



ETOS Training ribbon-cutting ceremony held at Fort Rucker

September 10, 2003

By: Larry Walker
Sun-Courier Staff Writer

The Enhanced Tower Simulator (ETOS), Fort Rucker's newest suite of simulation systems, was formally introduced recently at Braman Hall with a ribbon-cutting ceremony to kick things off.

Lt. Col. Kevin Bishop, 1st Battalion/13th Aviation Regiment commander, opened the ceremony with a brief description of the new system and introduced the guests for the ceremony.



The official ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Army's newest simulator system, the Enhanced Tower Simulator (ETOS), at Fort Rucker's Braman Hall on August 19th included instructor Sgt. 1st Class Stanley Schmidt, training developer and instructor Colleen Marks, Commander 1st Aviation Brigade Col. Steve Dwyer, ETOS student PFC Walter Abney, Project Manager Combined Arms Tactical Trainers Col. Kevin Noonan, Adacel Systems, Inc. General manager Mark Creasap and prime contractor CSC's P.J. Penny.

Col. Steve Dwyer, 1st Aviation Brigade commander, said he had seen the system in operation in Tunisia about six months ago and was extremely pleased to have the capability finally installed and operational at Fort Rucker.

Project Manager, Combined Arms Tactical Trainers, Col. Kevin Noonan, from the Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation out of Orlando, was on hand for the ceremony and presented two awards.

"This is where the rubber meets the road, or where the rotor blades first start turning," said Noonan. "We are the only army in the world with ETOS."

Noonan then presented Army Achievement Medals to Staff Sgt. David Porter and Sgt. 1st Class Rickey Webb for their outstanding dedication and professionalism in the installation, start-up and testing of the new system at Fort Rucker.

ETOS is the primary trainer for the tower phase of ATC training in the Army, replacing 20-year-old technology. It is being used to train soldiers in initial entry training, the Army National Guard and the Army Reserves on how to safely and expeditiously move aircraft to, from and through designated airspace in a simulated, virtual environment.

ETOS can simulate almost every aircraft in the U.S. military inventory along with civilian commercial aircraft.

With a 210-degree horizontal field of view and a 47-degree vertical view, the ETOS program is the most advanced Army air traffic control simulator in North America.

The ETOS training provided at Fort Rucker can apply to ATC operations at military airfields or civilian airports worldwide.

Assisting Dwyer and Noonan with the ribbon-cutting ceremony were instructor Sgt. 1st Class Stanley Schmidt, training developer and instructor Colleen Marks, ETOS student Pfc. Walter Abney, ADACEL General Manager Mark Creasap and prime contractor CSC's P.J. Penny.

ETOS is a planned replacement for the outdated Data Automated Tower Simulator (DATS), which was first installed in 1992, in the US Army Air Traffic Control School at Fort Rucker.

The mission of the school is two-fold, to train air traffic controllers, aviation operation specialists and reserve forces, thereby preserving the army's aviation enlisted future and to provide total air traffic control training to students coming out of the school-house.

Penny said CSC, as the prime contractor for the project, had overall responsibility for the development of ETOS as a system and the associated system engineering and project management.

Creasap said the technology provided by Adacel, 3-D visualization, voice recognition, all voice control and user preparation tools, form the core of the system and are what makes ETOS the premier system in the world.

The chosen simulator in the \$6 million ETOS program, led by STRICOM (Simulation, Training and Instrumentation Command), is the Adacel MaxSim.

"The features of the new MaxSim system are incredible," said Chief Instructor Master Sergeant Jeffrey Miller, Air Operations Training Committee at the Army Air Traffic Control School. "The synthesized voices of pilots add a definite note of realism previously unavailable, and they are well above the classic robotic-sounding computerized voices. MaxSim's synthesized voice coming back at the controller from the cockpit eliminates the need for human pseudo-pilots to provide those vocal cues to the trainees," he added.