



## FAA Still Allowing Contractors to Run Amok

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Professional Airways Systems Specialists (PASS) today expressed serious concern about the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) continued indifference toward the product and quality of work being performed by contractors and subcontractors from Harris Corporation, the company now providing Federal Telecommunications Infrastructure (FTI) circuitry and communications for the FAA.

On April 11, an FAA systems specialist from Little Rock spent over an hour helping a Harris subcontractor, NetCo, at the Memphis Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) determine that a modem was in need of replacement in West Helena, Arkansas. Over the course of the next three days, FAA systems specialists spent over 25 hours traveling to West Helena to meet and escort site representatives and contractors. Addressing the problem took considerably more time because contractors did not show up or showed up without the proper equipment. In one instance, the contractor could not even correctly install its own equipment. In the end, the contractor left to find more spare parts and the FAA systems specialist fixed the issue on his own by simply reading the user's manual.

A day before in Fort Worth, Texas, a Harris contractor inadvertently switched circuits causing a reboot of the systems, which resulted in a two-hour outage requiring the use of a backup system while the contractor attempted to resolve its own error.

"These two most recent events prove that the FAA is either unconcerned with the level of efficiency, knowledge and competence these contractors continue to display or they are happy to flush money down the toilet to contractors who have a track record of substandard service," said **Dave Spero, PASS regional vice president**. "No matter how you dice it, these scenarios are troubling and must be addressed immediately."

"Time and again, our systems specialists are cleaning up after the messes created by these contractors. In both of these situations, the FAA's time and money were spent troubleshooting contractors who are completely inept in working with these vital systems," said Tom Brantley, PASS national president. "If the FAA is going to continue to rely on contractors to perform this safety-sensitive work, it must ensure that these companies and individuals are sufficiently trained and able to supply the American flying public with quality work and products."

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*PASS represents more than 11,000 employees of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Department of Defense who install, maintain, support and certify air traffic control and national defense equipment, inspect and oversee the commercial and general aviation industries, develop flight procedures and perform quality analyses of the aviation systems. For more information, visit the PASS website at [www.passnational.org](http://www.passnational.org).*