

FAA Using New Lockheed Martin System To Control Oceanic Air Traffic

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Air traffic controllers in New York today are using the Federal Aviation Administration's new system to manage oceanic air traffic. Designed and integrated by Lockheed Martin, the Advanced Technologies and Oceanic Procedures (ATOP) system safely increases the capacity of international air routes and automates the manual tracking processes used previously.

"We are proud of Lockheed Martin's role in helping the FAA get to this historic day -- the beginning of automated control of our oceanic air traffic," said Don Antonucci, president of Lockheed Martin Transportation and Security Solutions. "Together, our team has worked diligently to meet the FAA's challenge to create an oceanic system that provides increased efficiency and oceanic airspace capacity to meet growing international air traffic requirements."

The ATOP system automates the FAA's existing procedures for managing aircraft separation over the oceans, enabling controllers to reduce spacing between aircraft while preserving passenger safety and improving efficiency. When fully deployed, ATOP will manage approximately 80 percent of the world's controlled oceanic airspace, including approximately 24 million square miles over the Atlantic, Pacific and Arctic oceans. Prior to ATOP, oceanic flights were manually guided with the help of paper flight strips, requiring controllers to separate flights by up to 100 miles. When ATOP is fully deployed, aircraft separation requirements for properly equipped aircraft will be reduced to 30 miles, which will allow the FAA to reduce delays, support the use of fuel-efficient routes and accommodate growing international air traffic.

The FAA and Lockheed Martin are also replacing oceanic procedures with ATOP at the Oakland, CA, and Anchorage, AK, centers for the Pacific and Arctic regions, becoming fully operational within the next year.

Supporting Lockheed Martin on the ATOP program are Adacel Inc., supplier of oceanic automation software; Airways Corporation of New Zealand, the first company to apply communications, navigation, surveillance and air traffic management (CNS/ATM) technology developed specifically for the oceanic environment; and Sunhill Corporation, provider of the External Communications Server (ECS), which provides access to external data interfaces.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin employs about 130,000 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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