Lockheed Martin Technology To Help Streamline Air Operations Centers

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has selected Lockheed Martinto help Air Operations Centers (AOCs) manage the flood of routine and tactical information in a battlefield environment.

The $8 million, 54-month award is part of DARPA's Joint Air/Ground operations: Unified Adaptive Re-planning (JAGUAR) program. The JAGUAR research and development effort will help AOCs better deal with the crush of information by using computer-based systems to perform routine functions, such as monitoring and re-planning missions. Currently, an AOC may use 800 inter-service personnel to oversee up to 2,000 air missions per day.

Lockheed Martin's solution, the Plan Understanding and Monitoring Associate (PUMA), is a software package that will use a variety of automated tools to free up the operator. Through the use of intelligent-agent technology, it will automatically monitor mission progress, identify deviations from operational plans, assess the impact of those deviations on the mission, and alert the operator. In addition to making the AOCs more agile and effective, PUMA will reduce by 90 percent the staff required to plan and re-plan missions.

"By automatically monitoring, assessing, and logging routine data, PUMA will let AOC combat operations and planning personnel concentrate almost exclusively on their defining moments: the critical tasks of re-planning to accomplish original missions or redirecting available assets to other missions," said Cindy Kamhieh, Lockheed Martin PUMA program manager.

Through three 18-month phases, PUMA will complete nine spiral development milestones, each culminating in increasingly more difficult evaluation exercises at the U.S. Air Force's Distributed Mission Operations Center at Kirkland Air Force Base, Albuquerque, NM. Lockheed Martin Advanced Technology Laboratories is leading a team that includes Lockheed Martin Mission Systems, Intelligent Software Solutions and the University of Maryland. The Air Force Rome Laboratory will administer the contract.

Headquartered in Bethesda, MD, Lockheed Martin employs about 125,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture and integration of advanced technology systems, products and services.

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