Lockheed Martin Completes National Deployment Of New Air Traffic Control Capability - Saving Airlines Over $600 Million In Fuel

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Today, air traffic controllers around the country are using new technology developed by Lockheed Martin to safely route aircraft more efficiently, saving airlines flight time and fuel. During the deployment of the advanced air traffic control planning technology, the User Request Evaluation Tool (URET), the Federal Aviation Administration has estimated a savings for carriers of 89.5 million nautical miles or $626.5 million in fuel and operational costs.

The Federal Aviation Administration this summer deployed the URET system at the Miami Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC), the last of 20 en route centers in the nation to start using the new technology. All 20 installations were completed on or ahead of schedule.

URET can determine whether pilot-requested changes in flight plans are free of conflicts with other air traffic. It can evaluate pilots' requests to deviate from their planned routes to avoid adverse weather, assign more direct routing of aircraft and evaluate changes in altitude to take advantage of favorable winds. All this saves time, fuel and money for the airlines and saves travel time for passengers, while helping to ensure safe aircraft separation.

URET also automatically predicts aircraft-to-aircraft conflicts up to 20 minutes in advance, enabling controllers to plan more strategically. Prior to URET, controllers relied on paper flight strips and mental calculations to determine whether a proposed route change would be conflict free. The system also continuously monitors aircraft flight path conformance with its flight plan and issues a controller alert 40 minutes in advance of when an aircraft is predicted to penetrate restricted or prohibited airspace.

"With URET, the FAA has delivered a completely new capability to our nation's air traffic controllers," said Sue Corcoran, vice president of Aviation Solutions for Lockheed Martin Transportation and Security Solutions. "Lockheed Martin is proud to support the FAA by deploying a next generation technology that is already providing measurable returns on investment -- meeting the FAA's goals of becoming a more cost effective organization and increasing airspace availability for its customers."

With jet fuel averaging over $2 a gallon, the airline industry's total fuel expense increased by $10.4 billion between 2004 and 2005, and data for 2006 suggests higher prices this year. "We are pleased that the FAA is deploying new technologies, such as URET, to enable pilots and carriers to get more out of the national air system," said Air Transport Association President and CEO James C. May. "With today's high fuel costs, it is saving an extraordinary amount of money on fuel use alone."

Lockheed Martin was responsible for URET systems engineering, software development, integration and deployment, hardware design and installation, and controller training material, and remains dedicated to system maintenance and user support and adaptation maintenance at all 20 ARTCCs. URET is based on a prototype that was developed by Mitre's Center for Advanced Aviation Systems Development.

Lockheed Martin is now leveraging URET's sophisticated trajectory modeling and flight planning capabilities, along with its basic infrastructure, as a fundamental part of the vital En Route Automation Modernization (ERAM) program. ERAM will redesign and modernize the 40-year Host Computer System, which is the core automation system in the en route environment. Lockheed Martin is on schedule to begin deployment of ERAM in 2008.

Headquartered in Bethesda, MD, Lockheed Martin employs about 140,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services.

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