



# TRAILBLAZER

Carla Flor Forges Pathway  
for More Women in Aviation

FEBRUARY 2013

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## ◀ STACO SYSTEMS

AEA Member Rolls Out New Light Plates, Switches

# AVIONICS

## FEBRUARY 2013 NEWS

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# Staco Systems Rolls Out New Light Plates, Switches

STORY BY CHRISTINE KNAUER

As Staco Systems of Irvine, Calif., kicks off its 55th year in business, it continues to innovate bright solutions for aviation, military and industrial applications. In February, the company, which specializes in switches, keyboards and sub-systems, is introducing a new type of light plate.

Recently patented, the night vision-compatible, next-generation light plate resists scratching, chipping, and wear and tear common with painted light plate surfaces, solving the issue of illegible legends and light leakage.

Traditional light plates use embedded lights under a clear plastic sheet covered with two layers of paint, typically a white base layer and an opaque surface color coat. In the dark, the lights underneath, which can be incandescent lamps, electroluminescent panels or light emitting diodes, illuminate the panel markings engraved or lasered through the color coat to the white base layer.

“Staco Systems’ new patented manufacturing process

improves both the optics and the wear resistance of the panel,” said Bruce Gray, president of Staco Systems. “It can’t be scratched to expose light. We back that with a lifetime warranty.”

Next month, the company plans to roll out its Series 300 Half Switch, the smallest two-

pole illuminated switch on the market, according to Gray. The S300 evolves the company’s Series 200 Ultra-Compact (it measures less than 1 inch), four-pole LED switch that was introduced a year ago.

The Ultra-Compact Half

Switch provides a two-pole switch in a small form factor, offers long-life durability of 1 million cycles and is NVIS compatible.

Staco Systems’ switches are used in a variety of applications, including commercial aircraft, military tanks, ground vehicles and aircraft, naval systems, launch controls, submarine controls, specialty vehicles, and industrial equipment and control systems.



WEBSITE: [www.stacosystems.com](http://www.stacosystems.com)

EMAIL: [sales@stacosystems.com](mailto:sales@stacosystems.com)

FACILITIES: 42,000 square feet

**WHAT THEY DO:**

Staco Systems designs and manufactures switches, keyboards and sub-systems for aerospace, defense and industrial applications.

EMPLOYEES: 65

FOUNDED: 1958

AEA MEMBER SINCE: 2012



**ABOVE:** Production supervisor Lucina Hernandez handles the final assembly of a customer's sub-systems product.  
**OPPOSITE PAGE:** Staco Systems launches its new Series 300 Half Switch in March.

In addition to its new light plate and a line of lighted pushbutton switches, Staco Systems designs and manufactures ruggedized keyboards and keypads, as well as sub-systems engineered and built to customers' specifications.

"We tend to concentrate on product applications that are technically demanding or subject to very harsh environmental conditions," Gray said.

### **55 Years of Experience**

In 1958, the company began as Staco Switch, manufacturing lighted pushbutton switches for aircraft.

Staco's small manufacturing and assembly team created the first Series 30 switch, which was used in a Fokker F-27 in 1960. In 2006, the company expanded into sub-systems and ruggedized keyboards, gaining customers in more markets and more industries worldwide.

Today, Staco Systems' engineering, testing, manufacturing, quality control and sales teams share space under one roof at the company's California headquarters and maintain sales representatives in more than 35 countries, enabling better customer service.

*Continued on following page*



**LEFT:** Assembly technician Loc Bui performs final assembly testing on a custom rugged keyboard.

**BELOW:** In February, Staco Systems introduced its next-generation, wear-resistant light plate.

**BOTTOM LEFT:** Staco Systems designed this Laser Arming Control Panel from the ground up for a customer. The sub-system controls moving map displays and a high-resolution imagery recorder system used for surveillance and targeting in defense/military, airborne law enforcement, and rescue aircraft.

## STACO SYSTEMS

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“In 2006, we began an aggressive campaign to expand our patent portfolio in the areas of lighting and miniaturization,” Gray said. “We have become particularly adept at finding product niches within the aerospace industry that can benefit from the application of newer technologies.”

For customers who need it, Staco’s engineering department offers full development resources for complex electro-mechanical sub-assemblies, including design engineering, prototyping and design-test services.

“Our sub-assemblies are custom-designed or build-



to-print for a multitude of customer applications and environments,” Gray said. “They range from pilot-operated accessory control panels in a laptop docking station for production of commercial jetliners to an environmental control systems management panel for Medivac helicopters, a ruggedized bridge propulsion engine control modules for naval ships and multiple sub-systems that are integrated into complex surveillance and weaponry systems for the airborne military.”

The company’s products meet strict industry, military and supplier standards and certifications, including AS9100, DO-160 and military specifications.

As Staco Systems celebrates 55 years in business, the company continues to press forward, bringing new technology to the cockpit of today’s aircraft, tanks, submarines and ground vehicles.

“We continue to invest in new technology development, particularly in the areas of optics, weight reduction and miniaturization,” Gray said. “Many categories of aerospace products have been bypassed by technical advances in the fields of optics and material sciences; this represents an area of major opportunity and future investment for us.” □

