Lockheed Martin Conducts First Flight In U-2 Avionics Tech Refresh

First flight enhances U-2 capabilities needed for the next generation battlespace.

PALMDALE, Calif., Sept. 26, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Lockheed Martin Skunk Works® (NYSE: LMT), in partnership with the U.S. Air Force, completed the first flight of the U-2 Dragon Lady's Avionics Tech Refresh (ATR) program.

The successful first flight tested the new advanced capabilities aboard the U-2 as part of the ATR contract, including:

- An updated avionics suite (communications, navigation, display, etc.) that modernizes the U-2's onboard systems to readily accept and use new technology.
- A new mission computer designed to the U.S. Air Force's open mission systems (OMS) standard that enables the U-2 to integrate with systems across air, space, sea, land and cyber domains at disparate security levels.
- New modern cockpit displays to make pilot tasks easier, while enhancing presentation of the data the aircraft collects to enable faster, better-informed decisions.

During this mission the aircraft successfully performed a low-altitude functional check flight to integrate new avionics, cabling and software.

"The successful first flight of the U-2 Avionics Tech Refresh is a significant moment in our journey to rapidly and affordably field new capabilities," said Sean Thatcher, U-2 Avionics Tech Refresh program manager at Lockheed Martin Skunk Works. "Leveraging the platform's open architecture, we're expediting these capabilities needed for the future Joint All-Domain Operations battlespace."

The ATR first flight marks a milestone in the U-2's modernization efforts and its path to be the first fully OMS-compliant fleet. Further testing will solidify a mature software baseline before mission systems are introduced to ensure both functionality and interoperability to meet operational needs.

The U-2 ATR contract was awarded by the U.S. Air Force in 2020 and valued at $50 million.

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