

Monday, October 27, 2003

Orlando Sentinel

Article Search:

GO

Older than 7 days:

GO

News

Sports

Business

Tourism

Technology

Nation/World

Columnists

Entertainment

Weather

Opinion

Lifestyle

Travel

Multimedia

Corrections

Jobs

Cars

Homes

Apartments

Relocation Guide

General Classifieds

Place a Classified Ad

Announcements

Go to the Pros

Personals

Shopping

Newspaper Ads

Member Services

Maps & Directions

Archive

Subscriber Services

Advertise With Us

Family Fund

Reading by Nine

News in Education

Message Boards

Wireless Edition

Sweepstakes

Feedback

FAQs

ARCHIVE SEARCH

Enter keyword(s):

GO

DETAILED SEARCH

Gazing at the big picture

By Christopher Boyd | Sentinel Staff Writer

Posted October 23, 2003

The economic importance of Florida's modeling, simulation and training industry continues to grow, especially in Orange County where nearly a third of the work force is located, according to a study released Wednesday.

The National Center for Simulation, an Orlando nonprofit organization that represents the industry nationally, commissioned the comprehensive study as part of an effort to safeguard Central Florida's military simulation commands. The project bolstered claims that the region has become the national epicenter for the development of simulation technology.

The study found that Florida now has at least 304 companies in what is known as the MS&T industry, employing 16,041 with a payroll of more than \$1 billion and an average salary \$65,973. Orange County, with its cluster of simulation companies that includes giant Lockheed Martin, had 5,389 MS&T workers.

"We knew there was a lot of simulation business in the Orlando area, but we were surprised at the number of companies scattered throughout the state," said Guy Hagen, president of Innovation Insight, the company that collected the data.

Much of the industry in Central Florida has grown around the Navy's NAVAIR Orlando Training Systems Division and the Army's Program Executive Office, Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEO STRI) units. Both develop and procure simulation systems used to train troops.

Russ Hauck, the NCS's executive director, said the study will be useful in arguing that the NAVAIR, PEO STRI and several other military procurement divisions in Central Florida ought to remain as the Pentagon mulls further military base closures and consolidations.

But Hauck said the analysis is the first carefully crafted effort to quantify the industry, which consists of an assortment of occupational categories. The difficulty in identifying MS&T jobs has led to a wide range of employment estimates for the sector. Hauck said the survey will help clarify the size of the industry.

"It will be useful in figuring out how to further grow the industry," Hauck said. "We need to get a better feel for where the companies are and what they are doing."

Hagen said the study focused exclusively on core jobs such as research, development and engineering positions. He said that adding support positions would probably raise the employment number. The study estimates that there are more than 63,000 jobs directly or indirectly tied to MS&T.

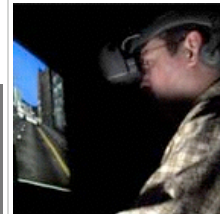
Christopher Boyd can be reached at cboyd@orlandosentinel.com or 407-420-5723.

Copyright © 2003, [Orlando Sentinel](http://Orlando.Sentinel)

 Email this story to a friend

 Printer friendly version

PHOTOS



Jason Simpkins of Veridian's Defense Modeling and Simulation Department. (HILDA M. PEREZ/ORLANDO SENTINEL)
Oct 23, 2003