Lockheed Martin System Goes Into Daily Use Early At Kansas City Air Route Traffic Control Center

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An advanced system developed by Lockheed Martin to detect aircraft-to-aircraft conflicts up to 20 minutes in advance was put into operational use two weeks ahead of schedule at the FAA's Kansas City Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC).

The User Request Evaluation Tool Core Capability Limited Deployment (URET CCLD) system detects potential conflicts with other aircraft and can determine if pilot requested changes to a flight plan are free of conflicts with other air traffic. This allows for more strategic planning by controllers, enables more direct routing of aircraft or deviations to avoid adverse weather, and permits changes in altitude to take advantage of favorable winds. This saves time, money and fuel for airlines and travel time for passengers, while continuing to ensure safe separation of aircraft. Prior to the new system, controllers relied on paper flight strips and mental calculations to determine if a proposed route change would be safe.

"This tool is one more example of how government and industry can team up to pay dividends directly to the passenger," said John Thornton, FAA's director of Free Flight Programs. "This was a mammoth undertaking. The controllers, the technicians and Lockheed Martin made it happen, and they made it happen early."

In addition to predicting aircraft-to-aircraft conflicts, URET continuously monitors aircraft conformance to filed flight plans. It also issues a controller alert 40 minutes in advance of when an aircraft is predicted to penetrate restricted or prohibited airspace.

A prototype of the URET system, developed by the Mitre Center for Advanced Aviation Systems Development, has been in use at the Indianapolis and Memphis ARTCCs, where measurable savings to airlines have exceeded $18 million per year. The FAA awarded Lockheed Martin a $204 million contract to fully develop URET in September 1999. Since then, Lockheed Martin has developed and tested over 600,000 lines of software code and integrated the system with two other major operational En Route National Airspace Systems, the Host system and the Display System Replacement (DSR). Both of these systems, also developed by Lockheed Martin, were simultaneously receiving their own planned enhancements and modifications to support URET. This type of complex integration is unprecedented in the FAA with systems of this size, as is the ahead-of-schedule performance. Lockheed Martin also is responsible for URET training, hardware design and installation, and user support and maintenance at the ARTCCs.

"URET CCLD has been an exceptionally complex program requiring incredible cooperation and coordination between many FAA organizations and contractors," said Sue Corcoran, vice president of North American Programs for Lockheed Martin Air Traffic Management. "Past upgrades to single systems have been likened to changing the tires on a race car traveling at 120 miles per hour. Make that merging a new race car onto a single lane track while changing the tires on two other race cars moving at 120 miles per hour and you have URET CCLD integrated with Host and DSR. Hats off to the FAA for its third in a row En Route success in the same number of years."

The URET CCLD system will be operational by mid-2002 at six additional ARTCCs: Memphis, Indianapolis, Cleveland, Chicago, Atlanta and Washington, D.C. URET CCLD will be deployed to the remaining 13 ARTCCs by 2005.

With headquarters in Rockville, Maryland, Lockheed Martin Air Traffic Management has four decades' experience in delivering advanced air traffic management solutions to international customers and focuses on systems integration, engineering design, development, test, delivery and support of Communications, Navigation, Surveillance (CNS-ATM) systems worldwide. A registered ISO 9001 company, Lockheed Martin Air Traffic Management employs approximately 1,300 people at major facilities in Rockville, Maryland, Eagan, Minnesota, Atlantic City, New Jersey and Southampton, England.

Lockheed Martin, with headquarters in Bethesda, Maryland, is a global enterprise principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation's core businesses are systems integration, space, aeronautics, and technology services.

For additional information, visit the website:http://www.lockheedmartin.com/ .

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