Initial C-5 Upgraded Under The Avionics Modernization Program Makes Its First Flight

The first C-5 Galaxy modified under the C-5 Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) made its first flight Saturday, Dec. 21, from Lockheed Martin's Marietta, Ga., facility several weeks ahead of the planned February 2003 date.

"Our team is excited to begin demonstrating the enhanced capabilities the AMP modification provides," said Blair Marks, Lockheed Martin Strategic Airlift deputy for AMP. "Over the next year, we will introduce additional features of the new automatic flight control system and Global Air Traffic Management-compliant systems, providing a modern avionics suite for the Galaxy fleet."

The combined US Air Force and Lockheed Martin crew took off from Dobbins Air Reserve base at 11:10 a.m. and landed five hours later. The flight consisted of several activities, including demonstration of basic flying qualities and basic navigational system operation, verification of the new primary flight displays and initial exploration of stability augmentation operation.

The C-5B aircraft involved in Saturday's flight, Air Force serial number 85-0004, was inducted into the AMP on June 13, 2002.

"This flight was a significant milestone for the program and we are very pleased to have accomplished this ahead of schedule," said June Shrewsbury, vice president of Lockheed Martin's Strategic Airlift program. "It demonstrated the basic airworthiness of the new avionics suite, and we were able to collect critical flight data to characterize system performance for additional capabilities that will complete development in 2003."

The AMP contract valued at $454 million was awarded to Lockheed Martin in January 1999 and is the first phase of the C-5 modernization program. The initial AMP installations are part of the Engineering and Manufacturing Development (EMD) contract estimated at more than $250 million and include installation of trial kits for two C-5s.

The second phase of the C-5 modernization program is the Reliability Enhancement and Re-engining Program (RERP), which is aimed at increasing fleet availability and reducing total cost of ownership. The contract for the System Development and Demonstration (SDD) phase of the RERP, valued at $1.1 billion, was awarded to Lockheed Martin on Dec. 5, 2001. RERP was determined by the Air Force to be the most cost-effective way to meet its future heavy airlift needs.

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