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SYSTEM OPERATION TEST FACILITATING PROGRAM AND METHOD

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

BE IT KNOWN THAT (1) KIM E. BELENGER, (2) JAMES R. GANNON, (3) MARYELLEN DOHERTY, AND (4) DENNIS K. BRUCE, employees of the United States Government, and (5) THOMAS FILIBERTO and (6) JOHN L. LEHET, citizens of the United States of America, and residents of (1) North Dighton, County of Bristol, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, (2) Coventry, County of Washington, State of Rhode Island, (3) Middletown, County of Newport, State of Rhode Island, (4) Berkley, County of Bristol, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, (5) Wakefield, County of Washington, State of Rhode Island, and (6) Waterford, County of New London, State of Connecticut, have invented certain new and useful improvements entitled as set forth above of which the following is a specification.

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DATE OF SIGNATURE

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2  
3 SYSTEM OPERATION TEST FACILITATING PROGRAM AND METHOD

4  
5 STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT INTEREST

6 The invention described herein may be manufactured and used  
7 by or for the Government of the United States of America for  
8 Governmental purposes without the payment of any royalties  
9 thereon or therefore.  
10

11 CROSS REFERENCE TO OTHER PATENT APPLICATIONS

12 This patent application is co-pending with one related  
13 patent applications entitled FUNCTIONAL ELEMENT TEST TOOL AND  
14 METHOD, Patent Application Serial No. 09/898,714, filed 3 July  
15 2001.  
16

17 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

18 (1) Field of the Invention

19 The present invention relates generally to development and  
20 testing of a software module for operation within large software  
21 systems and, more specifically, to a system operation test  
22 facilitating program operable for providing a stand alone system  
23 operation test tool that simulates a plurality of computer

1 programs as seen by the aforesaid software module being  
2 developed, that form the software environment in which the  
3 software module being developed will eventually operate. That  
4 is to say, the test facilitating program is a simulator of the  
5 large software system.

6 (2) Description of the Prior Art

7 Large-scale hardware and software systems and applications  
8 may typically include many different interrelated functional  
9 elements or software modules that may each comprise one or more  
10 computer programs. The various functional elements or modules  
11 of the system may need to be developed concurrently to form an  
12 overall system to save the cost and problems that occur if the  
13 functional elements are developed sequentially. Due to the  
14 complexity of the system, there is a risk that when a functional  
15 element and the overall system are eventually developed that the  
16 functional element will not integrate as expected into the  
17 overall system. It would be desirable to somehow reduce the  
18 risk of system component integration problems without the need  
19 to stop concurrent development of the various functional  
20 elements.

21 The present invention may be used in conjunction with the  
22 software disclosed in the hereinabove referenced related co-  
23 pending U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/898,714, and

1 everything in that co-pending application related to the sensor  
2 performance prediction functional segment (SPPFS) of the AN/SQQ-  
3 89(V)15 anti-submarine warfare computer program, or related to  
4 the common interprocessor communication (IPC) protocol, or  
5 related to the common object request broker architecture (COBRA)  
6 bridge ins hereby incorporated by reference.

7 As used herein, a functional element is a software module  
8 which performs a unique software task and which may have  
9 multiple interfaces with other functional elements and/or with  
10 an application comprised of numerous functional elements and/or  
11 with an overall system comprised of a plurality of applications.  
12 In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, the  
13 functional element performs one or more tasks which may utilize  
14 an inter-task interface or module-to-module communication  
15 protocol or mechanism. Each functional element may have  
16 multiple interfaces. The interface sets forth constraints on  
17 formats, timing, and/or other factors required by an interaction  
18 of functional elements that perform different tasks within a  
19 computer system.

20 The following patents describe various types of simulators  
21 that have been developed in the past.

22 U.S. Patent No. 4,192,082, issued March 11, 1980, to Deaton  
23 et al., discloses an electronic warfare simulator that is used

1 to teach students how to operate passive electronic warfare  
2 equipment. A computer produces simulated radar signals that  
3 duplicate the characteristics of real world radar emitters.  
4 These characteristic signals are input to a plurality of pulse  
5 generators and mixers which act upon the signals and stimulate a  
6 pulse analyzer in order for the pulse analyzer to realistically  
7 activate electronic warfare equipment.

8 U.S. Patent No. 5,474,454, issued December 12, 1995, to  
9 Knapp et al., discloses a system for simulating own ship sensor  
10 outputs for submarine trainers. The system is comprised of five  
11 personal computer systems operating together. These computers  
12 are interconnected such that the individual computers can  
13 exchange data and function as one integrated unit. The system  
14 provides sensor output to an external trainer through multiple  
15 I/O cards. The system also accepts trainer inputs on these  
16 lines. Software modules on the personal computer systems allow  
17 the operator to configure and monitor the sensor systems as well  
18 as providing processing of inputs received at multiple sources  
19 to generate a coherent output signal.

20 U.S. Patent No. 5,551,875, issued September 3, 1996, to  
21 Shaffer et al., discloses a land based launch tube control panel  
22 testing and training system for a submarine's launcher that  
23 interconnects with a launch tube control panel from a submarine

1 to simulate the operation of a submarine weapons launching  
2 system to allow for launch tube control panel operational  
3 testing and training of operator and maintenance personnel  
4 training. In a simulation mode, a submarine weapons launch tube  
5 control panel tester and trainer is responsive to weapons launch  
6 system control data signals received from the launch tube  
7 control panel, for transmitting to the launch tube control panel  
8 weapons launching system operational data signals having a  
9 predetermined data type and data value which are a function of  
10 the received weapons launching system control data signals. In  
11 the training and maintenance mode, the submarine weapons launch  
12 tube control panel tester and trainer can provide predetermined  
13 fault simulations to allow the training of maintenance  
14 personnel, as well as test signals which can be utilized to  
15 exercise and verify the operability of a tube control panel.

16 U.S. Patent No. 5,591,031, issued January 7, 1997, to Monk  
17 et al., discloses a missile simulator training apparatus for  
18 pilot training of an aircraft of the type having at least one  
19 missile station and including a pre-launch module for  
20 substantially simulating the pre-launch functions of a missile  
21 in response to data received from the aircraft. The apparatus  
22 also includes an inert factor formed missile body, thereby  
23 providing the apparatus with static and aerodynamic loads

1 equivalent to that of an actual missile. The apparatus further  
2 includes a data link and data capture module for recording all  
3 data transactions between the apparatus and the aircraft for  
4 post-flight analysis of aircraft and pilot performance.

5 U.S. Patent No. 5,969,835, issued October 19, 1999, to  
6 Kamieniecki et al., discloses an automated signal generator  
7 apparatus that allows testing of remotely-controlled electronic  
8 devices to verify functionality and reliability, or for product  
9 set-up, initialization or configuration. The apparatus  
10 simulates a person pressing the keys on a remote control keypad,  
11 and can simulate key press sequences, key press duration, and  
12 time between key presses. Other human interfaces may also be  
13 simulated. The apparatus can be continuously driven by an  
14 external computer in a slaved mode, or can store test  
15 instructions in an internal memory to operate in a standalone  
16 mode. Test instructions, which may be written in a macro script  
17 language, are processed by a microprocessor to provide a control  
18 signal to, e.g., an infrared (IR) transmitter. The IR  
19 transmitter can control one or more electronic devices which are  
20 under test. The transmitter may use a wide-angle IR beam, or a  
21 plurality of separate transmitters for testing of a plurality of  
22 electronic devices at the same time. In a human learning mode,



1 control signals from a human interface are processed to provide  
2 time compression or repetition of a fixed control sequence.

3 The above cited prior art does not provide a means for  
4 verifying that a software functional element will suitably  
5 integrate within an overall software system comprising a  
6 plurality of computer programs that are still under development.  
7 Consequently, there remains a long felt but unsolved need for  
8 improved software functional element development tools to insure  
9 reliable integration thereof into a complex software system that  
10 is developed concurrently with the software functional element.  
11 Those skilled in the art will appreciate that the present  
12 invention addresses the above and other problems.

13

14

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

15 Accordingly, it is an object of the present invention to  
16 provide an improved system and method for developing and/or  
17 testing a functional element of a computer software system to  
18 improve reliability of integration of the functional element  
19 into the overall computer software system.

20 Another object of the present invention is to provide more  
21 reliable integration of a functional element being developed  
22 into a software system that is being developed concurrently.

1        Still another object is to provide a system and method as  
2        aforesaid which provides a controlled test environment to test  
3        operation of a functional element with respect to integration  
4        with other functional elements of an overall system that are  
5        being developed concurrently.

6        A further object is to provide a system and method as  
7        aforesaid which simulates a plurality of programs as seen by the  
8        functional element being developed.

9        A still further object is to provide a system and method as  
10       aforesaid that can facilitate off-line quantitative analysis of  
11       the test results and collected data.

12       Yet another object is to provide a system and method which  
13       enables software development in a manner to reduce the overall  
14       number of defects that occur during the development phase.

15       These and other objects, features, and advantages of the  
16       present invention will become apparent from the drawings, the  
17       descriptions given herein, and the appended claims. However, it  
18       will be understood that above listed objects and advantages of  
19       the invention are intended only as an aid in understanding  
20       aspects of the invention, are not intended to limit the  
21       invention in any way, and do not form a comprehensive list of  
22       objects, features, and advantages.

1           In accordance with the present invention, a test  
2     facilitating computer program product is provided for simulating  
3     a plurality of interrelated computer programs and associated  
4     software interfaces that comprise an overall computer system as  
5     seen by a functional software element. The test facilitating  
6     computer program product is operable to simulate computer  
7     messages between the plurality of interrelated computer programs  
8     and the functional software element through one or more internal  
9     interfaces of the functional software element.

10           The invention may comprise one or more elements such as,  
11     for instance, one or more external software interface simulating  
12     modules which simulate preselected messages that issue from the  
13     associated software interfaces of the plurality of interrelated  
14     computer programs to the internal interfaces of the functional  
15     software element. The software external interface simulating  
16     modules are operable for simulating interface message receipt  
17     and transmission from the plurality of interrelated computer  
18     programs from and to the functional software element through the  
19     internal interfaces of the functional software element.

20           The test facilitating computer program product may comprise  
21     a message collector and storage operatively associated with the  
22     software external interface simulating modules to facilitate off  
23     line analysis of performance of the functional software element

1 and/or an input to enable a user of the test facilitating  
2 computer program product to preselect messages which a  
3 respective of the plurality of interrelated computer programs  
4 will transmit to the functional software element to exercise a  
5 capability of the functional software element to thereby  
6 validate performance and accuracy of the functional software  
7 element. An example of such a functional software element is  
8 sensor performance prediction functional segment (SPPFS) which  
9 performs forecasting and analysis of different acoustic signal  
10 propagation models used in AEGIS weapon system combat control.

11 In one embodiment, the test facilitating computer program  
12 product is operable for simulating an AN/SQQ-89(V)15  
13 antisubmarine warfare (ASW) warfare computer system program as  
14 seen by the functional software element. More specifically, the  
15 software external interface simulating modules are operable to  
16 simulate interface functions as executed by the functional  
17 software element of an acoustic sensor functional segment  
18 (ASFS), a common systems services functional segment (CSSFS), a  
19 light airborne multipurpose system (LAMPS) sonobuoy functional  
20 segment (LSFS), a undersea warfare control functional segment  
21 (UCFS), and a computer aided dead reckoning tracer support  
22 segment (CADRT).

1           In operation, a method is provided for development of a  
2 functional software element for operation with a plurality of  
3 computer programs which may communicate utilizing a common  
4 interprocessor communication (IPC) protocol. The method may  
5 comprise one or more steps such as, for instance, developing a  
6 test facilitating computer program product which simulates  
7 operation of the plurality of computer programs as seen  
8 by the functional software element and/or using the test  
9 facilitating computer program product to test the functional  
10 software element undergoing development.

11           The method may comprise providing one or more simulated  
12 external software interfaces which simulate external interface  
13 functions of the plurality of computer programs with respect to  
14 the functional software element and/or storing messages sent  
15 between the plurality of simulated external software interfaces  
16 of the test facilitating computer program product and the  
17 internal interfaces of the functional software element.

18           Other steps may comprise displaying messages sent between  
19 the plurality of simulated external software interfaces of the  
20 test facilitating computer program product and the internal  
21 interfaces of the functional software element and/or displaying  
22 a software control panel for operation of the test facilitating  
23 computer program and/or utilizing the software control panel to

1 select a plurality of simulated messages for transmission to the  
2 functional software element.

3       The method may comprise utilizing the software control  
4 panel to start a scenario which automatically sends a plurality  
5 of preselected simulated messages to the functional software  
6 element and stimulates production of a plurality of messages by  
7 the functional software element. The method may comprise  
8 sending simulated data, such as acoustic array data that may be  
9 stored in one or more files, in response to a request for the  
10 data by the functional software element. The software control  
11 panel may also be utilized to monitor messages sent to, received  
12 from, or requested by the functional software element during the  
13 scenario.

14       In another embodiment, a method is provided for developing  
15 a software functional element that integrates with a plurality  
16 of other software functional elements to comprise an overall  
17 software system whereby the plurality of other software  
18 functional elements are simultaneously being developed. The  
19 method may comprise steps such as developing a test facilitating  
20 computer program product which simulates operation of the  
21 plurality of computer programs as seen by the functional  
22 software element and developing one or more simulated external

1 software interfaces for interfacing between the software  
2 functional element and the plurality of computer programs.  
3 Other steps may comprise storing files containing messages  
4 to be sent to the software functional element from the plurality  
5 of computer programs utilizing the simulated external software  
6 interfaces and/or monitoring messages sent from and received by  
7 the simulated external software interfaces and/or displaying  
8 errors due to incorrect transmission or receipt of messages  
9 between the software functional element and the simulated  
10 external software interfaces and/or displaying a computer  
11 control panel on a computer screen for controlling the test  
12 facilitating computer program product.

13

#### 14 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

15 A more complete understanding of the invention and many of  
16 the attendant advantages thereto will be readily appreciated as  
17 the same becomes better understood by reference to the following  
18 detailed description when considered in conjunction with the  
19 accompanying drawings wherein corresponding reference characters  
20 indicate corresponding parts throughout several views of the  
21 drawings and wherein:

1        FIG. 1 is a schematic which shows a system operation test  
2        facilitating program for use in testing a functional element in  
3        accord with the present invention; and

4        FIG. 2 is a representative embodiment of a computer display  
5        of a control panel for operating the system operation test  
6        facilitating program of FIG. 1 in accord with the present  
7        invention.

#### 8 9                    ONE OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

10       Referring now to the drawings and, more specifically to  
11       FIG. 1, there is shown a schematic of test facilitating system  
12       10 that comprises a test facilitating program 12 (i.e., the  
13       components within the bounds of the dashed line), which may be  
14       referred to herein as SYSOP 12, that acts to simulate the system  
15       environment in which functional element 14 (the solid line  
16       blocks and associated internal interfaces represented by  
17       inwardly pointing arrowheads touching the block) will be the  
18       object of integration testing. SYSOP 12 provides a stand-alone  
19       system operation function (SYSOP) to effectively simulate the  
20       overall software system as seen by the functional element 14.  
21       The overall software system simulated by SYSOP 12, in a  
22       presently preferred embodiment, may be the AN/SQQ-89(V) 15 system  
23       computer program for use in submarines. The AN/SQQ-89(V) 15 is a



1 sonar-based anti-submarine warfare (ASW) computer program. The  
2 AN/SQQ-89(V)15 computer system program may, at the present time,  
3 have eighty-nine functional elements, wherein each functional  
4 element comprises one or more computer programs, some of which  
5 are discussed herein. However, the present invention could be  
6 utilized generally for developing other large computer systems  
7 which include a plurality of functional elements and associated  
8 computer programs to be simulated by test faciliating program 12  
9 and other functional elements 14. Functional element 14 is a  
10 component element of ASW computer program AN/SQQ-89(V)15 which  
11 is the object of the testing of reliability of its integration  
12 into the AN/SQQ-89(V)15. For purposes of illustration of the  
13 invention a sensor performance prediction segment (SPPFS), which  
14 is one of the eighty-nine functional elements of the AN/SQQ-  
15 89(V)15 is shown in FIG. 1 and is the nominal functional element  
16 14 discussed in the description of this invention. Briefly,  
17 SPPFS performs forecasting and analysis of different underwater  
18 signal propagation models.

19 In accord with the methods of the present invention for  
20 developing software, the AN/SQQ-89 (V) 15 is to be developed  
21 concurrently at the same time SPPFS functional element 14 is  
22 being developed and therefore is not presently available for use  
23 in developing SPPFS functional element 14. SYSOP 12 may be

1 utilized to simulate the AN/SQQ-89 (V) 15 computer system  
2 program and therefore provide an environment to verify operation  
3 of functional element 14 as required for development purposes.

4 SPPFS Functional element 14 may have multiple interfaces  
5 with software programs of an integrated system of AEGIS weapon  
6 system AWS equipment digital processors. Thus, the SPPFS and  
7 the AN/SQQ-89(V)15 are programs/actual processors that are being  
8 developed. SYSOP 12 comprises the present invention and  
9 operates with SPPFS functional element 14 as a simulator of the  
10 AN/SQQ-89(V)15 computer system program.

11 Thus, SYSOP 12 provides the equivalent as seen by SPPFS  
12 functional element 14 of various components of the AN/SQQ-  
13 89(V)15 sonar-based antisubmarine warfare computer system  
14 program and provides an independent test environment for the  
15 entire SPPFS system. SYSOP 12 functionally simulates all SPPFS  
16 functional element 14 external interfaces, thereby providing the  
17 ability to record, accept, and respond to all SPPFS external  
18 messages as well as generate input messages to SPPFS. The  
19 operation may be monitored, and an operator may generate input  
20 messages, as indicated in control panel 100 for controlling  
21 software programs shown in FIG. 2. Control panel 100 is of a  
22 conventional type providing a computer screen-based display and  
23 enabling interactive operator control of operation of software

1 computer programs by means the operator pointing and clicking a  
2 computer mouse relative to a computer monitor display showing  
3 dialog boxes and buttons. Input and/or response messages can be  
4 either manually input from SYSOP 12 displays or automatically  
5 produced from a data file in accord with a scenario of  
6 operation.

7 For example, via SYSOP 12, the operator has the ability to  
8 initiate a simulation of a drop of an expendable  
9 bathythermograph (XBT) buoy and control the contents of the XBT  
10 data. This is sent to functional element 14, in this case  
11 SPPFS, and the performance of SPPFS is assessed by collecting  
12 relevant messages and data. An example of the automatic  
13 response of SYSOP 12 occurs when SPPFS requests active array  
14 background (AAB) data from the submarine hull segment. SYSOP 12  
15 can be set up to automatically respond to this request with pre-  
16 determined data. The corresponding SYSOP 12 interface is  
17 emulated to perform as the actual interface would.

18 The SPPFS Functional element 14 may comprise one or more  
19 internal software interfaces 16, 18, 20, 22, and 24. These  
20 internal software interfaces may be utilized to communicate with  
21 one or more external software interfaces 26, 28, 30, 32, and 34  
22 of SYSOP 12. Thus, interfaces 26-34 of SYSOP 12 emulate the  
23 actual interfaces of the AN/SQQ-89(V)15 computer system program.

1           In a presently preferred embodiment, communications may be  
2 made through a single type of interface which may be referred to  
3 as a common object request broker architecture (CORBA) bridge.  
4 This type of interface is conventional and well known. Software  
5 interfaces 16-34 are preferably interfaces of this type that  
6 permit different software modules to communicate with each  
7 other. Software interfaces 16-34 may utilize a common  
8 interprocessor communication (IPC) protocol relating to timing,  
9 status, data software registers, control signals, memory  
10 locations, data transfer rates, and so forth. A number of such  
11 IPC protocols are within the knowledge of those having skill in  
12 the art, from which a selection may be made.

13           In the present embodiment, SYSOP 12 simulates the AN/SQQ-  
14 89(V)15 to/from acoustic sensor functional segment (ASFS) 36,  
15 LAMPS sonobuoy functional segment (LSFS) 38, common system  
16 services functional segment (CSSFS) 40, computer aided dead  
17 reckoning table (CADRT) 42, and undersea warfare control  
18 functional segment (UCFS) 44 as indicated in FIG. 1.

19           SYSOP 12 facilitates system level testing of SPPFS  
20 functional element 14 independent of the actual AN/SQQ-89(V)15  
21 computer program system. In addition, SYSOP 12 provides a  
22 controlled test environment that will facilitate off-line data  
23 analysis of the test results and collected data. Finally, SYSOP

1 12 provides a good pre-integration risk mitigation test  
2 environment. SYSOP 12 provides simulated outputs/inputs needing  
3 to be present at the interfaces of the AN/SQQ-89(V)15 warfare  
4 system computer program external to the SPPFS for conducting  
5 integration tests of the SPPFS functional element thereof, and  
6 the outputs/inputs needing to be present at the interfaces  
7 internal to the SPPFS in order to validate the SPPFS system  
8 operation and data processing.

9 Acoustic sensor functional segment or ASFS 36 may comprise  
10 several computer programs such as control and display computer  
11 program(CDCP) 46, track manager computer program(TMCP) 48, and  
12 hull signal processing computer program(HSPC) 50. For operation  
13 with ASFS 36, SYSOP 12 may be utilized to send and/or receive  
14 and/or respond to various messages.

15 For instance, referring to FIG. 2, by selecting button 102,  
16 a control message presently labeled as MCDCP6001, is to be used  
17 with CDCP 46, and may be sent by an operator utilizing control  
18 panel 100. A corresponding message 104 may be shown in message  
19 log window 106 in response thereto. The message may also be  
20 sent automatically at specified time periods and/or in response  
21 to certain events that may be set up by the operator and/or  
22 initiated by pressing start scenario button 110. The messages  
23 may come from various sources during a scenario execution such

1 as a user provided data file, a default SYSOP 12 data file, or  
2 may be derived from scenario setup parameters for ASFS 36. If  
3 in the case a data file is selected, then SYSOP 12 reads the  
4 data file prior to message transmission to receive the contents  
5 of the message. SYSOP 12 stores the status and timing  
6 information in a scenario log file. If the message transmission  
7 fails, then the operator may be alerted such as through an  
8 indication in message log window 106 and/or window 108. The  
9 various times of sending/receipt of messages may be recorded as  
10 desired for review, analysis, playback, and the like.

11 All messages may be monitored, collected, and stored in a  
12 memory such as, for example memory 60, along with timing,  
13 status, and/or other related information for archiving,  
14 playback, analysis, and/or other functions. While memory 60 is  
15 shown as a separate memory, storage for memory 60 may be  
16 incorporated in the memory utilized for storing various  
17 functional elements such as CADRT 42, ASFS 36, LSFS 38, CSSFS  
18 40, and UCFS 44.

19 Likewise, SYSOP 12 may perform similar functions concerning  
20 other messages such as active array background (AAB) data  
21 message that may be referred to as MHSPC6000 AAB DTA, as  
22 indicated by button 112 in panel 100 of FIG. 2. This message  
23 may be sent to hull signal processing computer program (HSPC)

1 50. Thus, this information may comprise data, such as  
2 background signal data, that is received from a simulated active  
3 array of sensors and may be sent automatically to SPPFS  
4 functional element 14 in response to a request from SPPFS for  
5 this information. The message would be logged as indicated at  
6 114 in message log window 106.

7 As another example, bottom depth/sound speeds data message,  
8 which may be referred to as MSIMA0401 may be sent between SYSOP  
9 12 and track manager computer program (TMCP) 48 as indicated at  
10 116 and 118. As yet another example, an in-use mode waveform  
11 definition message, which may be called, MTMCP7011 as indicated  
12 at 120 and 122 may be sent to TMCP 48 as desired and may be  
13 recorded, read from different sources, stored with timing and  
14 status, and/or provided with means to determine the successful  
15 operation in response thereto as discussed above.

16 As indicated above, start scenario button 110 may be  
17 utilized to automatically send/receive/respond to various  
18 messages between SYSOP 12 and SPPFS functional element 14. Stop  
19 scenario button 124 may be utilized to stop the test at any  
20 time. If manual commands are desired, then manual control  
21 portion as indicated at 126 may be utilized with buttons  
22 therebelow. Groups of buttons may correspond to various  
23 components of SYSOP 12 that would operate with SPPFS function

1 element 14. For instance, button group 128 may comprise buttons  
2 that send messages to UCFS 44 as indicated at 130. Undersea  
3 warfare control functional segment or UCFS 44 may be comprised  
4 of computer programs such as display and control computer  
5 program (DCCP) 52 and fire control computer program (FCCP) 54.  
6 This section may include various commands such as an environment  
7 data request, an expendable bathythermograph data request,  
8 sonobuoy data request, a counter data request, and the like.

9 Likewise, button group 132 may be utilized to send messages  
10 to other elements of SYSOP 12 such as to common system services  
11 function (CSSFS) 40 as indicated at 134 that may comprise  
12 interface processing computer program (IFCP) 56. Messages may  
13 include navigation data, wind data, depth data, expendable  
14 bathythermograph raw data, environmental data, predicted  
15 acoustic coverage, probe type, predicted sonobuoy coverage,  
16 display status, and the like. Again, the messages can be  
17 generated from numerous sources such as data files, stored with  
18 timing and status signals, and/or the system can be notified of  
19 message failures.

20 As another example, one or more buttons 136 may be utilized  
21 in conjunction with sending messages to LAMPS sonobuoy  
22 functional segment or LSFS 38 which includes interface



1 processing computer program or IFCP 58. Messages may include  
2 bathothernograph BT data file table data.

3 Thus, in operation of the present invention, a first test  
4 facilitating program such as SYSOP 12 is provided for simulating  
5 an overall computer system that may be utilized in the creation  
6 of a second program such as functional element 14 which may for  
7 illustrative purposes comprise, a sensor performance prediction  
8 functional segment or SPPFS. SYSOP 12 will comprise one or more  
9 software interfaces, such as software interfaces 26-34, that are  
10 external interfaces with respect to functional element 14. The  
11 actual overall computer system, such as an AN/SQQ-89(V) 15  
12 computer system is not required. SPPFS Functional element 14  
13 will preferably comprise internal software interfaces such as  
14 one or more software interfaces 16-24. SYSOP 12 will be  
15 operable for simulating the various computer programs or groups  
16 of computer programs in the overall computer system, as well as  
17 their interfaces, as would be seen by SPPFS functional element  
18 14. SYSOP 12 will therefore be operable to send/receive/respond  
19 to various types of messages, such as control signals, data  
20 files, definitions, and other types of information as would be  
21 transferred therebetween. The messages or signals can be  
22 recorded, archived, and played back. The system may include  
23 means for converting existing archived tapes of data and/or

1 information into a format for use with the AN/SQQ-89(V)15 system  
2 program whereby functional element 14 may be tested with actual  
3 data and/or information of the types required. For instance,  
4 functional element 14 may request data such as data from an  
5 active array. SYSOP 12 will then automatically respond, just as  
6 would the AN/SQQ-89(V)15 system program by sending the prepared  
7 or simulated data to functional element 14.

8 Quality software can be developed in less time and with  
9 fewer overall defects due to the use of SYSOP 12 during the  
10 initial development phase as well as overall life cycle  
11 maintenance.

12 It will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that the  
13 invention can be implemented using a suitable programmed general  
14 purpose computer or special purpose hardware, with program  
15 routines or logical circuit sets performing as processors. Such  
16 routines or logical circuit sets may also be referred to as  
17 processors or the like.

18 Therefore, it will be understood that many additional  
19 changes in the details, materials, steps and arrangement of  
20 parts, which have been herein described and illustrated in order  
21 to explain the nature of the invention, may be made by those  
22 skilled in the art within the principle and scope of the  
23 invention as expressed in the appended claims.

2  
3 SYSTEM OPERATION TEST FACILITATING PROGRAM AND METHOD

4  
5 ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

6 A method and system are provided by the present invention  
7 for developing functional software element that operates in an  
8 environment comprising a plurality of computer programs that are  
9 being simultaneously developed. A test facilitating computer  
10 program product is utilized to simulate the plurality of  
11 computer programs as seen by the functional software element.  
12 The functional software element has one or more internal  
13 software interfaces that interact with one or more simulated  
14 external software interfaces to provide an environment in which  
15 the operation of the functional element and the internal  
16 software interfaces thereof can be monitored. The test  
17 facilitating tool permits creation of files that may be utilized  
18 to create an operational scenario during which messages that are  
19 received by and sent from said functional software element can  
20 be monitored.

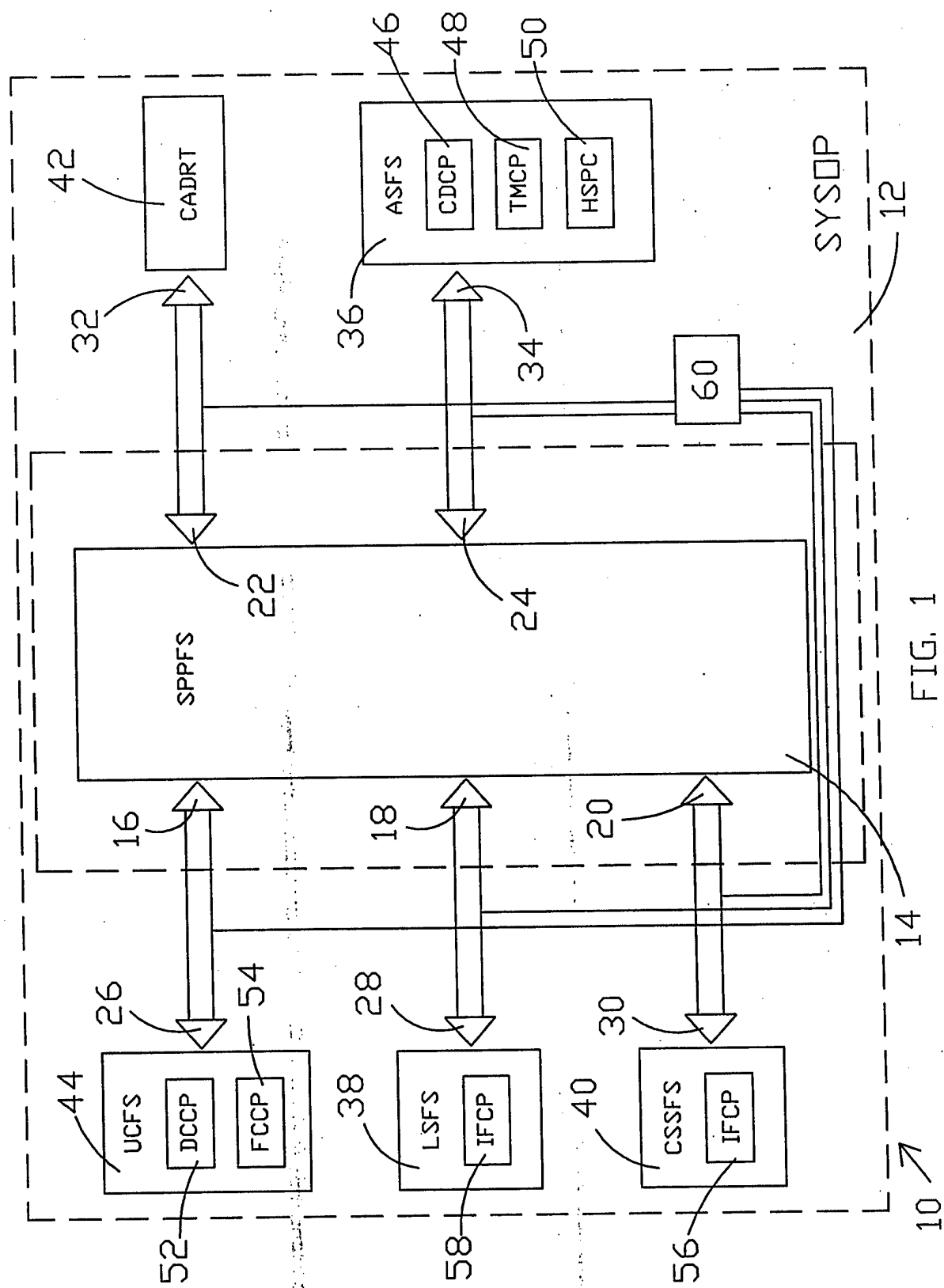
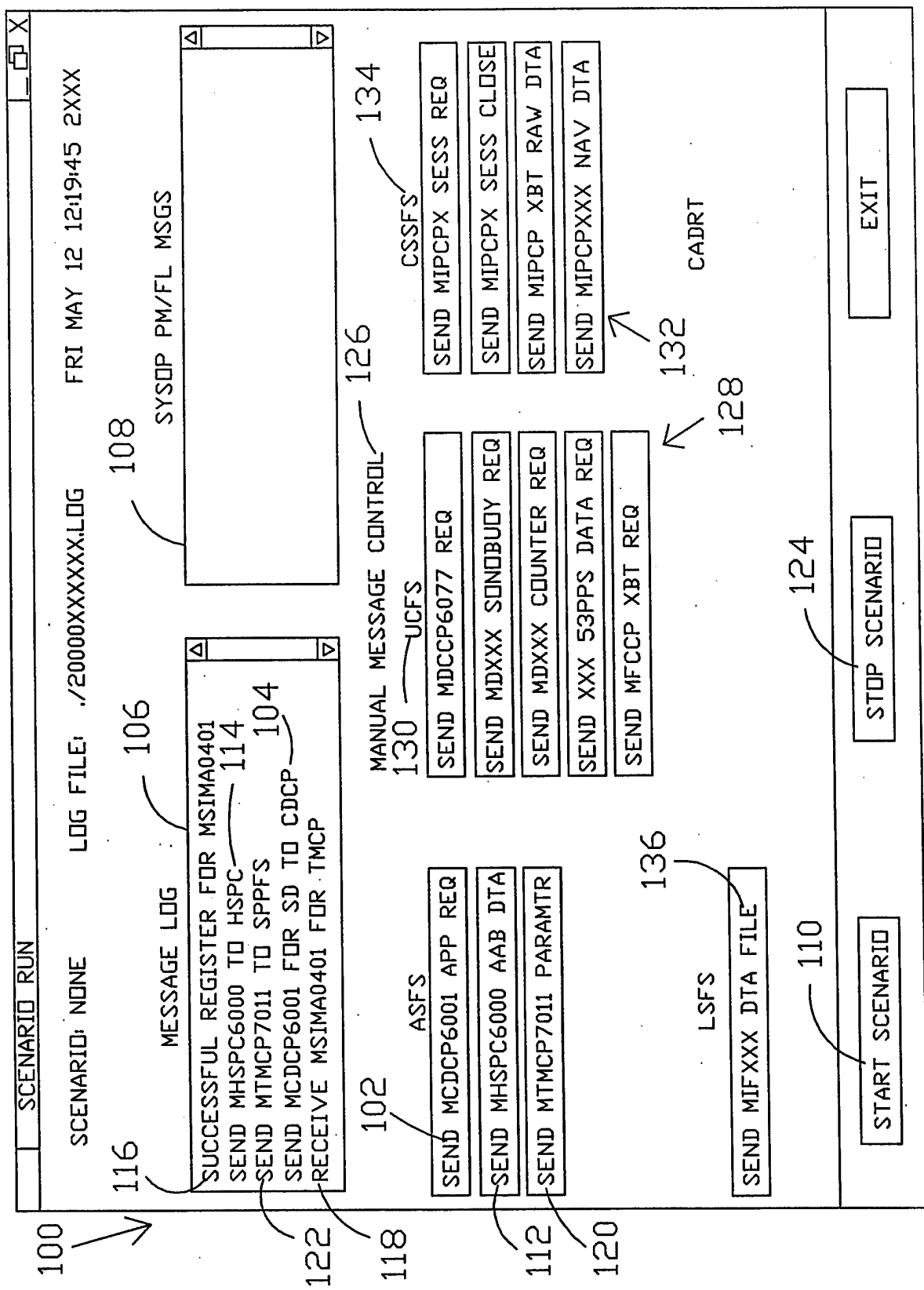


FIG. 1



2  
FIG.