

# Prescott Valley may get flight services contract

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PRESCOTT VALLEY - Prescott Valley has been selected as one of three hubs to provide in-flight services for general aviation flights throughout the country, town officials said Wednesday.

A contract is expected to be officially awarded to Lockheed Martin Corp. next week to provide the services, which will begin Oct. 1.

Kevin Harrington, air traffic manager at Prescott's Love Field, said Lockheed's move into the area will mean an additional 150 to 200 jobs.

Prescott Valley will serve pilot needs in the western third of the country. Fort Worth will handle the Midwest and Leesburg, Va., the East, Harrington said.

The jobs in Prescott Valley will pay an average of \$75,000 a year and the company will locate in a 50,000-square-foot building in Big Sky Business Center, said Gary Marks, executive director of the Prescott Valley Economic Development Foundation.

"This is a great thing not only for Prescott Valley, but the entire state of Arizona," Marks said.

Tom Greer, a spokesman for Lockheed Martin, said he could not comment on entering the Prescott Valley market until the contract was officially awarded.

Congress decided several years ago to privatize in-flight services, a function currently being conducted by the Federal Aviation Administration, for general aviation flights. Those services include compiling flight plans, providing weather information, helping pilots make safe landings and assisting in search and rescue missions.

"We currently have equipment at the FAA that's vintage 1970s, and this will be a huge upgrade in technology," Harrington said.

Harrington said that about 40 FAA workers currently work in that role at Love Field and that some of them have accepted job offers from Lockheed Martin.

Other workers have transferred to new jobs within the federal government, he said.