(U//FOUO) Airborne SIGINT Engineering Integrated Product Team - Part II

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(U) Note from SIGINT Communications: This is the conclusion of a two-part article.

(U//FOUO) The ASEIPT has also worked with industry leaders in examining Open System Architecture approaches, which emphasize cross-platform re-usability and interoperability while minimizing non-recurring engineering costs. The unanimous message/theme from industry was the need for a common standardized application interface/middleware to facilitate horizontal integration and interoperability of core SIGINT functions as well as facilitate advanced technology insertion into all platforms.

(U//FOUO) As a first step in defining and developing this common interface, the ASEIPT members agreed to work with the MIDAS (Multi-User Interactive Development and Analysis Software - a portable, networked, interactive environment for software signal processing and analysis) community to integrate MIDAS applications into their systems. Today, MIDAS applications are used sporadically across airborne platforms but are not truly "integrated" into the core SIGINT system(s) (usually they are a QRC/laptop type installation onto the platforms). The ASEIPT is currently formalizing a working relationship with the National Reconnaissance Office's (NRO) MIDAS PMO to jointly develop and demonstrate this common application interface/middleware. The Air Force's Rivet Joint (RC-135) SIGINT aircraft has been designated to be the test platform for this effort in FY-04 and the other airborne SIGINT platforms will be involved during the interface definition and development phase.

(U//FOUO) The lessons learned from the Rivet Joint's integration effort will assist in extending this common application interface/middleware to the other platforms. This migration is expected to reduce the costs of integrating future capabilities and reduce development costs by leveraging off the extensive MIDAS SIGINT functionality (non-proprietary, GOTS applications) and structure already in existence. It is anticipated that the technical interface definitions/descriptions for the application interface will be documented in the community's Joint Airborne SIGINT Architecture (JASA), developed and coordinated for the airborne SIGINT community by NSA's National Tactical Integration Office (NTIO).

(U//FOUO) The ASEIPT also sponsors an airborne SIGINT Technology Conference every year. The purpose of this conference is for the various services/programs to showcase their new capabilities to be available to other airborne platforms within 18 months. The next conference will be held 8-12 December 2003 in Greenville, TX. The point of contact for the conference is [redacted], S141, [redacted].

(U//FOUO) The ASEIPT is striving towards and enabling true collaboration across the tactical airborne SIGINT community with the emphasis on re-usability and interoperability. Together, we can achieve a joint tactical airborne SIGINT environment with the engineering solutions to satisfy today's and tomorrows most pressing requirements.