna.
March 5, 2004: $60,600 contract for an electronic test set. 76  
December 16, 2003: $889,150 contract from US Army Aviation and Missile Command for flight instruments. 78  
December 2, 2003: $41,600 for attitudes indicators. 79

Smiths Industries Aerospace

General Information

3290 Patterson Ave SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49512

www.smiths-aerospace.com

Smiths Industries Aerospace is a large aerospace corporation that produces a variety of components for civilian and military aircraft. In terms of dollars and volume, it is the largest recipient of military contracts in the Grand Rapids area. According to Defense News, Smiths ranks 31st out of the top 100 defense contractors 80 and military equipment accounts for 60% of sales in 2003 for total Smiths operation. 81 Smiths makes components for systems such as the F-15 Eagle, the F-16 Falcon, the F-18 Hornet, the Blackhawk (UH-60), the F-4 Phantom, and many other weapons systems.

Tax Breaks

Smiths received a Michigan Economic Growth Authority (MEGA) grant worth $6 million in 1996. 82 The Michigan Economic Growth Authority is a Single Business Tax and Income Tax credit program targeted at large-scale investment and job creation, as well as attraction of technology-intensive business concerns. 83

Recent Contracts

September, 21 2004: $705,640 contract for crash survivable flight information recorder. 84  
September 15, 2004: $46,914 contract for miscellaneous communications equipment. 85  
September 3, 2004: Estimated $7,650,825 firm-fixed-price requirements contract for the procurement of up to 34 AV-8B Harrier Aircraft Warfare Management Computers. Work will be performed in Clearwater, Fla. 86  
June 7, 2004: $436,770 contract for navigational instruments. 87  
February 14, 2004: $38,471 for a software kit. 88  
January 6, 2004: $1.6 million contract from the U.S. Navy's Air Systems Command for the Tactical Aircraft Moving Map Capability PC Memory Card International Association Mission. 89
**December 18, 2003:** $376,740 contract for missile aircraft accessories and components.90

**December 12, 2003:** Estimated $16,747,286 indefinite-delivery/indefinite-quantity contract for the procurement of up to 20 Crash Survivable Flight Information Recorders (CSFIRs) and 360 Crash Survivable Memory Units (CSMU), and for the repair of up to 10 CSFIRs and CSMU. In addition, the contract provides for product/engineering support for platforms utilizing CSFIR and CSMU hardware, including the C-2A, C-130T, UP/VP-3A, F/A-18C/D, MV-22B, and CV-22 aircraft. Work will be performed in Grand Rapids, Mich., and is expected to be completed in December 2006.91

**December 4, 2003:** $65,100 contract for governor control units.92

**November 28, 2003:** $49,423 contract for annual ball bearings.93

**November 6, 2003:** $28,457 for control panel.94

**October 29, 2003:** $87,074 contract for transmitter motor.95

**October 15, 2003:** $262,307 contract for hybrid microcircuit.96

**August 21, 2003:** $247,797 contract for gyroscope actuator.97

**August 7, 2003:** $100,170 contract for gyroscopes.98

**July 31, 2003:** $73,339 contract for gyroscope ring contact.99

**July 30, 2003:** $104,723.62 contract for flight instruments.100

**July 30, 2003:** $289,588 contract for CSFIR engineering support.101

**July 11, 2003:** $55,313 contract for rotors.102

**July 11, 2003:** $47,810 contract for electrical motor.103

**June 30, 2003:** $104,732.62 contract for flight instruments.104

**June 11, 2003:** $431,080 contract from the U.S. Naval Inventory Control Point for interference blankers.105

**May 5, 2003:** $5,440,994 modification to a previously awarded firm-fixed-priced contract (N00019-03-C-0018) for the procurement of 369 tactical aircraft moving map capability (TAMMAC) advanced memory units (AMU) and mounting plates for use in Navy and Marine aircraft (F/A-18C/D and F/A-18E/F, AH-1Z, UH-1Y, AV-8B) for the Navy (279 AMUs), and for the governments of Australia (67 AMUs), Switzerland (18 AMUs), and Finland (5 AMUs). This contract combines purchases for the Navy ($4,113,154; 76 percent), and for the governments of Australia ($988,682; 18 percent), Switzerland ($265,428; 5 percent) and Finland ($73,730; 1 percent) under the Foreign Military Sales Program. Work will be performed in Clearwater, Fla. (60 percent) and Grand Rapids, Mich. (40 percent), and is expected to be completed in January 2006.106

**April 22, 2003:** $157,500 contract from the Defense General Supply Center for torque motors.107

**April 22, 2003:** $1.44 million contract from the U.S. Naval Air Systems Command for TAMMAC Advanced Memory Units.108

**April 11, 2003:** $48,348 contract for torque ring assembly.109

**March 28, 2003:** $49,500 contract for programmable cartridge transfer unit.110
March 25, 2003: $89,640 contract for brush assembly.\textsuperscript{111}
March 20, 2003: $445,000 contract for cover assembly.\textsuperscript{112}
March 17, 2003: $27,000 contract for printed wiring board.\textsuperscript{113}
March 6, 2003: $49,165 contract for motor rotor.\textsuperscript{114}
March 3, 2003: $31,358 for piston assembly.\textsuperscript{115}
February 10, 2003: $71,835 contract for gyromotor.\textsuperscript{116}
February 4, 2003: $3,277,782 contract for TAMMAC Advanced Memory Units.\textsuperscript{117}
January 24, 2003: $56,899 contract for electrolytic switch.\textsuperscript{118}
January 17, 2003: $39,333 contract for electrolytic switches.\textsuperscript{119}
December 12, 2002: $69,955 contract for linear microcircuit.\textsuperscript{120}
December 11, 2002: $27,421 contract for electric contact assembly brush.\textsuperscript{121}
November 29, 2002: $46,033 contract for brush assembly.\textsuperscript{122}
November 19, 2002: $30,600 contract for hybrid microcircuit.\textsuperscript{123}
November 18, 2002: $45,781 for control panel.\textsuperscript{124}
September 14, 2002: $44,149 contract for helical torsion spring.\textsuperscript{125}
June 3, 2002: $260,400 contract for gyroscope actuator.\textsuperscript{126}
May 31, 2002: $161,293 contract for yoke and shaft assembly.\textsuperscript{127}
January 15, 2002: $2.43 million contract from the U.S. Naval Air Systems Command $2.43 million contract from the U.S. Naval Air Systems Command.\textsuperscript{128}

\textbf{Wolverine World Wide}

\textbf{General Information}

9341 Courtland Drive  
Rockford, MI 49351

www.wolverine.com

Wolverine is one of the largest manufacturer of footwear for the military with its Bates division posting a double-digit increase in revenue in 2003 as a result of fulfilling contractual orders from the Department of Defense and increased demand in the civilian sector.\textsuperscript{129} Wolverine does not
view themselves as a “manufacturing company”, but rather, according to their Vice President of International Sales and Marketing in the Asia-Pacific, Dan Tenacte, they are a “sourcing company” that outsources production overseas. While their footwear sold to the military is manufactured in the United States, the majority of their footwear is made in countries such as China.130

**Tax Breaks**

Wolverine received a 12-year, 50% property tax break for its new headquarters. The tax abatement was on all costs associated with land improvement, building improvements, machinery and equipment, and furniture and fixtures.131 It also received a tax abatement of $1.4 million over 12 years from Cedar Springs on a new warehouse.132

**Recent Contracts**

**July 16, 2004**: $9,913,032 firm fixed price with indefinite delivery type of contract for safety shoes for the Navy.133

**July 9, 2004**: $19,018,790 fixed price with economic price adjustment and indefinite delivery type of contract for infantry combat boots for the Army and Air Force. Work will also be performed in Jonesboro, Ark.134

**April 19, 2004**: $5,516,906 firm fixed price type of contract for boots for the U.S. Marine Corps.135

**August 15, 2003**: $14,505,899 firm-fixed-price with indefinite-quantity delivery type of contract for boots for the U.S. Army.136

**March 17, 2003**: $101.02 million contract from the Defense Supply Center, Philadelphia, for infantry combat boots.137

**September 26, 2002**: $6,749,849 firm-fixed-price with indefinite delivery and quantity type of contract for boots for the U.S. Army. Work will also be performed in Arkansas and Michigan. *(States News Service accessed via Lexis-Nexis)*

**September 17, 2002**: $9,034,265 firm-fixed-price with indefinite-quantity and delivery type contract for men's poromeric dress shoes for the U.S. Army, U.S. Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Work will also be performed in Arkansas.138

**July 14, 2002**: $8,560,172 firm-fixed-price with indefinite-quantity type contract for safety shoes for the U.S. Navy. Work will also be performed in Puerto Rico and Missouri.139
Resources

Local

Confronting Empire Working Group
The Confronting Empire Working Group is a local effort to create an approach to anti-war and anti-corporate globalization organizing as aspects of US empire. The group hosts regular meetings and can be reached via their list serve at confrontempire@lists.riseup.net. The group is currently organizing an antiwar campaign that will incorporate information from this report.

People’s Alliance Anti-Corporate Globalization Campaign: War Profiteers and Iraq
While somewhat dated, the People’s Alliance Anti-Corporate Globalization campaign features links to a number of resources on war profiteering by companies in the United States.

West Michigan Justice and Peace Coalition
The West Michigan Justice and Peace Coalition is a network of individuals and groups in the West Michigan area that oppose war and support peace. They exist to plan, coordinate, and support actions for justice and peace.

National

Citizen Works
The Citizen Works site features a number of links to resources on war profiteering.

Warprofiteers.com
Warprofiteers.com is run by CorpWatch and provides one of the best sources of information about new military contracts.
Notes and Documentation

1 http://www.iraqbodycount.net/
2 http://www.mediamouse.org/iraqwatch/20041029.php
9 “Full Circuit”
10 http://www.cornerstone.edu/assets/academics/catalog/downloads/04_05_catalog.pdf
62 http://www.mediamouse.org/static/grand_valley_state_university_to_contribute_to_ballistic_missile_defense_system.php
63 http://www.defensenews.com/content/features/2003chart1.html


*States News Service* accessed via Lexis-Nexis

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*States News Service* accessed via Lexis-Nexis