Lockheed Martin To Develop Interface To Help Navy Manage Unmanned Vehicles

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The Office of Naval Research awarded Lockheed MartinAdvanced Technology Laboratories (ATL) a $2.4-million, 18-month contract to develop and validate a framework to help small teams of naval operators manage groups of unmanned vehicles through dynamic, complex missions.

Called SUMMIT (Supervision of Unmanned vehicles Mission Management by Interactive Teams), the program will develop a framework for building collaborative displays that allow each operator sitting at a console to access services across all of the ground-control stations. The system's collaboration layer will also allow operators to fluidly share information and tasks while preserving accountability as those tasks pass from one operator to another.

"SUMMIT moves the focus of command and control from vehicle-centric to mission-centric," said Jerry Franke, ATL's SUMMIT principal investigator. "This breaks the stovepipe problem and helps reduce manning requirements. Instead of having each operator locked to one system, SUMMIT supports operator collaboration across the team."

ATL will use its Interaction Design and Engineering for Advanced Systems process to develop SUMMIT. The process supports direct interaction among operational subject matter experts and technologists to produce technical advances tailored to the warfighter. The result will be a fluid and dynamic display environment where operators can adjust their workflows when their tasks increase or decrease. This will help maintain a manageable workload among operators across a broad range of scenarios.

ATL leads a team that includes Lockheed Martin Aeronautics; Lockheed Martin Maritime Sensors and Systems; Lockheed Martin Systems Integration- Owego; and Mission Package Development Laboratory, Naval Surface Warfare Center, Panama City, Fla.

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. The Corporation reported 2007 sales of $41.9 billion.

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