

Test Management Control System for USAF Update

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Photographs/Prints: Upon Request to the issuer

(*Florence, SC*) SATIS, Inc. (formerly Science Applied Technology) has received a contract to increase the capabilities of the Test Management & Control System (TMACS) project for the United States Air Force, Air Logistics Command (WRALC) at Robins AFB in Warner Robins, Georgia. The first TMACS system upgrade, provided by SATIS and deployed in November of 1998, replaced a complex mainframe database, used by Engineering, Production and Purchasing, to track the performance and status of projects involving vendor-supplied items. The data generated provide the teams with the information needed to produce and maintain high quality and highly reliable components and systems for use in the nation's defense. As many items purchased are unique and must perform under difficult conditions, the ALC use TMACS to insure item compliance with purchase specifications, track costs, track vendor performance and exchange Reports. With thousands of projects to track and hundreds of attributes for each project, the deployment was a good test of the technology.

SATIS, Inc. of Florence, SC designed and implemented the new TMACS system operating from a Web Server and using only a standard browser on the user's desktop to access and maintain TMACS. Due to the efficient architecture-and careful design of the communications protocol-the system speed was increased, the usability of the system improved and the capability of the system enhanced. Using lower-level computer code to access the system database, along with the high-level browser code for the user interface, the training for new users was decreased and system response improved. In addition to desktop access to the database, users may elect to save the formatted data and reports to MS Excel or a text file for further analysis or inclusion into a backend accounting system. Savings to the Command are realized in increased productivity, decreased training, increased data analysis capabilities and lower maintenance costs.

According to Karen Works, Software Development Manager for SATIS, "The TMACS mainframe system was complex from the designer's and user's perspective. Our goal was to make use of the system intuitive; therefore, decreasing the training time and increasing productivity while also improving system response time. This was accomplished using software techniques that were even more complex than the original but presenting the user with a straightforward interface using a standard web browser. The burden of complexity was shifted from the user to the software developer".

The TMACS system utilizes Microsoft's SQL database, Internet Information Server, Index Server and ActiveX technologies. The core software code is written in MS C++ and the user interface was developed using MS InterDev. Layout was performed in MS Front Page and the code is archived in native HTML. Reporting functions were developed using Seagate's Crystal Reports and SATIS' custom controls. TMACS allows authorized users to produce "on-the-fly" Reports using any of the data contained in the database-all from the desktop.

The contract addition expands the scope of TMACS to include digital imaging, report document tracking, and including certain data from an external Oracle database to produce additional computational fields.

The Internet Management Solution (IMS) based on technology utilized for TMACS has considerable applications in the commercial sector. The ability to replace various forms of Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) with a single secure interface for exchange of information has the potential to save companies hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in purchasing costs. Another area of application is the management of remote businesses from a central location. Unlike current e-commerce and management solutions, which tend decrease the paper handling and data entry cost for the initiating party-but place additional burden on the target party- IMS systems cut costs to both parties. In addition, the costly process of setting up and maintaining EDI solutions is greatly reduced for all parties since IMS is setup-once-and-deploy-many.

About Robins Air Force Base, Air Logistics Command, Technology & Sciences Division:

WR-ALC is located in Warner Robins, Georgia, south of Macon, Georgia. WR-ALC was dedicated in 1943 and named in honor of Brigadier General Augustine Warner Robins, one of the Army Air Corps' first General Staff Officers. The base, commanded by Major General Richard N. Goddard, is the largest industrial installation in Georgia. The base employs more than 19,000 persons and has worldwide management and engineering responsibility for the F-15 Eagle, the C-130 Hercules, the C-141 Starlifter, and the C-5 Galaxy. In addition, WR-ALC has worldwide management responsibility for the U-2 Dragon Lady. The Command's general web site is at www.robins.af.mil.

USAF Contact: Office of Public Relations, Robins AFB, Georgia.

USAF TMACS Contact: Contact SATIS, Inc. for approved contacts.

Heritage Digital is a privately held concern located in Florence, South Carolina. The company, specializing in Internet/intranet applications, database, programming and imaging and was established in 1997.