Lockheed Martin To Transition Mission Assessment Technology Into Military Air Operations Centers

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) awarded Lockheed Martina $2.5-million, 18-month contract to prepare its Plan Understanding and Monitoring Associate (PUMA) for transition into U.S. Air Force Air Operations Centers (AOCs).

The award funds Phase III of DARPA's Joint Air/Ground Operations: Unified Adaptive Re-planning program. The program will help AOCs manage the flood of routine and tactical information in a battlefield environment. A typical AOC may use 800 inter-service personnel to oversee up to 2,000 air missions daily.

Under an earlier phase of the DARPA program, Lockheed Martin Advanced Technology Laboratories (ATL) developed PUMA, a software package that uses automated software tools to help operators deal with the crush of information and to better assess the plans affecting their airspace. As a result, AOCs will see an order of magnitude decrease in the time required for mission assessment and subsequent replanning activities. PUMA will automatically monitor mission progress, identify deviations from the mission, assess the impact of those deviations on the operational plan, and alert operators.

"PUMA will enable continuous-rather than deliberate-planning within AOCs," said John McCormick, ATL PUMA program manager. "As a result, operators can respond more quickly to time-critical events."

For Phase III, ATL will work with the user community to develop and harden particular software features for the final software delivery in late 2008.

ATL leads a team that includes Lockheed Martin Information Systems & Global Services and Intelligent Software Solutions.

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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