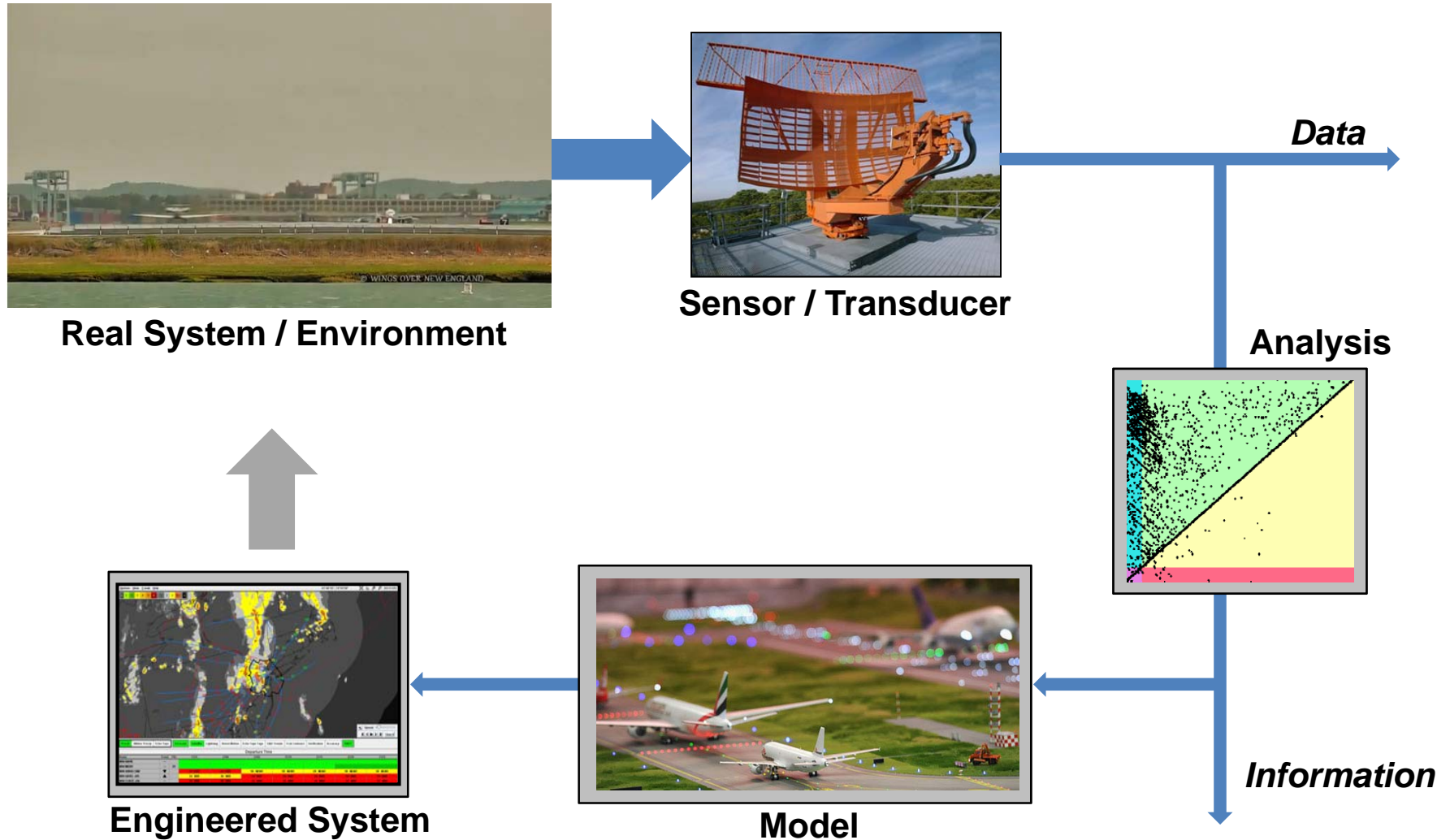

Experiences from Modeling and Exploiting Data in Air Traffic Control

James K. Kuchar
24 October 2012





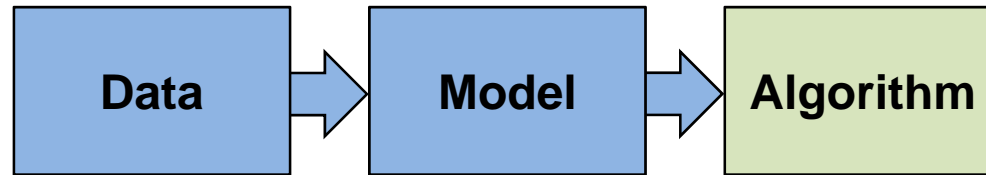
CIDU 2012: Intelligent Data Understanding Bringing Data and Models Together



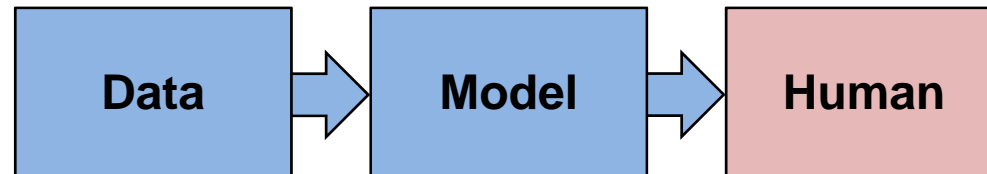


Two Vignettes

➔ 1: Collision avoidance



2: Airport departure management

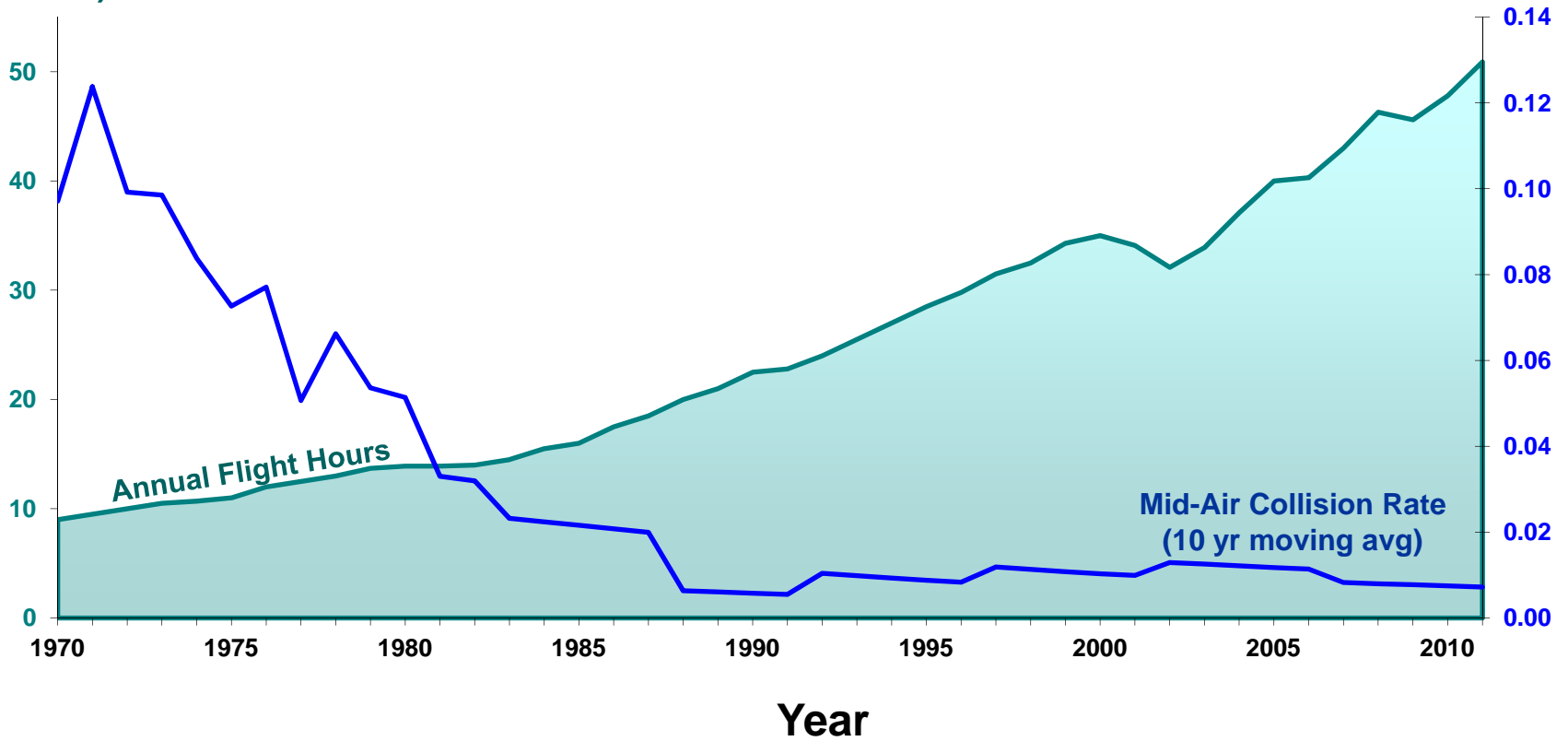




Annual Flight Hours and Collision Rate

Worldwide Annual
Jet Transport
Flight Hours
(Millions)

Mid-Air Collision Rate
(Per Million Flight Hours)





Collision Prevention Layers

Strategic Separation
Airspace Design

Tactical Separation
Air Traffic Control

**Onboard
Collision
Avoidance**





Traffic Alert and Collision Avoidance System (TCAS)



TCAS Aircraft



Transponder-Equipped
Beacon Surveillance



TCAS-Equipped
Beacon Surveillance and
Maneuver Coordination



Traffic Display

Assists in visual acquisition

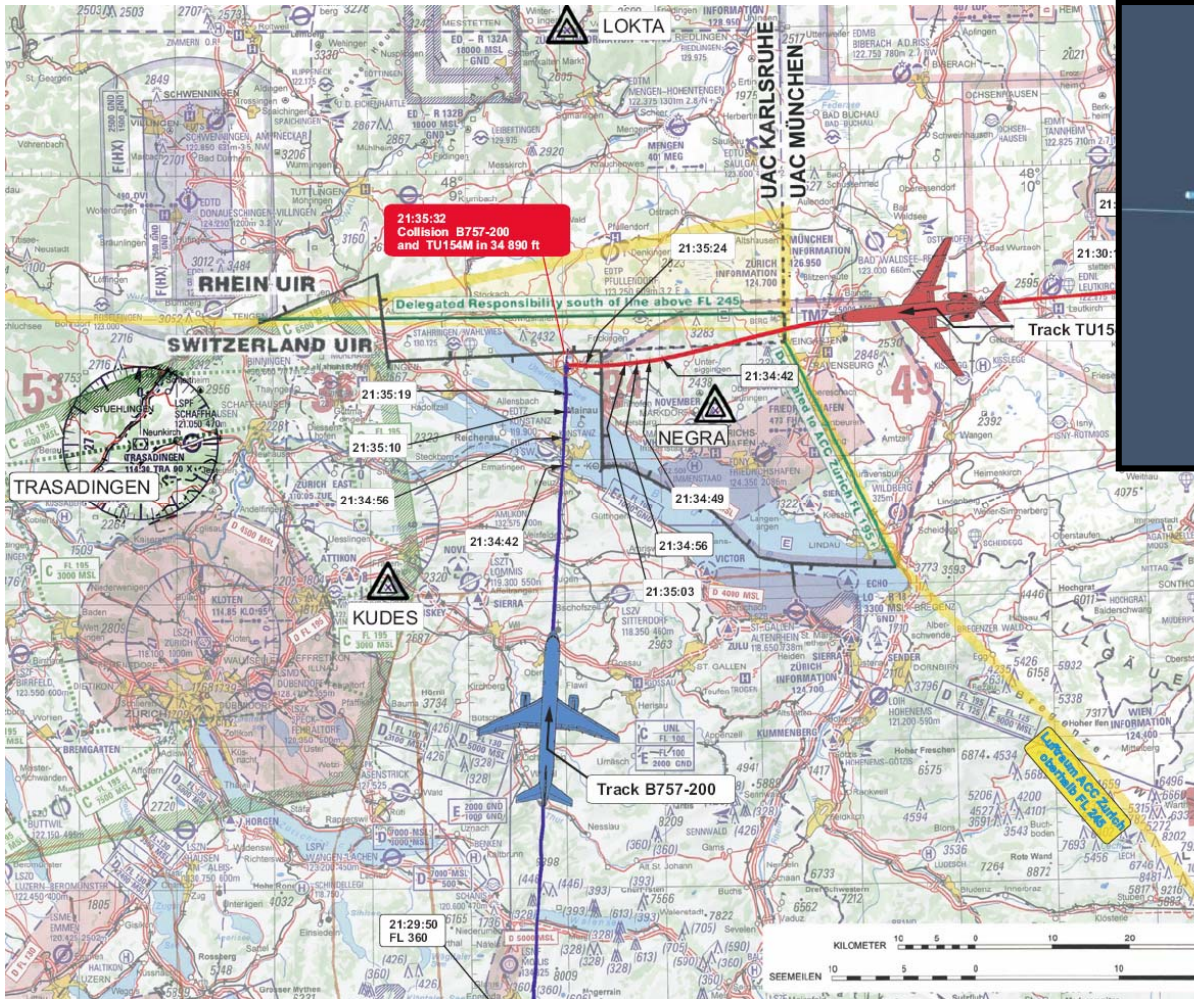


Resolution Advisory (RA)

Advises pilots how to maneuver



Überlingen, Germany, 1 July 2002



21:35:32
Collision B757-200
and TU154M in 34 890 ft

Track B757-200

Track TU15

Upper limit ACC Zurich
above FL 245



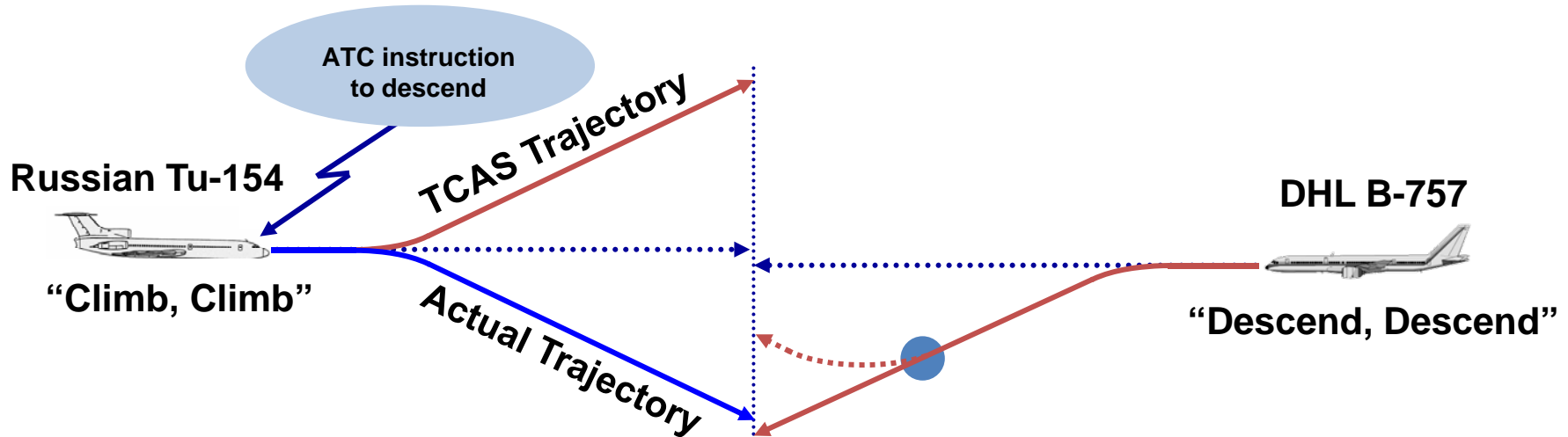
DHL B-757

Russian
Tu-154





Überlingen, Germany, 1 July 2002



Russian followed ATC instruction to descend

DHL followed TCAS RA to descend

Led to changes in TCAS algorithms to improve reversal performance



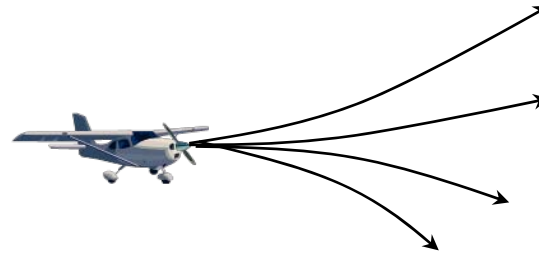
Challenges for Decision Making

State Uncertainty



Imperfect sensor information leads to uncertainty in position and velocity of aircraft

Dynamic Uncertainty

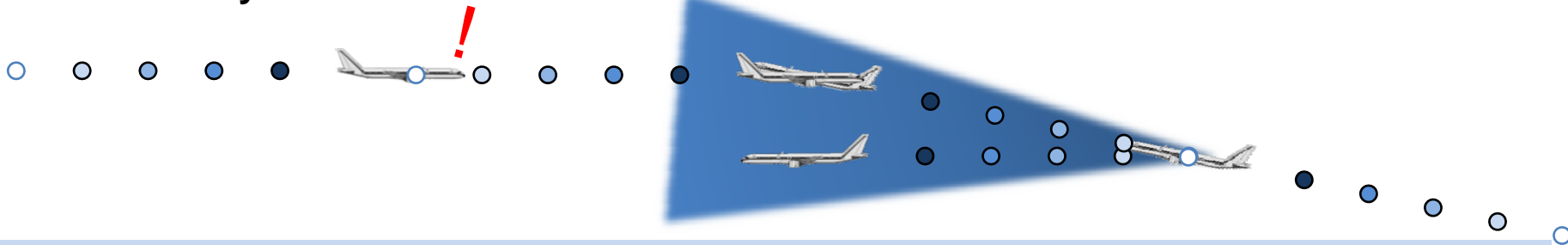


Variability makes it difficult to predict future trajectories of aircraft

Multiple Objectives



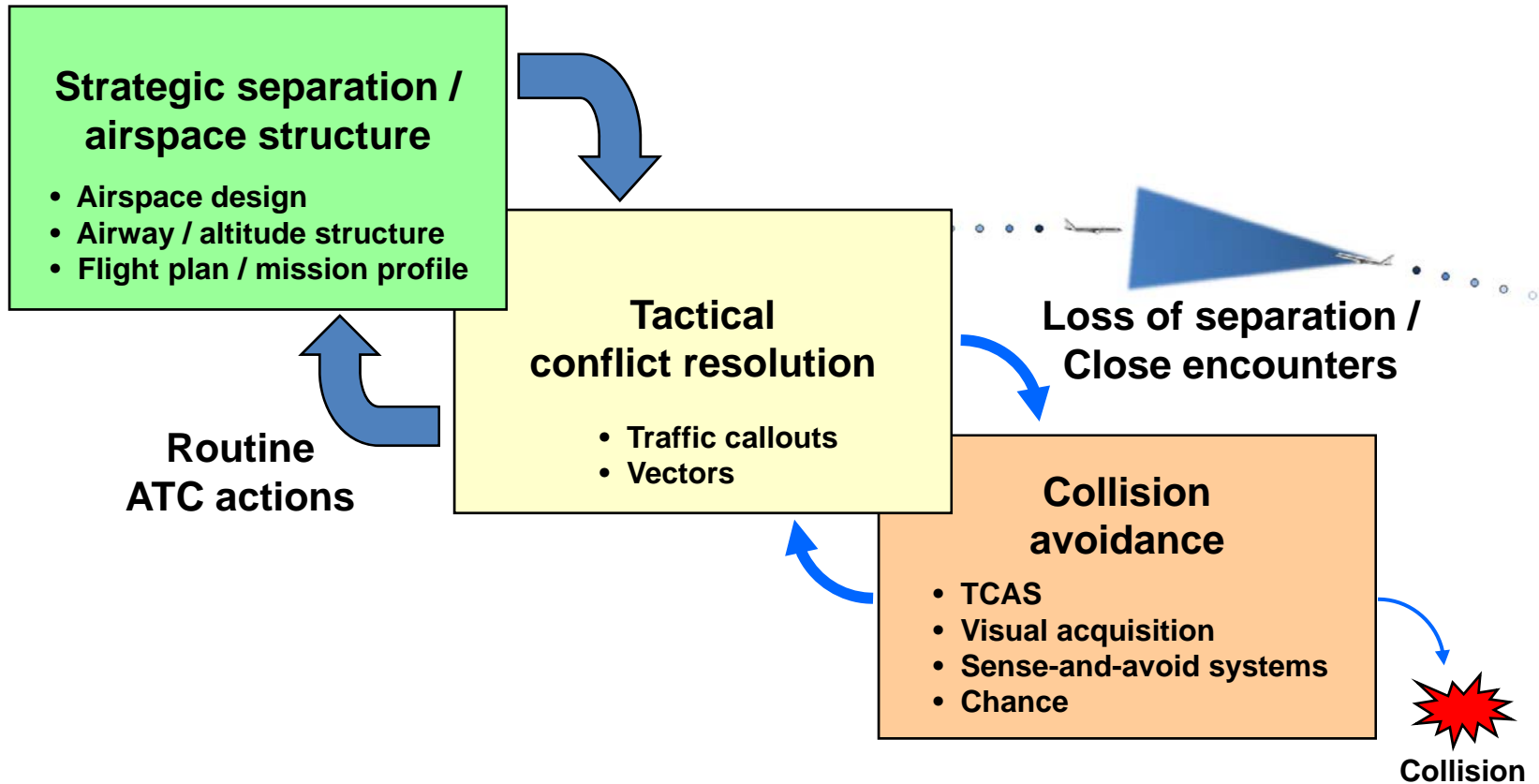
System must carefully balance both safety and operational considerations



Alerting logic model needs to be matched to encounter characteristics

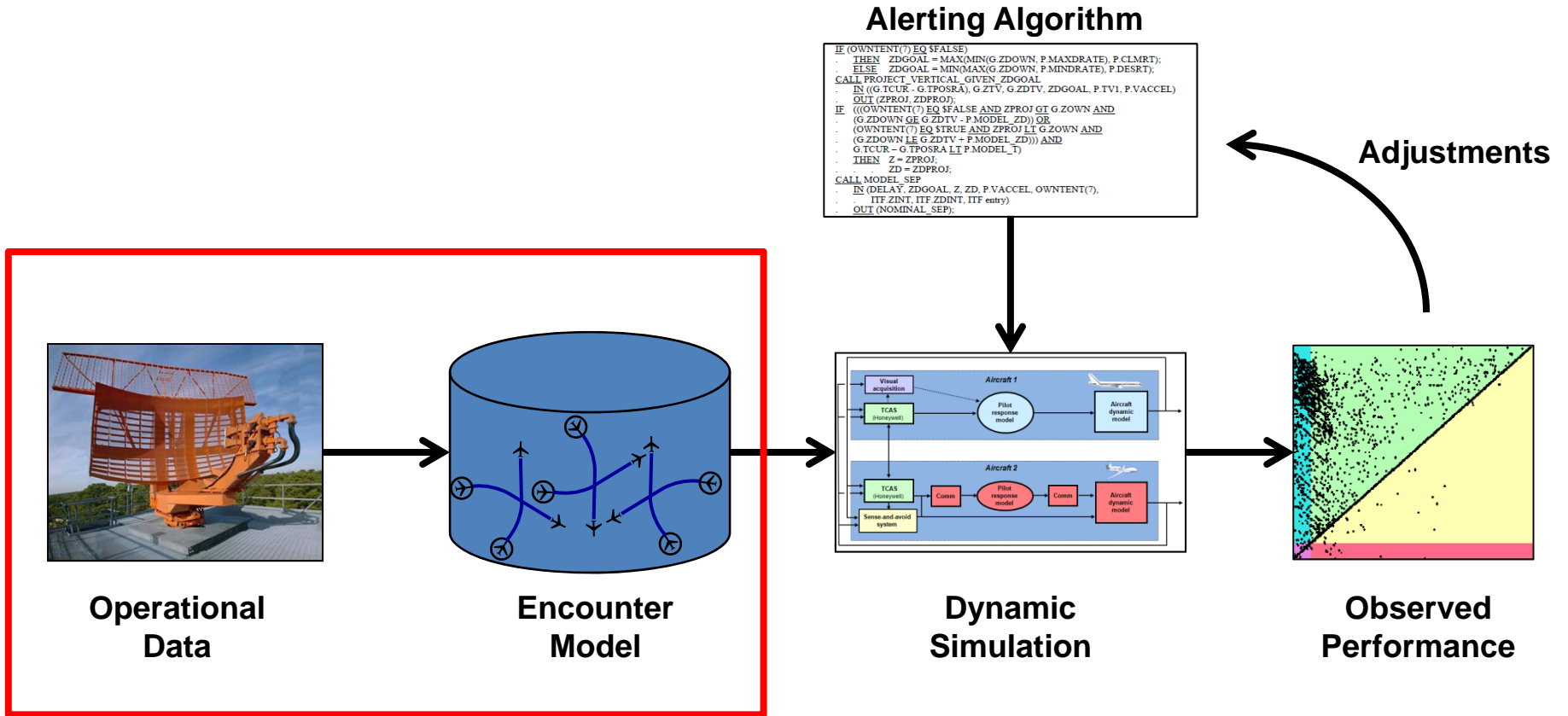


Collision Avoidance Chain



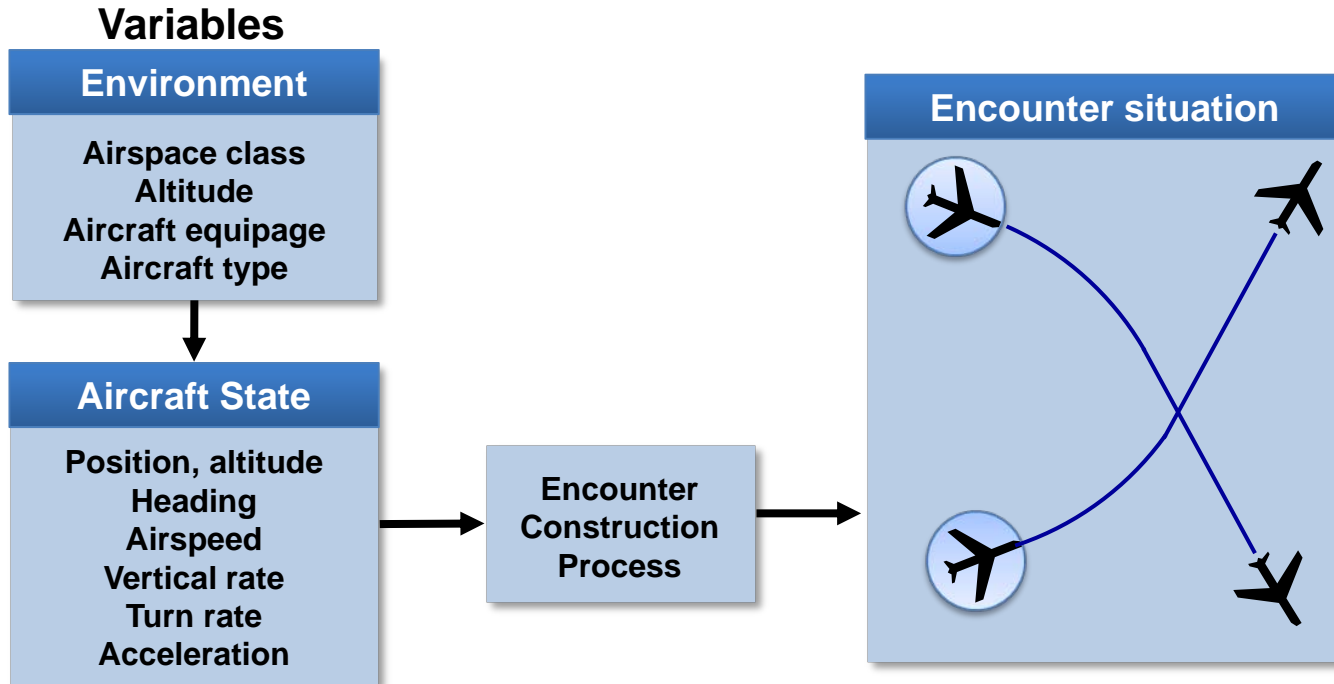


Traditional Development Process





Encounter Model Components



Requirements

- Statistically representative geometries
- Physically realistic behavior
- Manageable size and execution time

Challenges

- Limited observed data to build model
- Selection of variables for model
- ID relationships between variables



Encounter Model Development History

TCAS Mandate (U.S.)

TCAS Mandate (Worldwide)

1980

1985

1990

1995

2000

2005

2010

MITRE
(US)

Intl. Civil Aviation Org. (ICAO)
(US & Europe)

Eurocontrol
(Europe)

FAA / Lincoln Laboratory
(US)

Vertical motion encounters
Cooperative aircraft

3D, single acceleration periods
Cooperative aircraft

3D, multiple acceleration periods
Cooperative & non-cooperative aircraft

12 radar sites
1,683 encounters

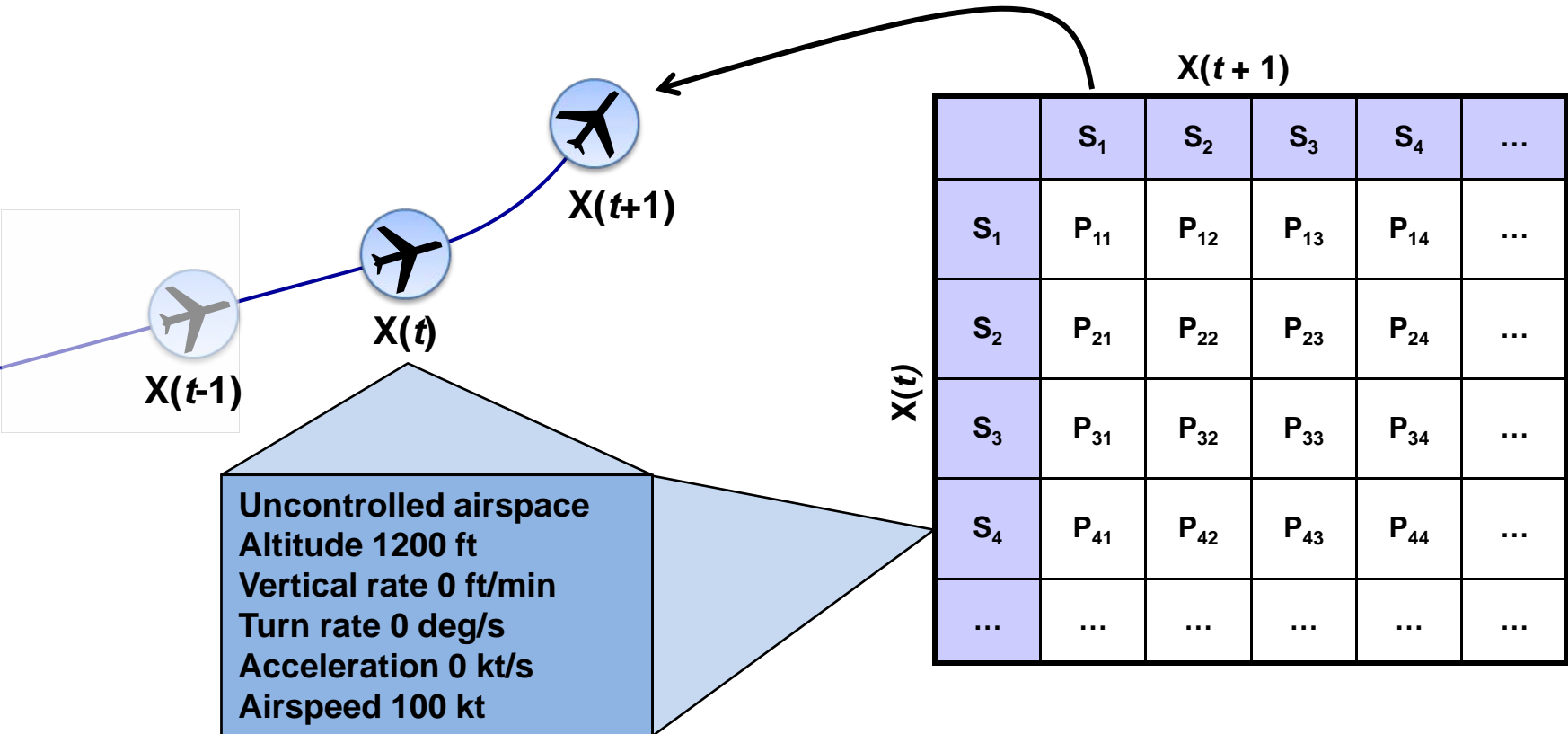
6 radar sites
2,387 encounters

134 radar sites
411,867 encounters

M. J. Kochenderfer, M. W. M. Edwards, L. P. Espindle, J. K. Kuchar, and J. D. Griffith, "Airspace Encounter Models for Estimating Collision Risk," *Journal of Guidance, Control, and Dynamics*, vol. 33, iss. 2, pp. 487-499, 2010.



Markov Model Representation

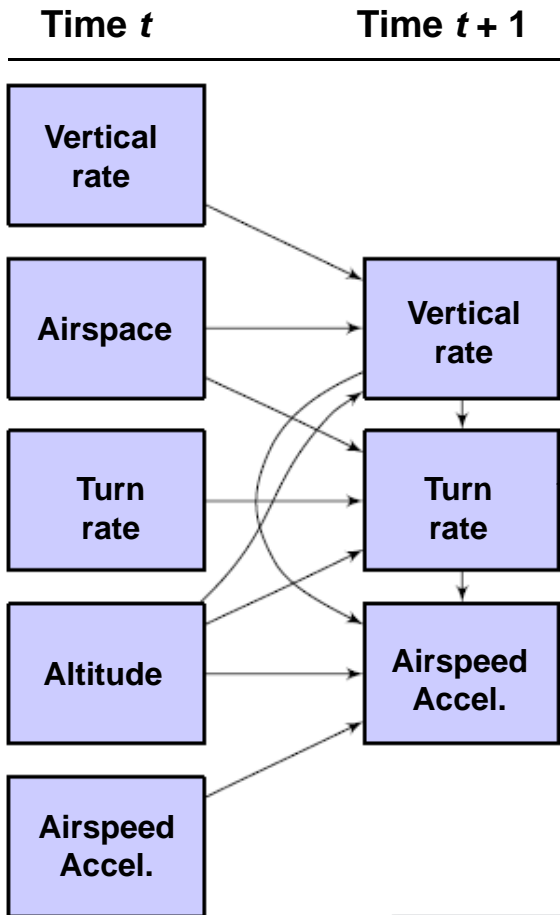


A complete state transition matrix can have ~1 billion parameters, making this approach impractical



Dynamic Bayesian Networks

Dynamic Bayesian networks compactly represent Markov models
(Dean & Kanazawa, 1989; Murphy, 2002)



Conditional Probability Table
 $P(\text{Turn}(t+1) \mid \text{Turn}(t), \text{Vertical}(t+1), \text{Airspace}(t), \text{Alt}(t))$

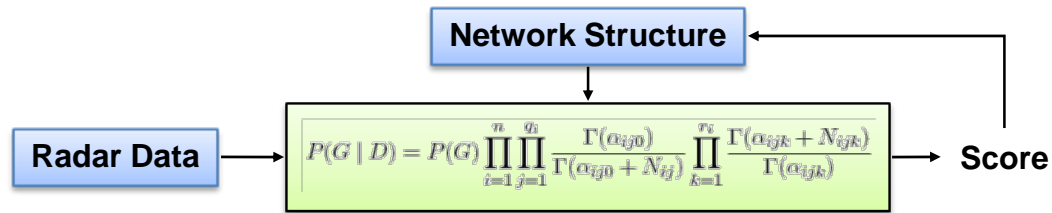
A	L	$\psi(t)$	$h(t+1)$	$\psi(t+1)$			
				[-8, -6]	[-6, -4.5]	[-4.5, -1.5]	[-1.5, 1.5]
B	[3000, ∞]	[-8, -6]	[-250, 250]	5346	306	0	0
C	[3000, ∞]	[-8, -6]	[-250, 250]	90	7	0	0
D	[3000, ∞]	[-8, -6]	[-250, 250]	0	0	0	0
O	[3000, ∞]	[-8, -6]	[-250, 250]	49439	2562	0	0
B	[0, 1200]	[-6, -4.5]	[-250, 250]	86	1268	123	0
C	[0, 1200]	[-6, -4.5]	[-250, 250]	306	4440	399	0
D	[0, 1200]	[-6, -4.5]	[-250, 250]	3903	99413	7637	0
O	[0, 1200]	[-6, -4.5]	[-250, 250]	10139	244892	19790	0
B	[1200, 3000]	[-6, -4.5]	[-250, 250]	35	806	79	0
C	[1200, 3000]	[-6, -4.5]	[-250, 250]	50	1782	140	0
D	[1200, 3000]	[-6, -4.5]	[-250, 250]	538	12316	1113	0
O	[1200, 3000]	[-6, -4.5]	[-250, 250]	4457	106791	9795	0
B	[3000, ∞]	[-6, -4.5]	[-250, 250]	279	4657	597	0
C	[3000, ∞]	[-6, -4.5]	[-250, 250]	7	87	11	0

...

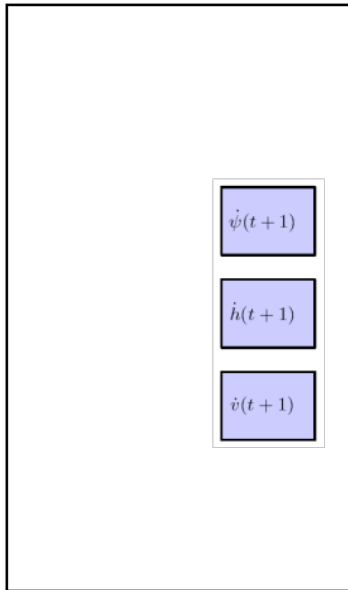
Only ~9,000 independent parameters required



Bayesian Network Structure Learning

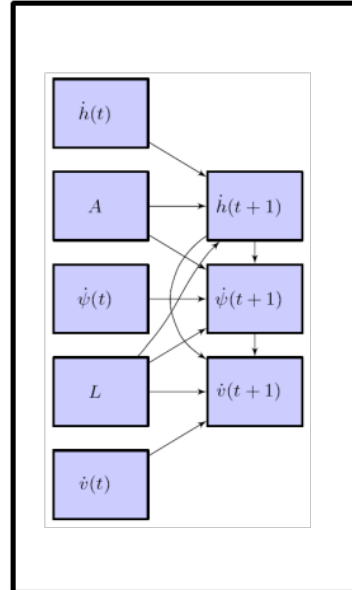


Unconnected



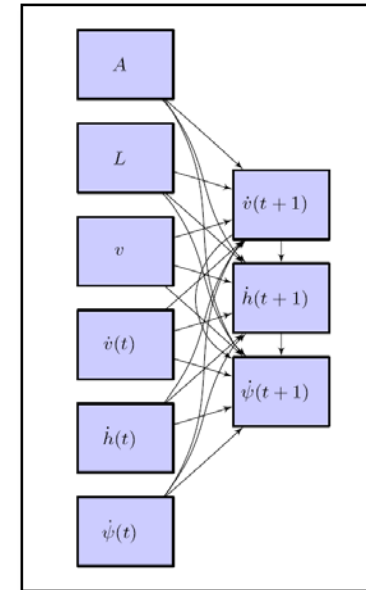
16 parameters

Optimal



9,296 parameters

Fully Connected



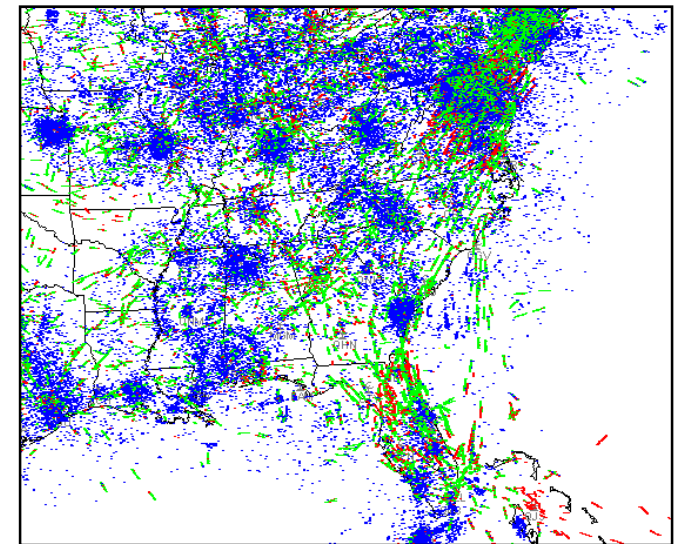
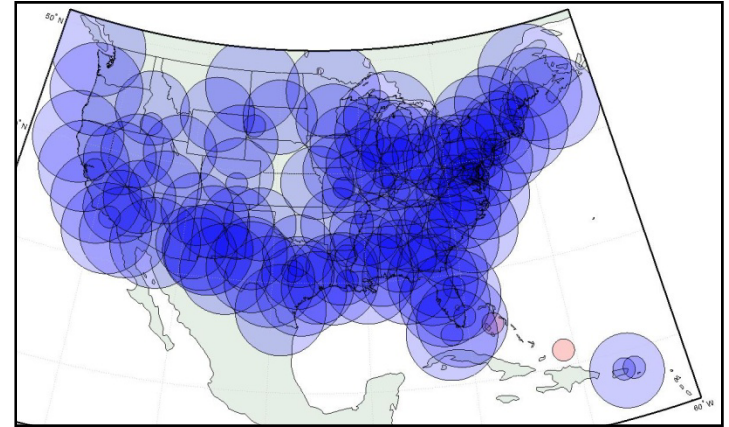
7,651,840 parameters

Increasing number of parameters



New US Airspace Models National Radar Data Feeds

- Data gathered at Eastern / Western Air Defense Sectors, transmitted to 84th Radar Evaluation Squadron (RADES), thence to Lincoln Lab
- Raw sensor data
 - 134 sensors including CONUS and littoral / offshore coverage
 - Not affected by filtering or tracking
 - Primary and secondary radar returns
 - 8 radar types (including long-range ARSR-4, short-range ASR-8 -9 -11)
 - Includes height measurements for some sensors (e.g., ARSR-4)
 - ~ 10 GB of data / day



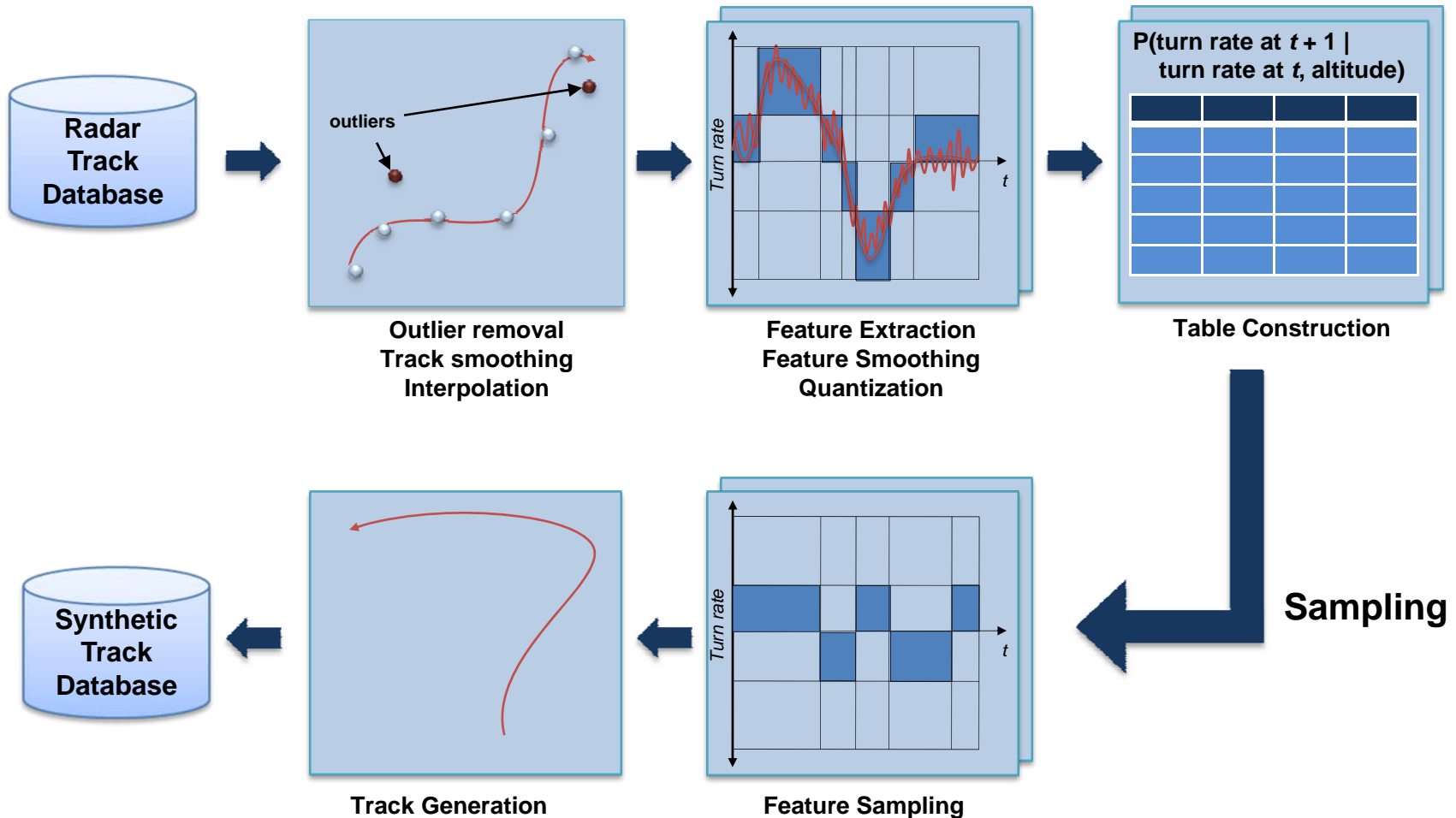
Primary-only

Beacon-only

Reinforced



Track Processing and Synthesis



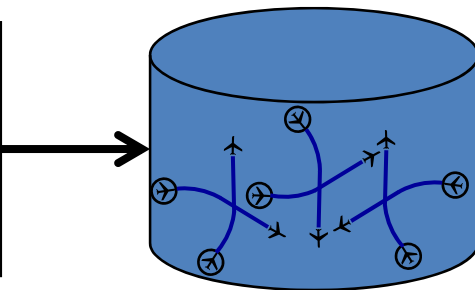
Results validated by comparison to other operational data



Traditional Development Process



Operational Data

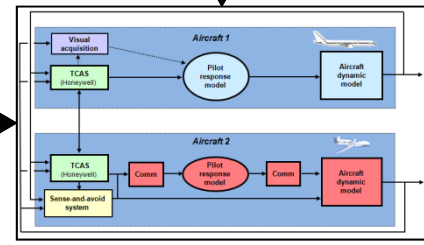


Encounter Model

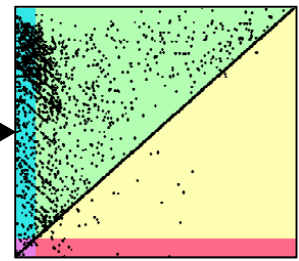
```

Alerting Algorithm
IF (OWNENT(?) EQ $FALSE)
  THEN ZDGOAL = MAX(MIN(G.ZDOWN, P.MAXDRATE), P.CLMRT);
  ELSE ZDGOAL = MIN(MAX(G.ZDOWN, P.MINDRATE), P.DESRT);
CALL PROJECT_VERTICAL_GIVEN_ZDGOAL
  IN ((G.TCUR - G.TPOSRA), G.ZTV, G.ZDTV, ZDGOAL, P.TVI, P.VACCEL)
  OUT (ZPROJ, ZDPROF);
IF (((OWNENT(?) EQ $FALSE AND ZPROJ GT G.ZOWN AND
  (G.ZDOWN GE G.ZDTV - P.MODEL_ZD)) OR
  (OWNENT(?) EQ $TRUE AND ZPROJ LT G.ZOWN AND
  (G.ZDOWN LE G.ZDTV + P.MODEL_ZD))) AND
  G.TCUR - G.TPOSRA LT P.MODEL_T)
  THEN Z = ZDPROF;
  ELSE Z = ZDGOAL;
CALL MODEL_SEP
  IN (DELAY, ZDGOAL, Z, ZD, P.VACCEL, OWNENT(?),
  ITF.ZINT, ITF.ZDINT, ITF.entry)
  OUT (NOMINAL_SEP);

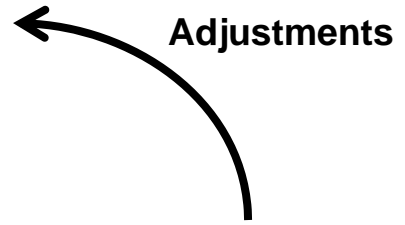
```



Dynamic Simulation

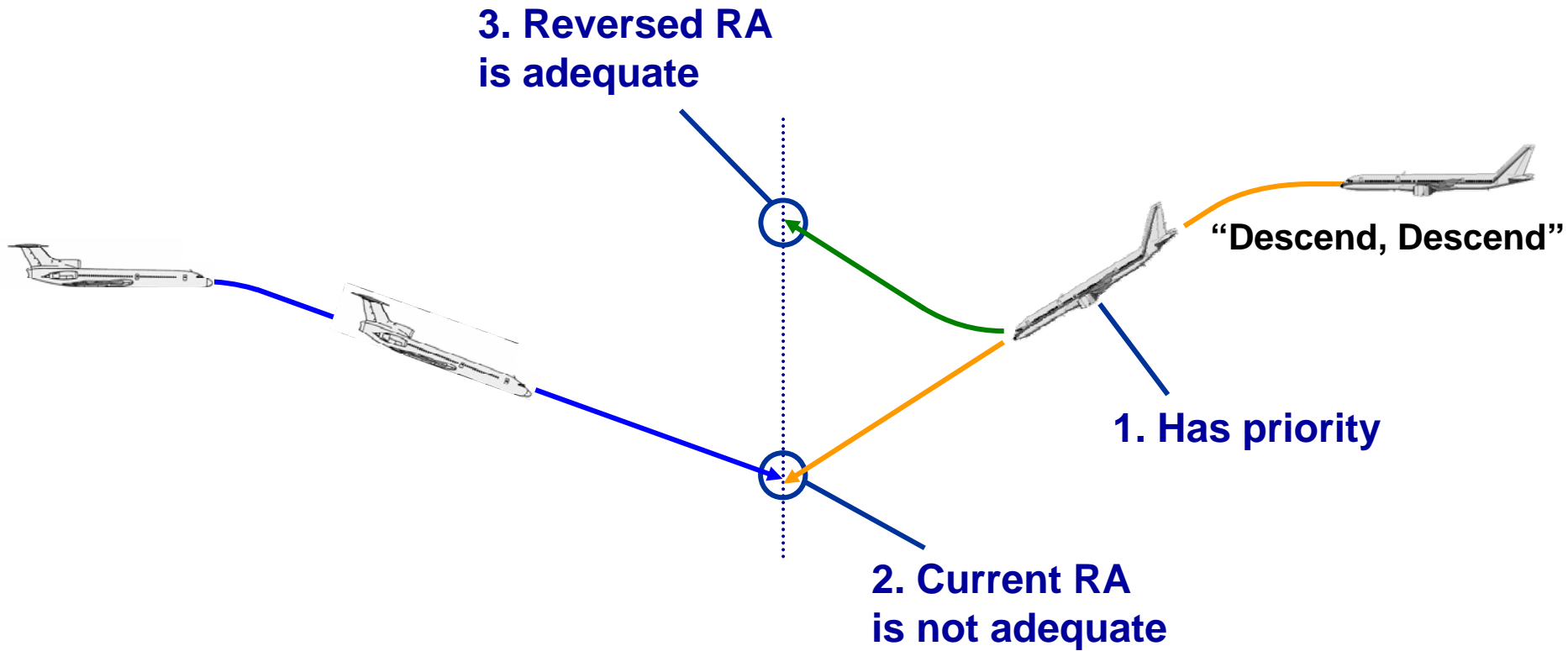


Observed Performance



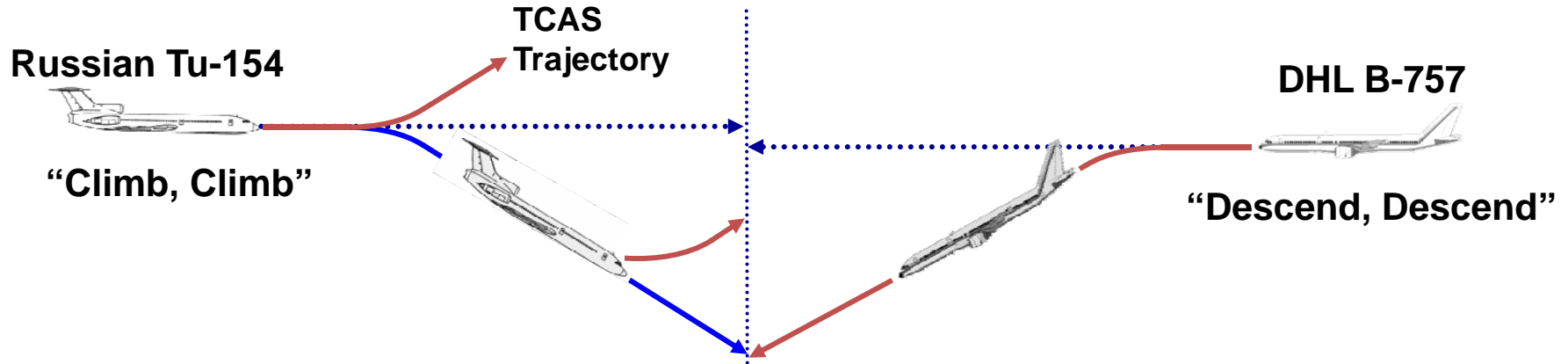


TCAS V7.0 Sense Reversal Criteria





Sense Reversal Behavior at Überlingen



Russian aircraft

- Had priority
- Climb RA provides adequate separation: No reversal

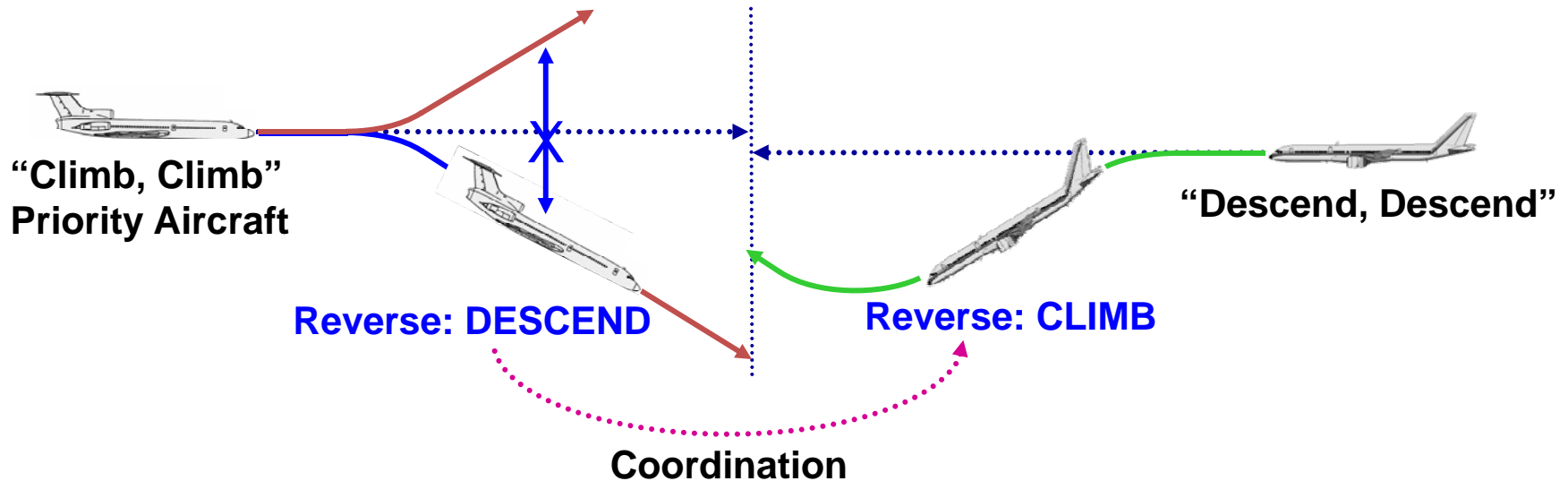
**Algorithm relied on invalid assumption
that own aircraft was following its RA**



V7.1 Logic Change Proposal*

Test whether own aircraft is following its RA

Coordination ensures compatible reversals

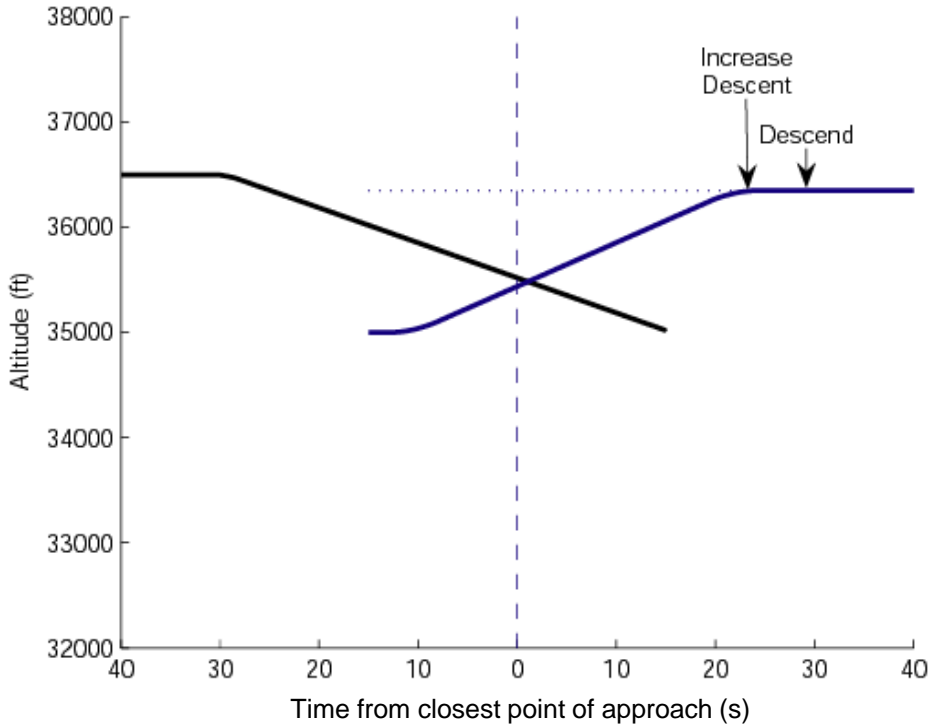


Provides the aircraft that is following its RA an escape path

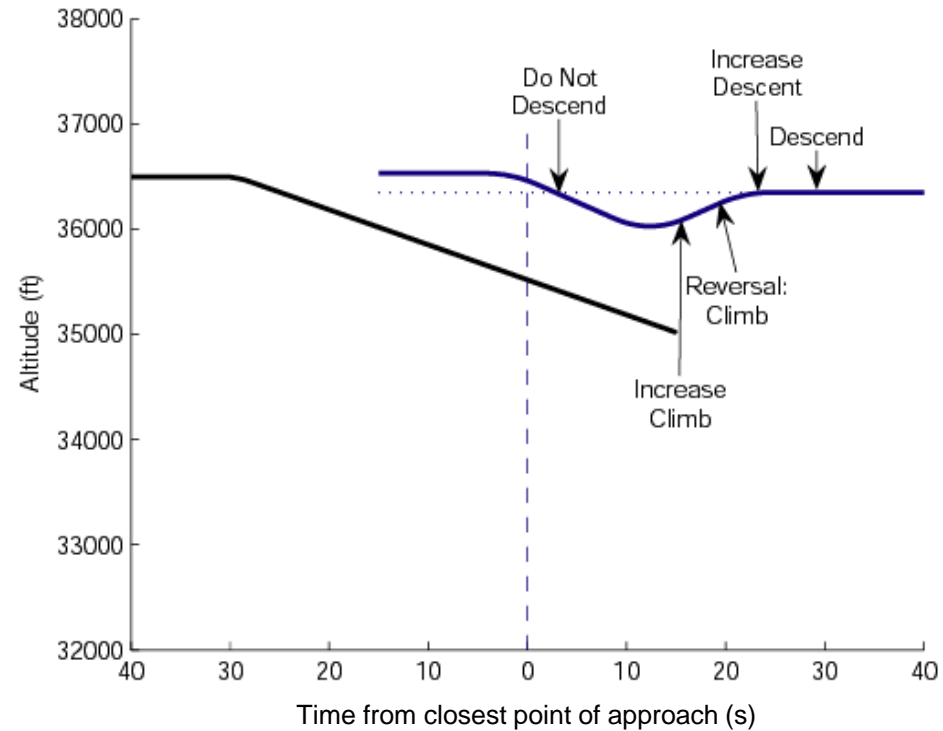


Simulation of Überlingen Geometry

Encounter with TCAS V7.0



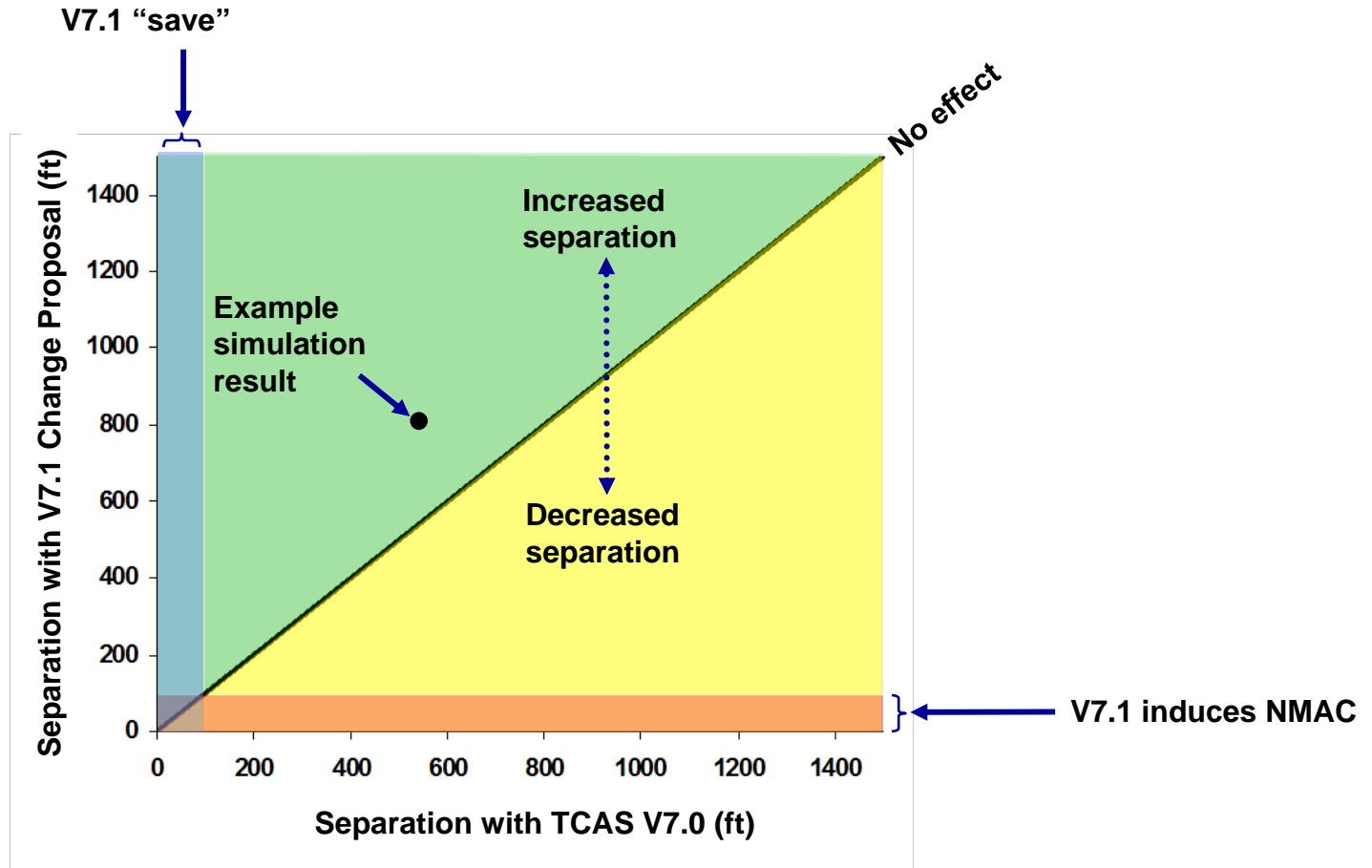
Encounter with TCAS V7.1



TCAS V7.1 successfully reverses the RA sense



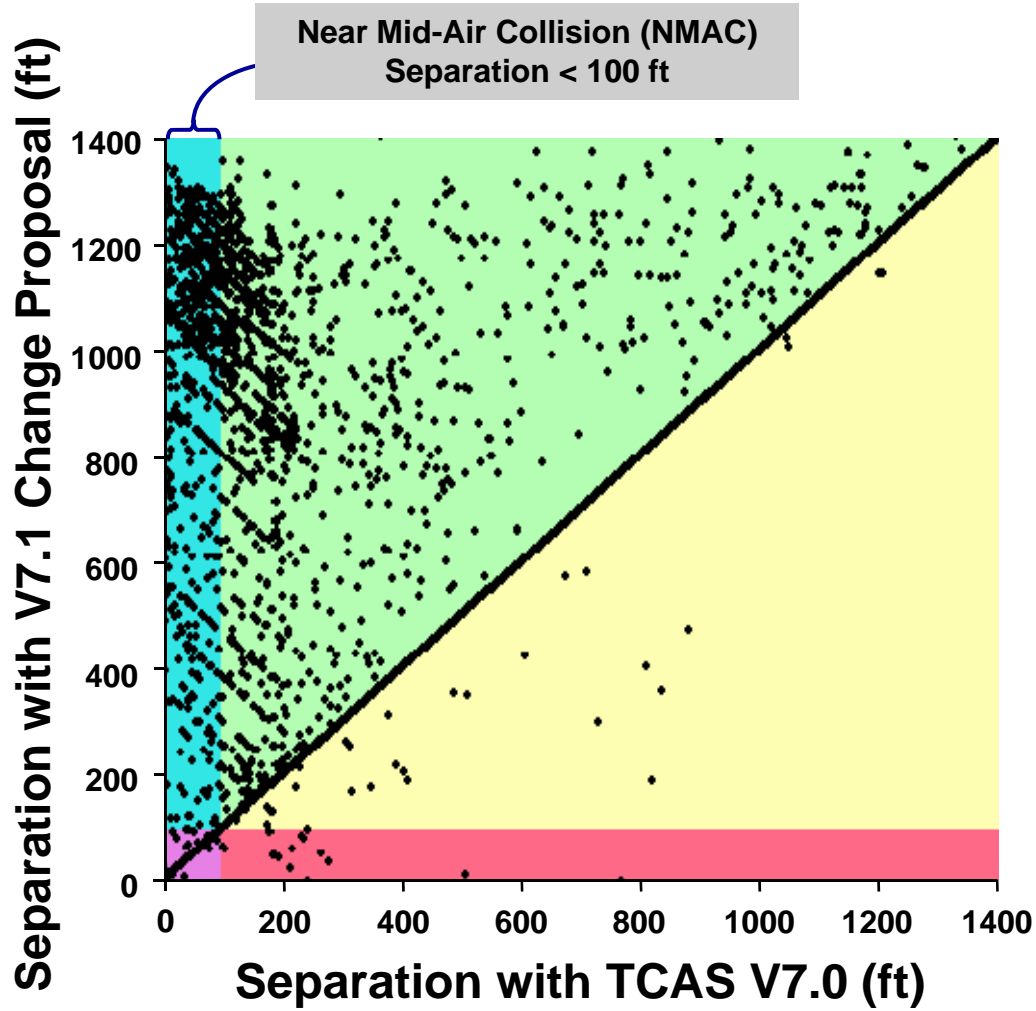
Performance Robustness Comparison



Near Mid-Air Collision (NMAC): separation < 100 ft



Example Monte Carlo Results: Vertical Separation When One Aircraft Ignores RAs



- Change proposal affects 0.05% of runs
- 92% of changes involve separation gains
- 22% of changes are saves
- 2% of changes are induced NMACs
- 3% of changes are unresolved NMACs



Impact: European Adoption

IFALPA
The Global Voice of Pilots

Air Traffic Services
Briefing Leaflet

12ATSBL09

February 2012

TCAS version 7.1: Coming to a cockpit near you soon...

QuickRead

From March 2012 (new-build aircraft), Aircraft operating into European Union airspace will be required to have TCAS II V7.1 installed. Retrofit of older aircraft must be completed before 1 December 2015.

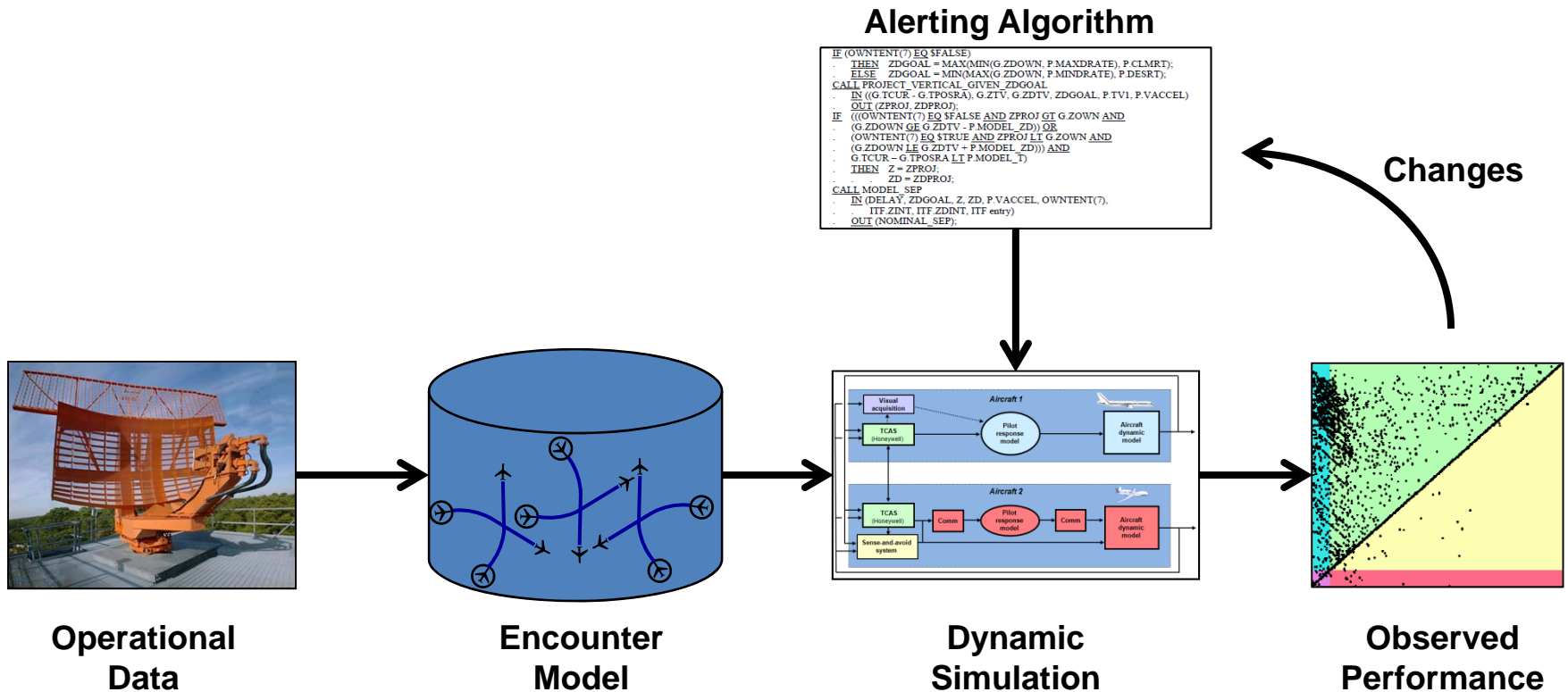
While substantially similar to v7.0, Version 7.1 introduces a new “level off” RA designed to eliminate the potential for confusion or misunderstandings created by the existing “adjust vertical speed” RA. It is also

Version 7.1 solution – improved reversal logic

Version 7.1 will bring improvements to the reversal logic by detecting situations in which, despite the RA, the aircraft continue to converge vertically.



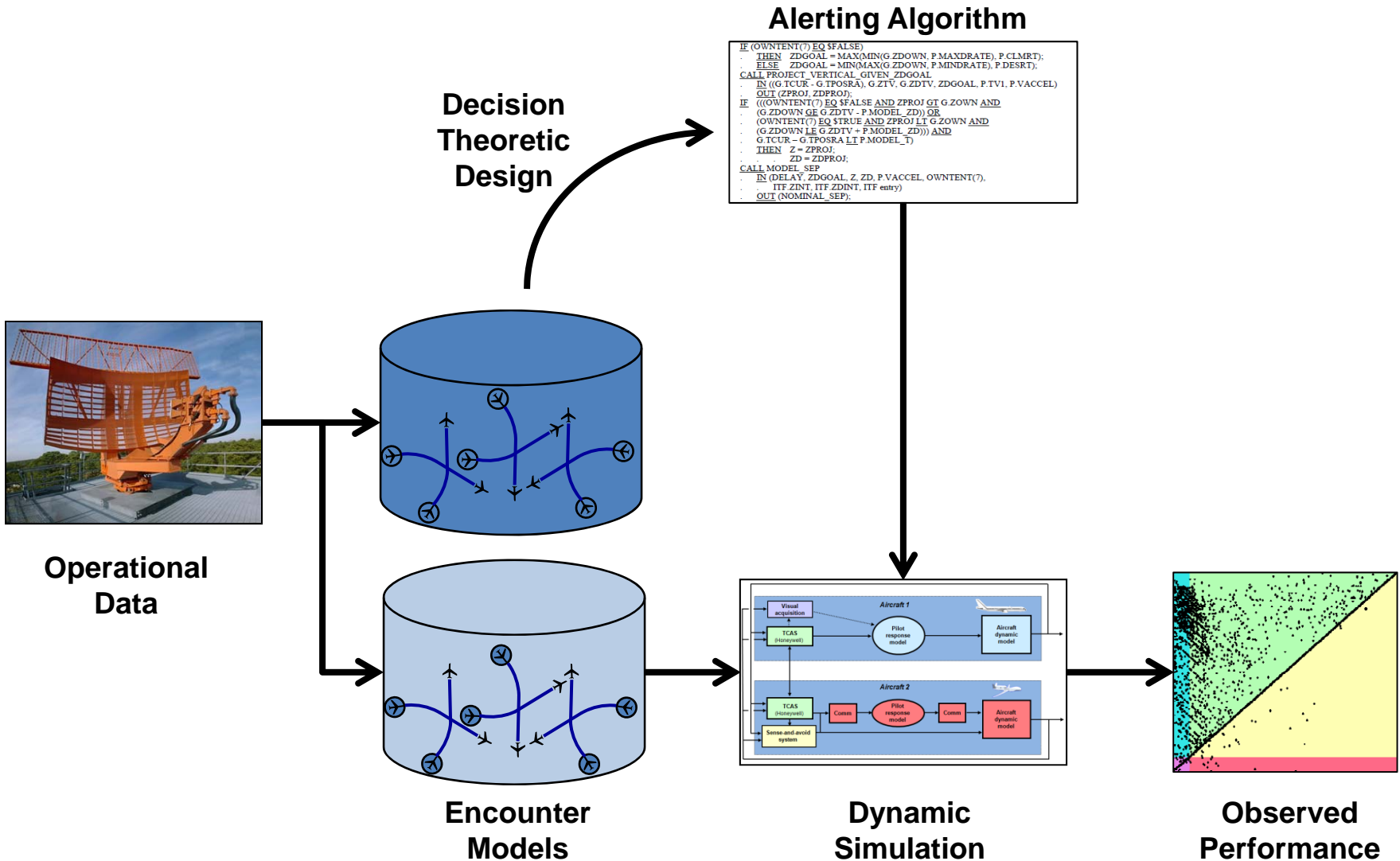
Problems with the Traditional Development Process



Traditional V7.1 upgrade process involved trial-and-error and spanned several years

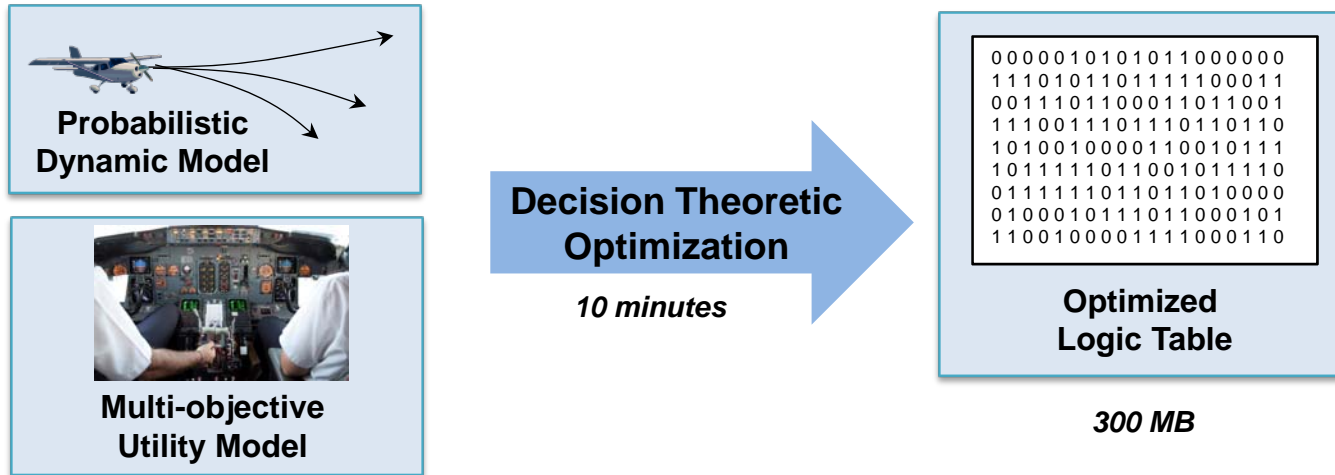


A Direct Approach: Decision Theoretic Design





Next-Generation TCAS Logic Development: ACAS X



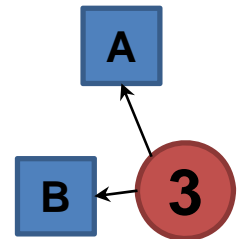
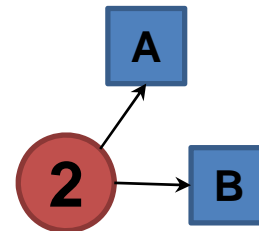
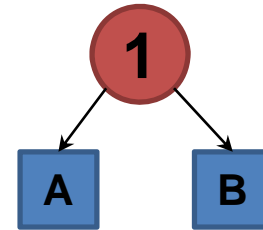
- **Logic complexity is represented using numeric table instead of rules**
- **Table is standardized and given to system manufacturers**
- **Updates can be made to the system by uploading a new table**



Markov Decision Process (MDP)

MDPs are a general framework for formulating sequential decision problems

- **State space**
 - Set of all possible states
- **Action space**
 - Set of all possible actions

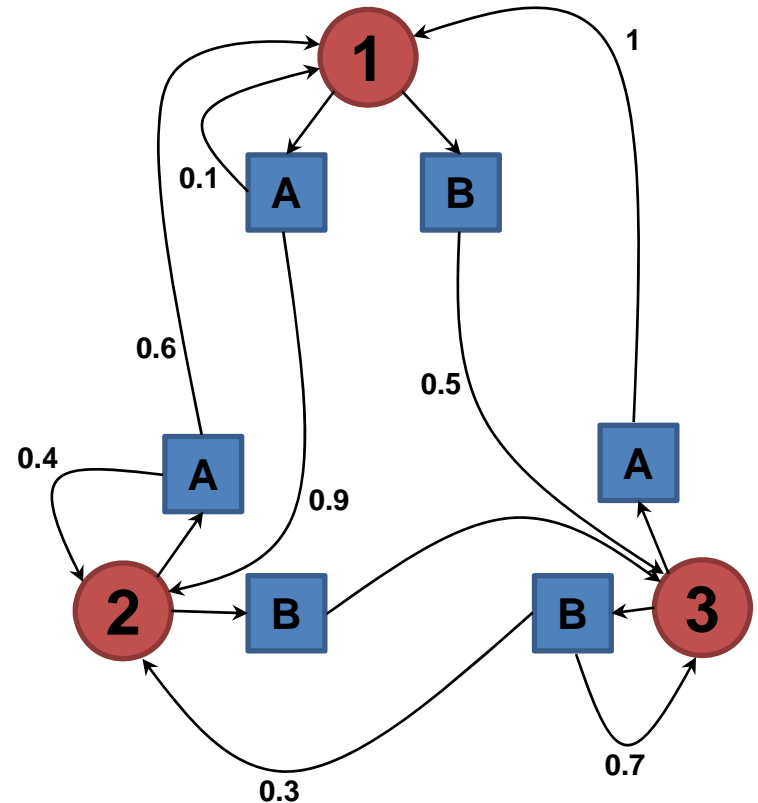




Markov Decision Process (MDP)

MDPs are a general framework for formulating sequential decision problems

- **State space**
 - Set of all possible states
- **Action space**
 - Set of all possible actions
- **Dynamic model**
 - State transition probabilities



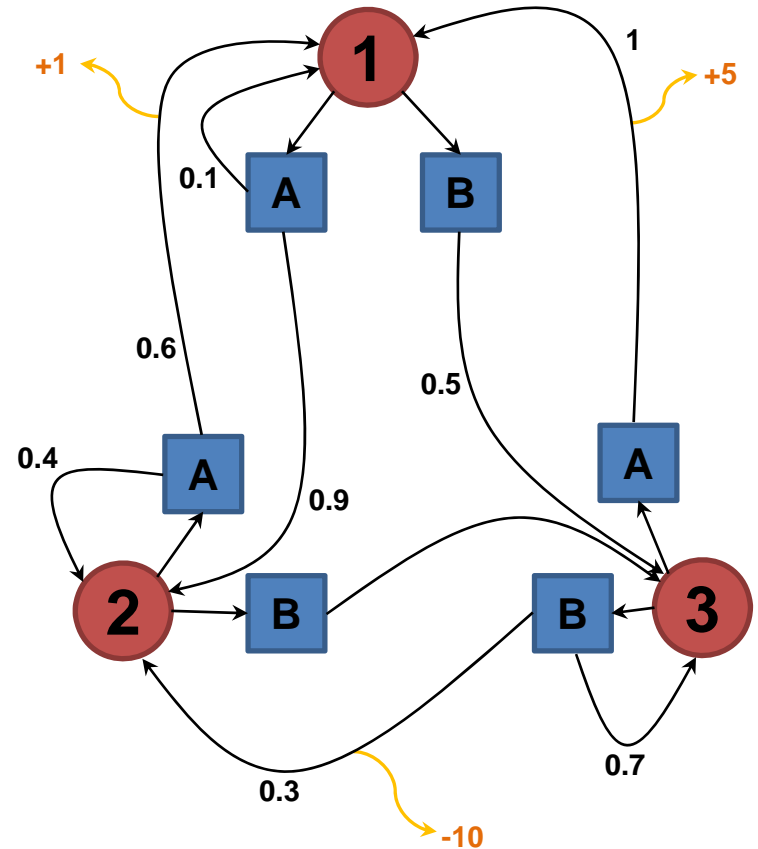


Markov Decision Process (MDP)

MDPs are a general framework for formulating sequential decision problems

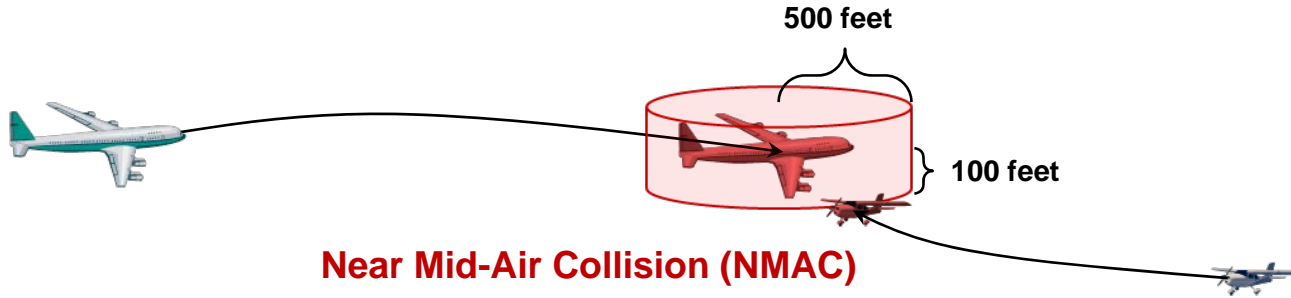
- **State space**
 - Set of all possible states
- **Action space**
 - Set of all possible actions
- **Dynamic model**
 - State transition probabilities
- **Reward model**
 - Reward for making transition

Objective is to maximize reward





Collision Avoidance MDP



State space	Action space
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relative altitude• Own vertical rate• Intruder vertical rate• Time to lateral NMAC• State of advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear of conflict• Climb > 1500 ft/min• Climb > 2500 ft/min• Descend > 1500 ft/min• Descend > 2500 ft/min
Dynamic model	Reward model
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Head-on, constant closure• Random vertical acceleration• Pilot response delay (5 s)• Pilot response strength (1/4 g)• State of advisory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NMAC (-1)• Alert (-0.01)• Reversal (-0.01)• Strengthen (-0.009)• Clear of conflict (0.0001)

M. J. Kochenderfer and J. P. Chryssanthacopoulos, "A Decision-Theoretic Approach to Developing Robust Collision Avoidance Logic," in IEEE International Conference on Intelligent Transportation Systems, Madeira Island, Portugal, 2010.



Dynamic Programming (DP)

DP is an efficient way to solve an MDP

Expected value

$$Q(s, a) = R(s, a) + \sum_{s'} P(s' | s, a) V(s')$$

$$V(s) = \max_a Q(s, a)$$

- DP is an iterative process for computing the expected value when starting from each state
- Best action can be derived directly from expected value



Dynamic Programming (DP)

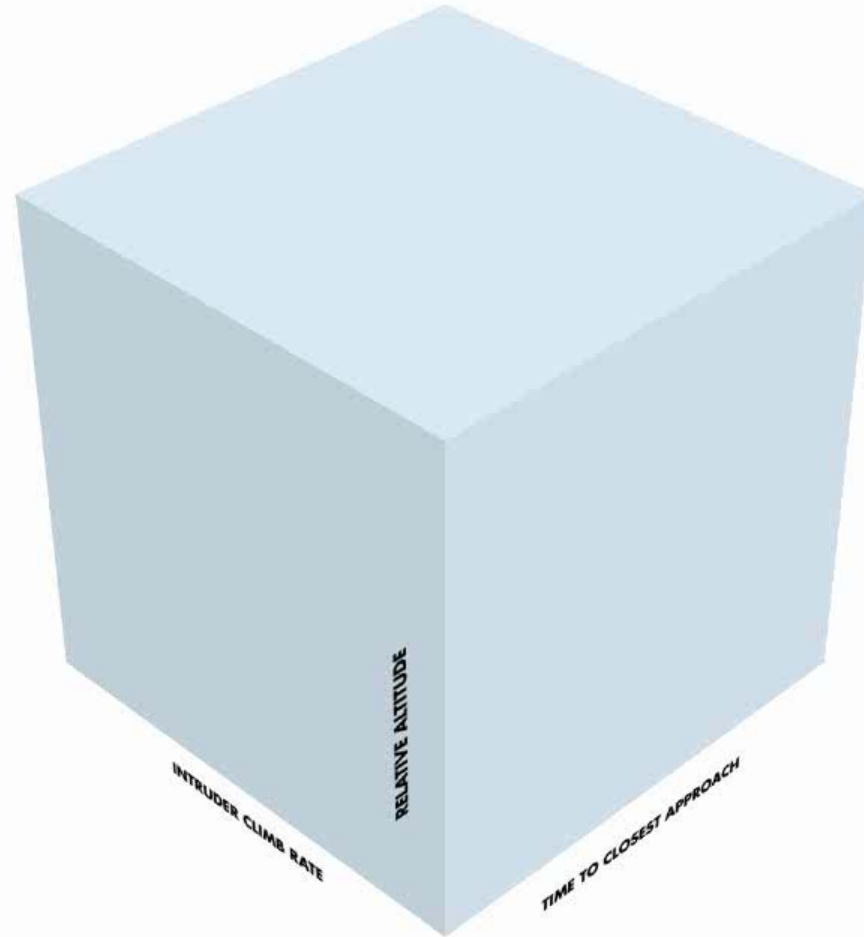
Notional Expected Value Table

State					Expected Value		
Relative altitude	Time to go	Own vert. spd.	Intruder vert. spd.	Advisory state	No alert	Climb	Descend
100	19	1500	-1000	None	-0.0144	-0.4215	-0.0190
200	20	0	0	None	-0.0449	-0.0339	-0.4251
...

- Rows correspond to different discrete states
- Table queried in real time on aircraft to select optimal action

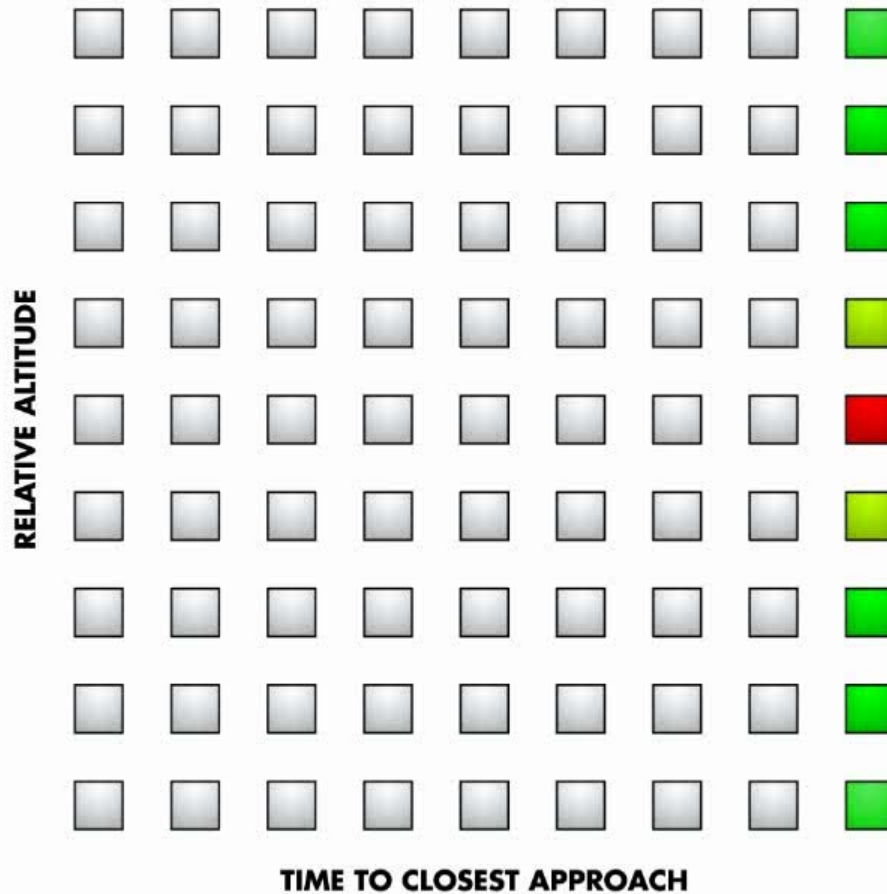


Dynamic Programming (DP)



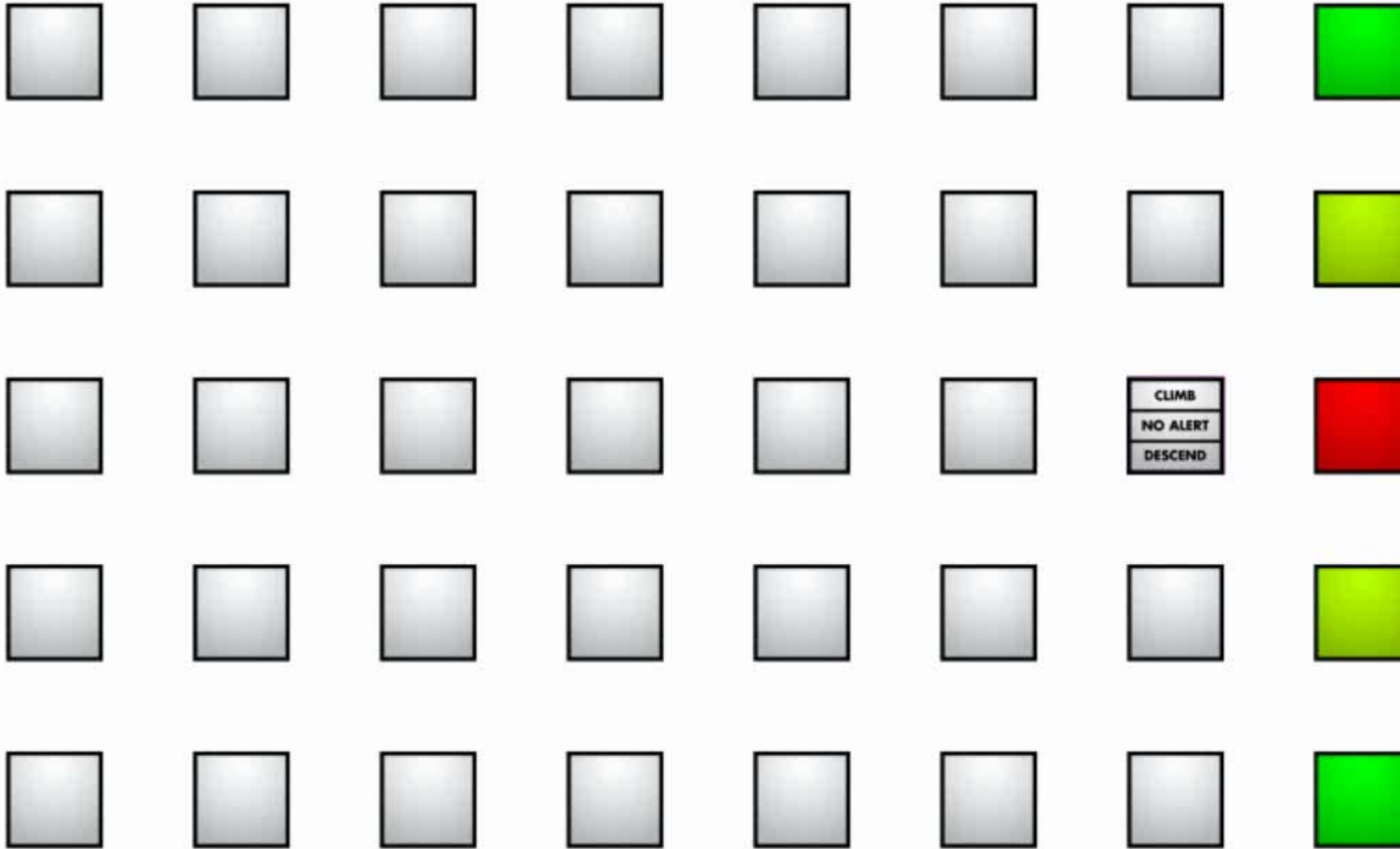


Dynamic Programming (DP)



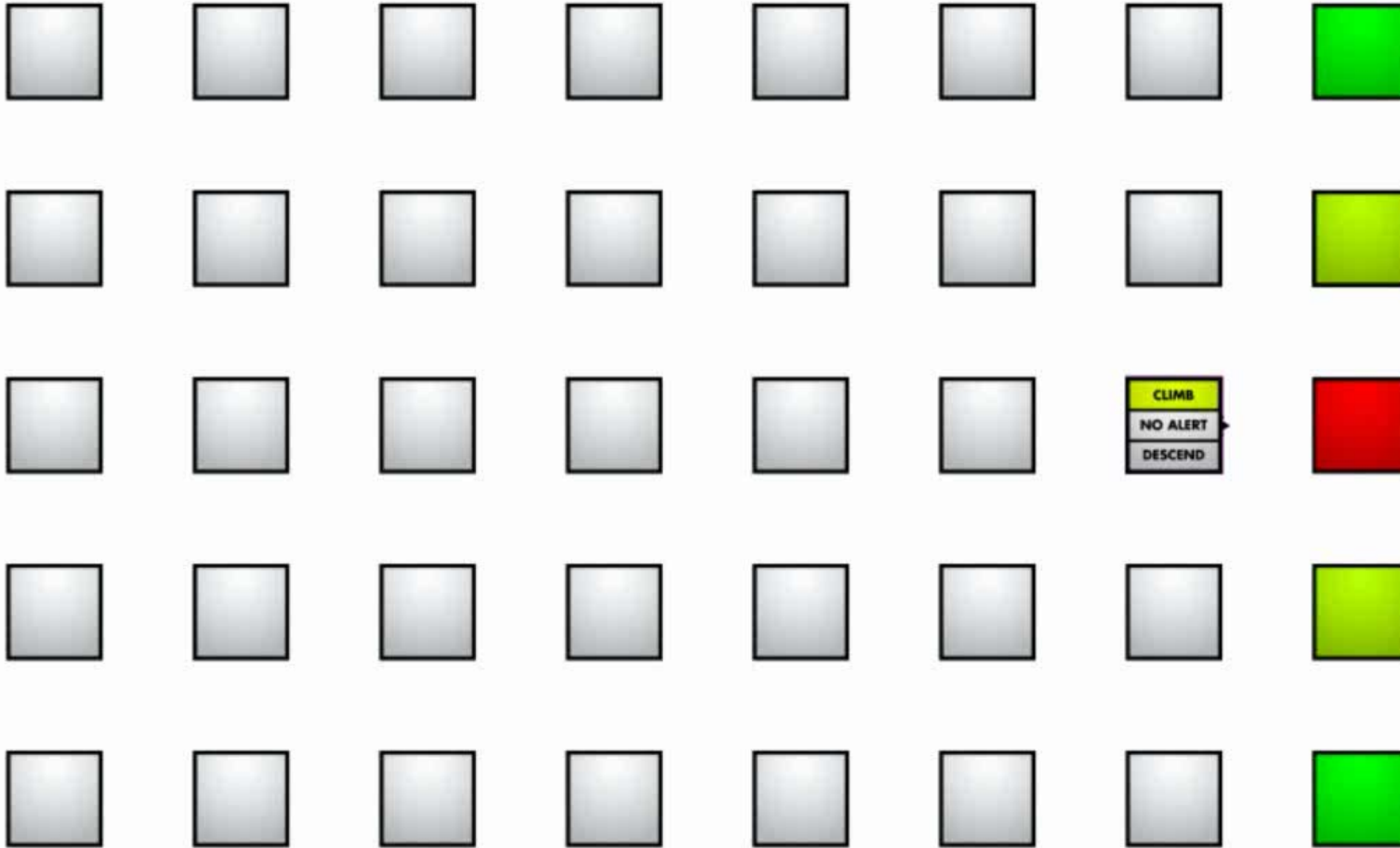


Dynamic Programming (DP)



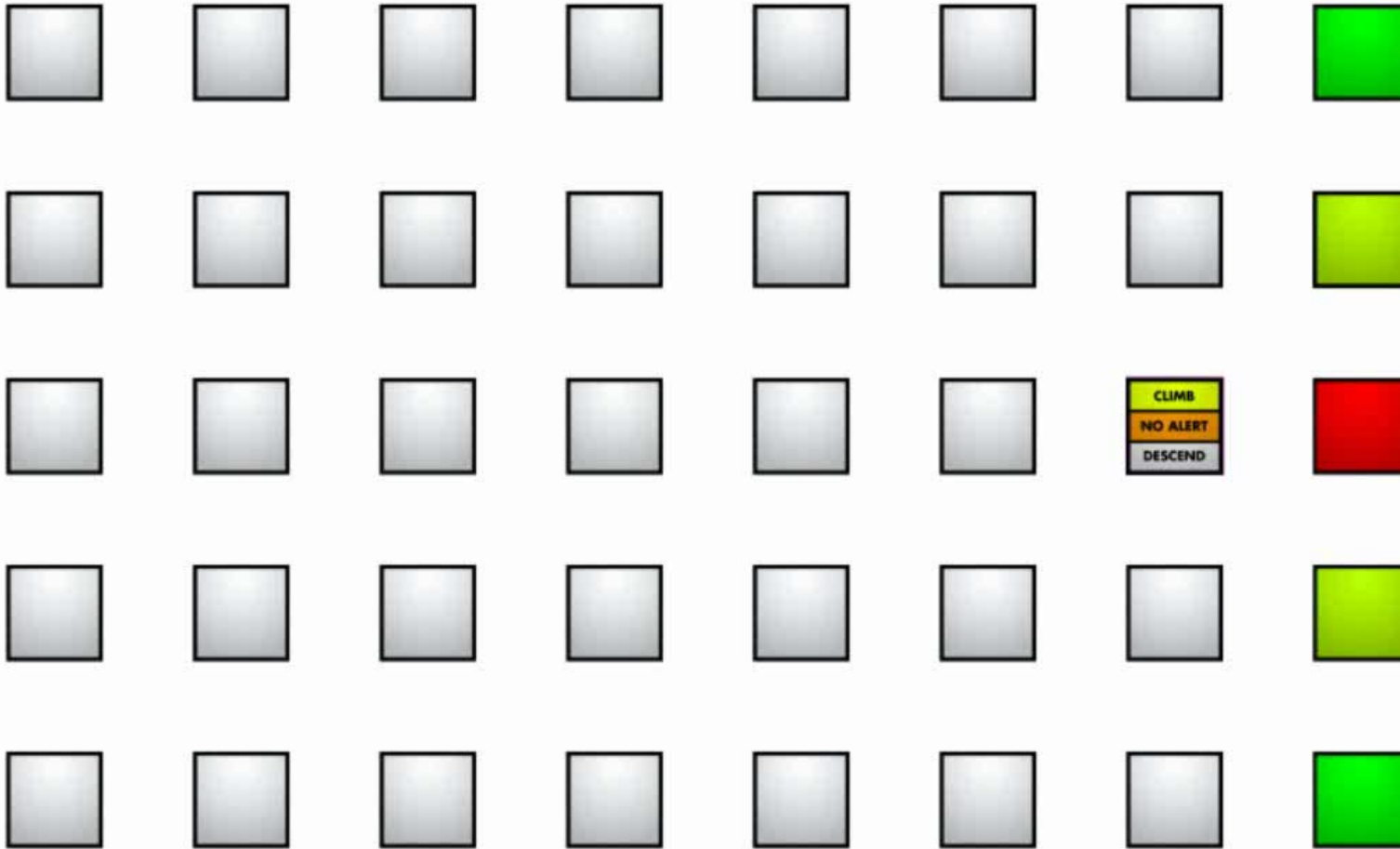


Dynamic Programming (DP)



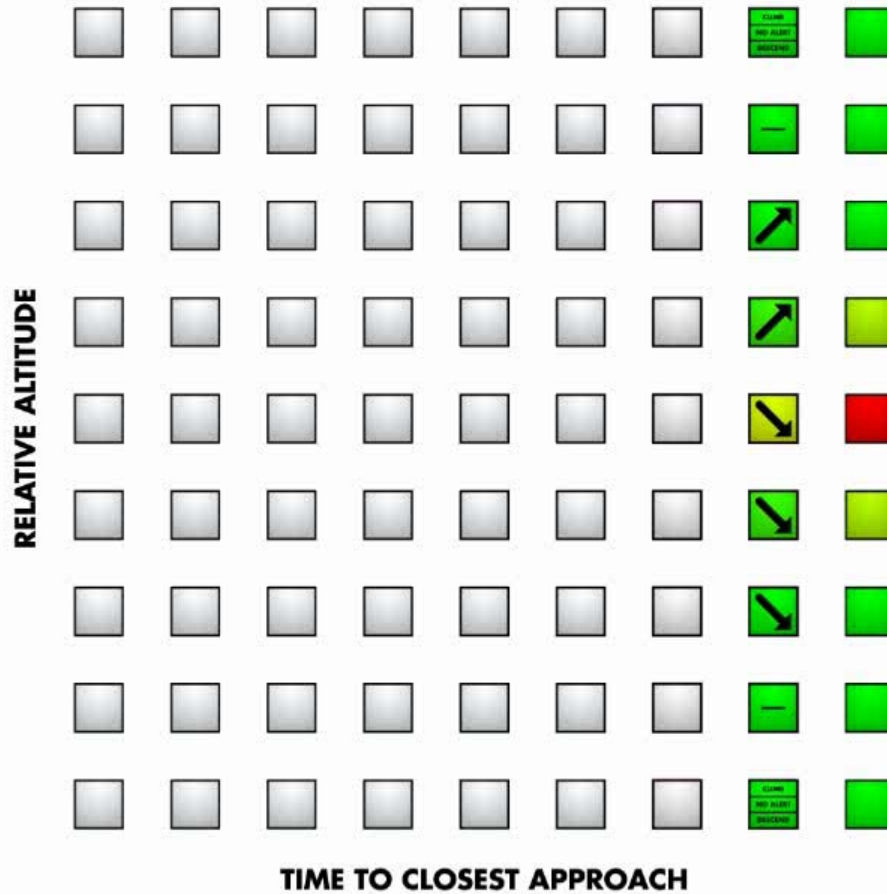


Dynamic Programming (DP)





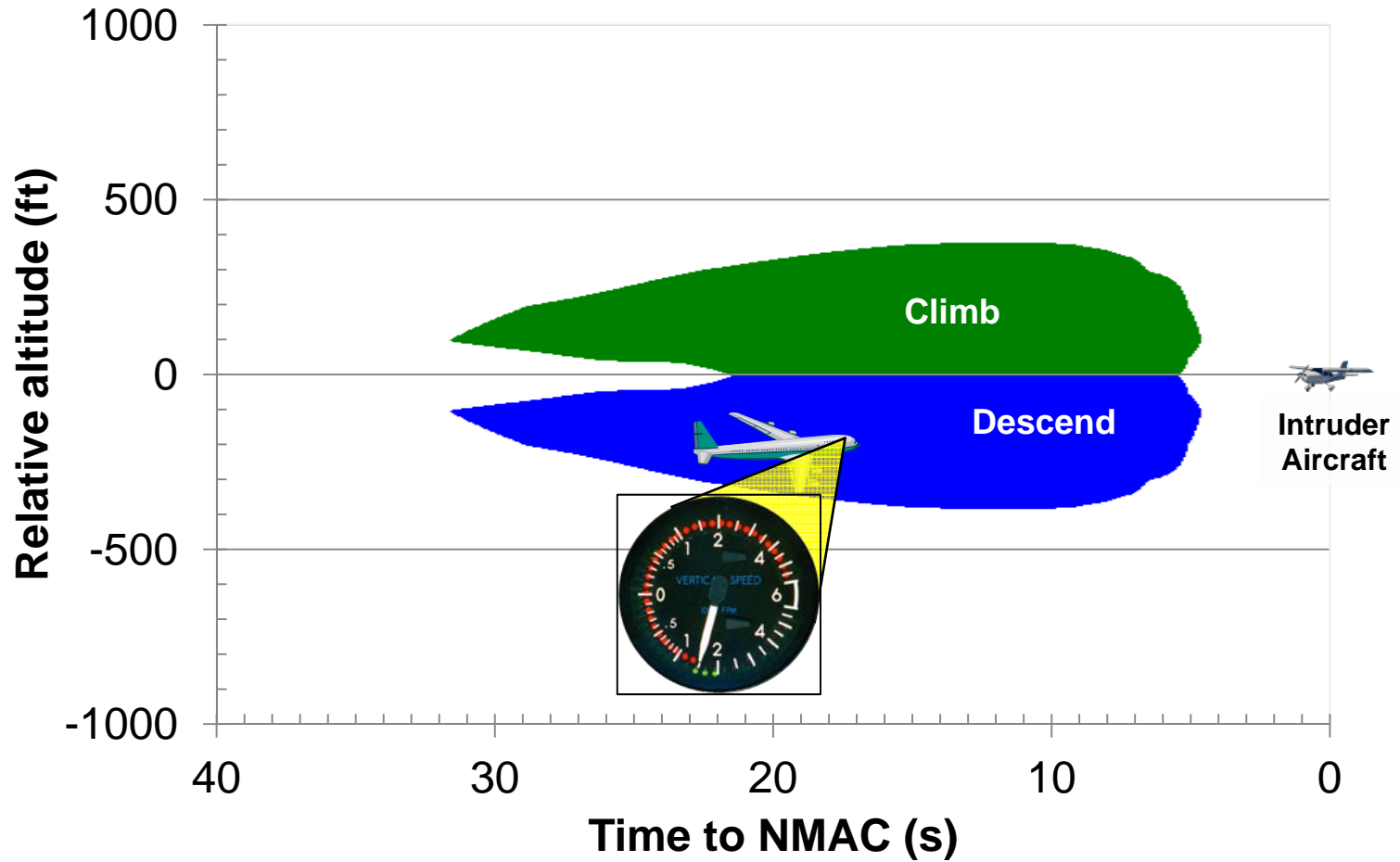
Dynamic Programming (DP)





Optimized Logic

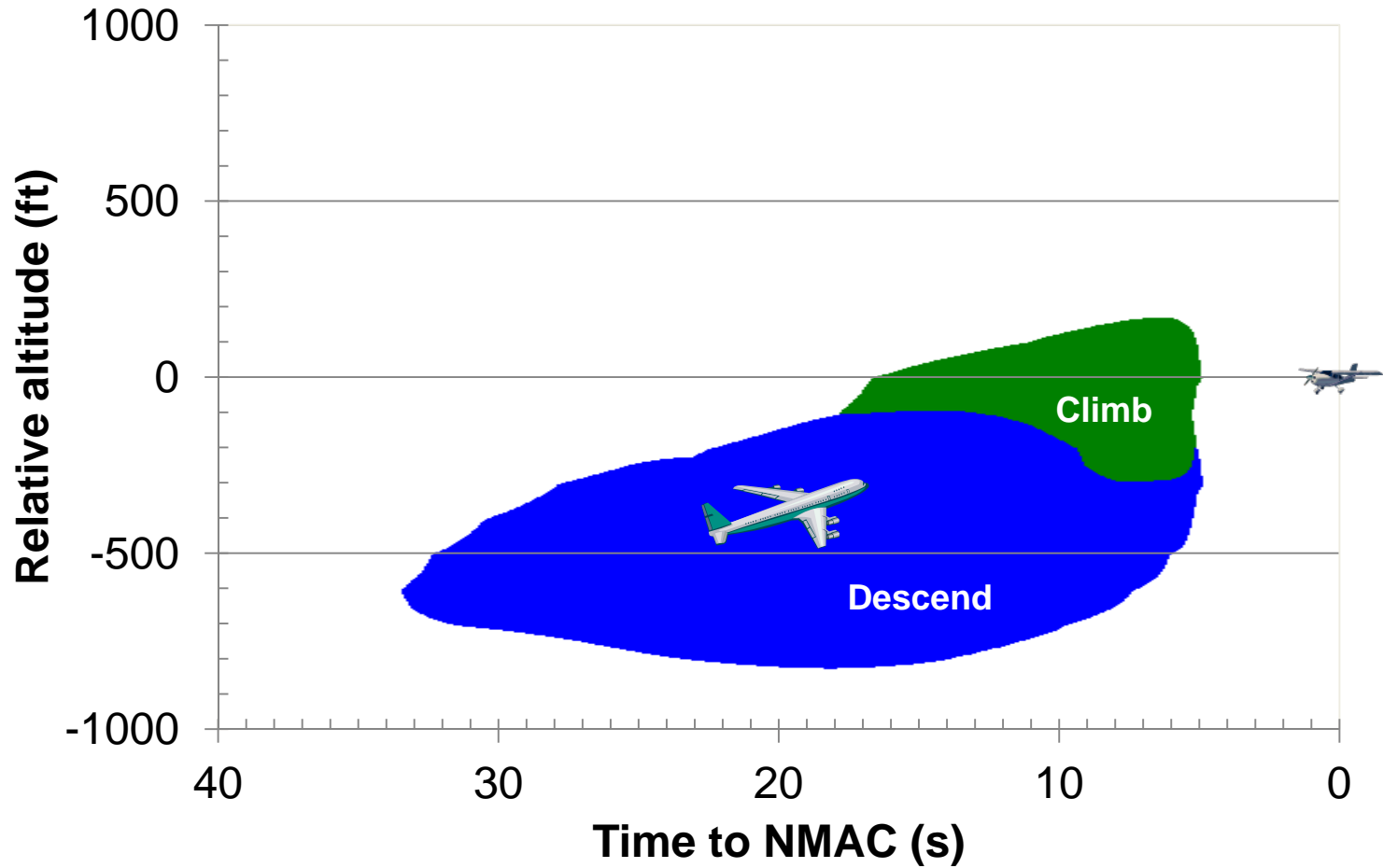
Both Own and Intruder Level





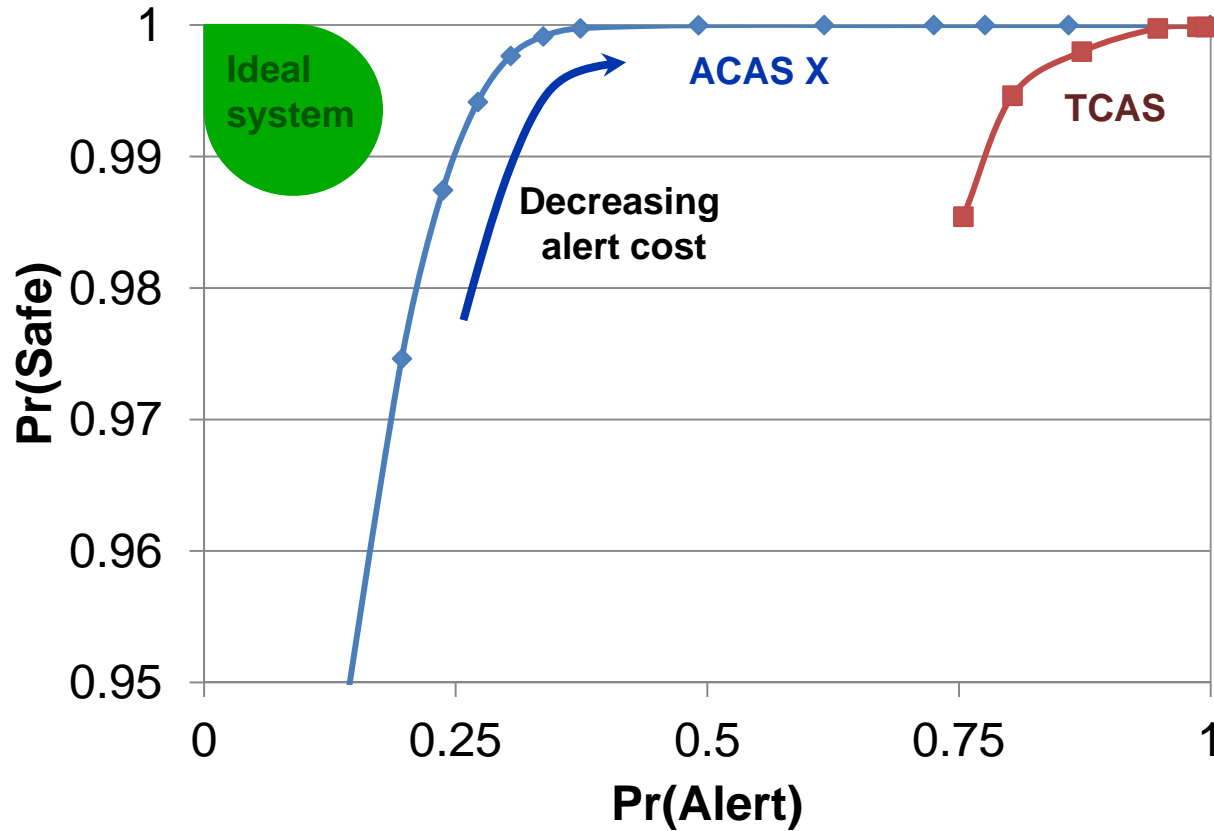
Optimized Logic

Own Climbing 1500 ft/min, Intruder Level





Safety Curve

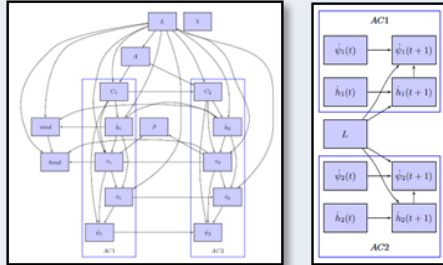


$$\text{Pr}(\text{Safe}) = 1 - \text{Pr}(\text{NMAC})$$



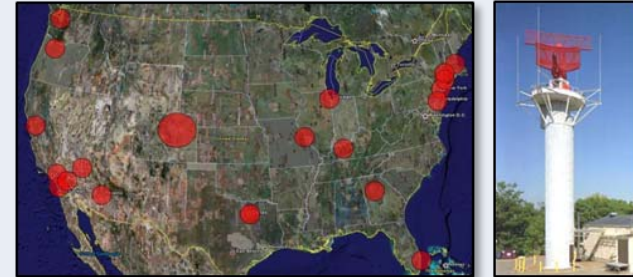
Performance Validation

Airspace Encounter Models



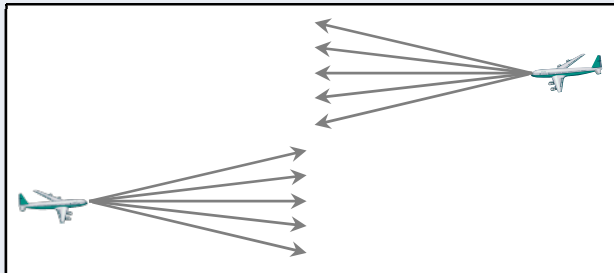
Generate many encounters representative of airspace

Recorded Radar Tracks



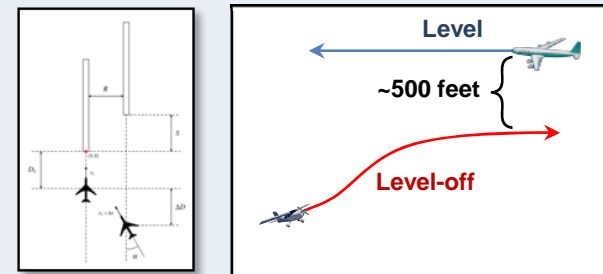
Recorded radar tracks with known TCAS intervention

Stress Testing



Exhaustive variations of certain classes of encounters

Scenario Specific Mini-Models



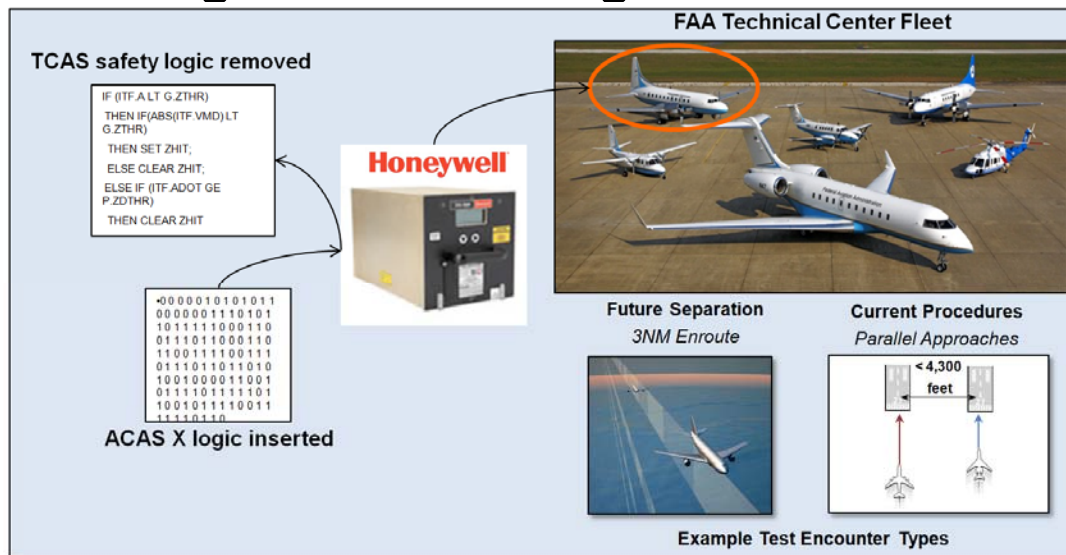
Focused models constructed from expert knowledge and data

M. J. Kochenderfer, J. E. Holland, and J. P. Chryssanthacopoulos, "Next generation airborne collision avoidance system," *Lincoln Laboratory Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 17-33, 2012.



Future of ACAS X

- Performance validation continues, initial results positive
 - Reduced nuisance alert rate: 63% fewer alerts
 - Complex reversal / crossing alerts reduced by 52%-68%
- Operational flight tests starting in 2013

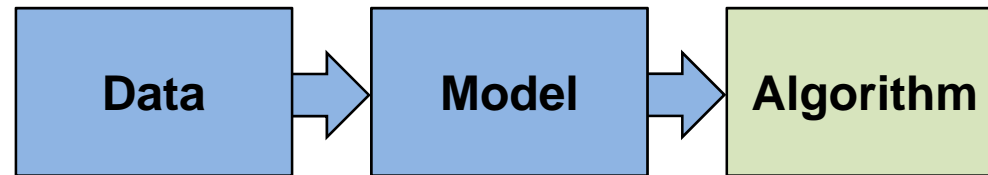


Final performance requirements and additional tuning will be vetted through a government / industry standards-making group

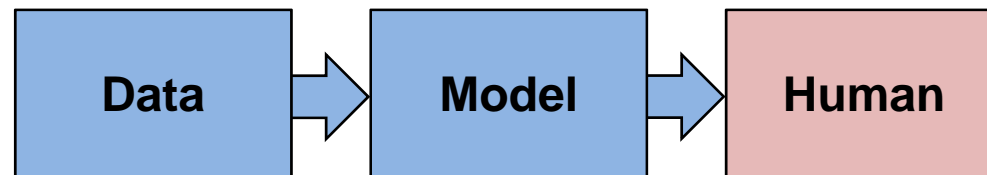


Two Vignettes

1: Collision avoidance

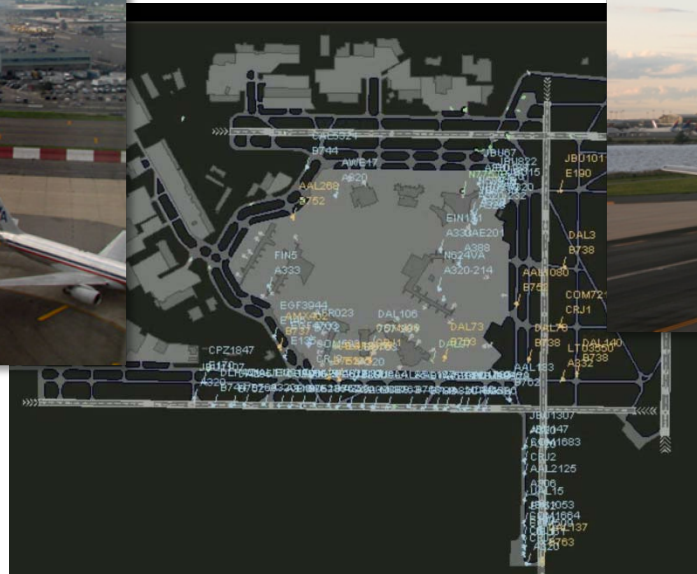


➔ 2: Airport departure management





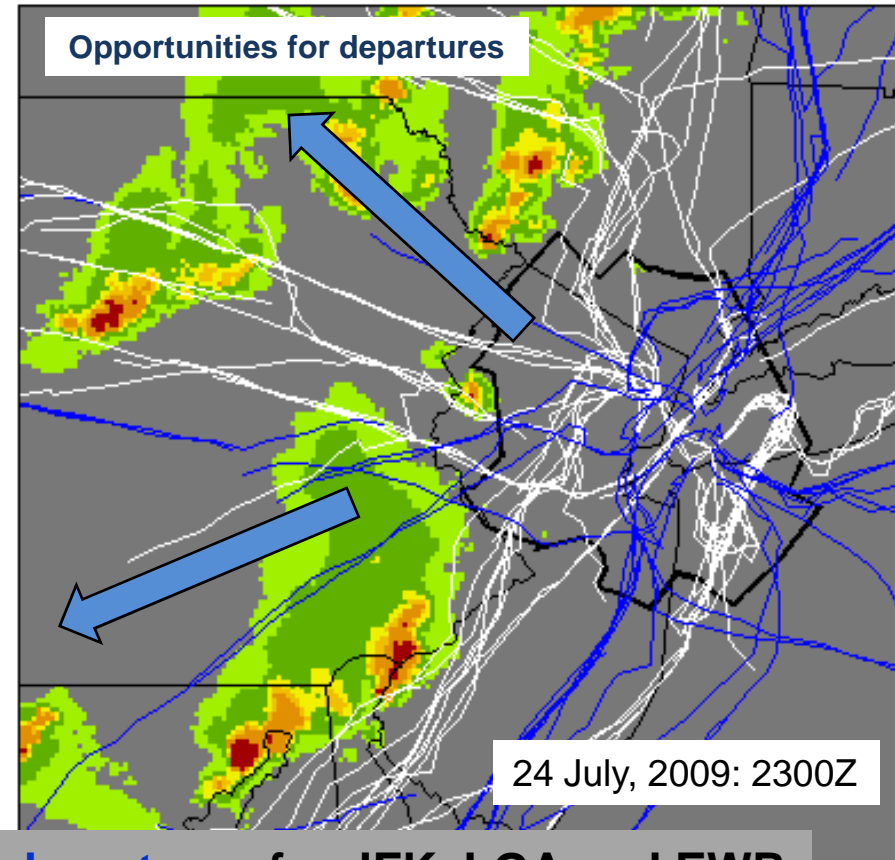
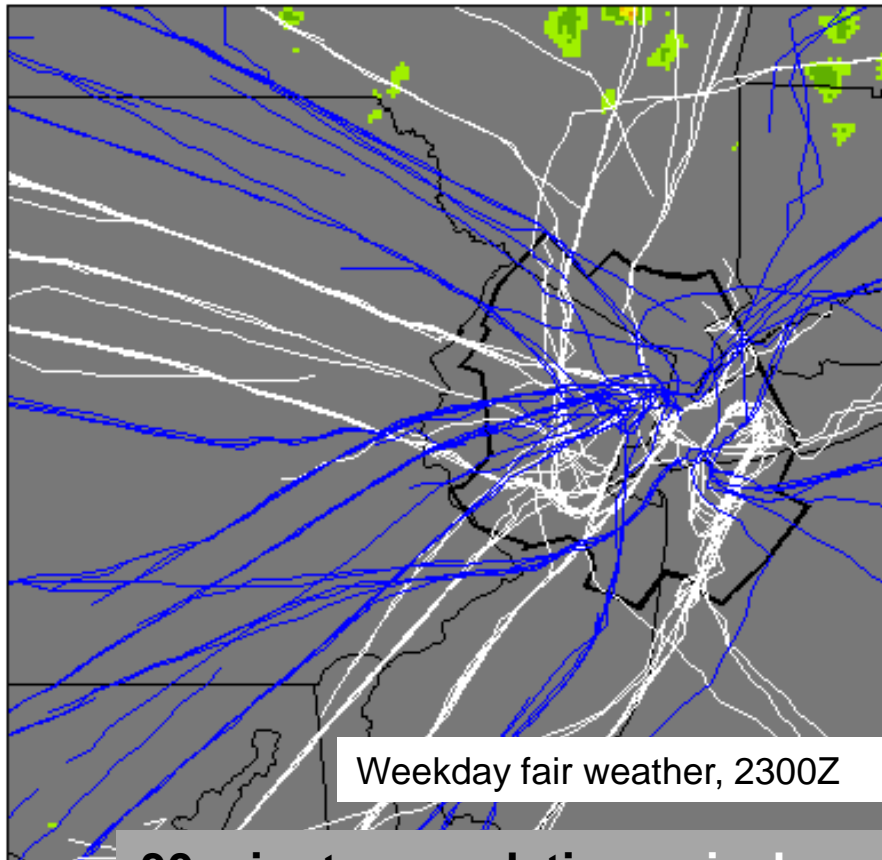
Motivation for Improving Departure Management



- **Estimated 75% of all US air traffic delays related to NY airports or airspace**
- **Severe Weather Avoidance Programs (SWAP) for convective weather in place 60-80 days per year in NY**



Missed Departure Opportunities



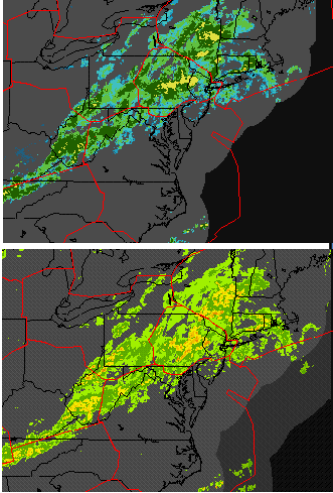
30 minute cumulative arrivals and departures for JFK, LGA and EWR

- Many factors contribute toward missed opportunities
- Example of 'difficult decision making': time pressure, ambiguous information, significant consequences



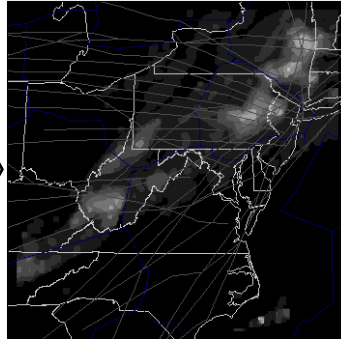
Route Availability Planning Tool (RAPT)

CIWS echo top forecast

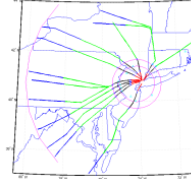


CIWS VIL forecast

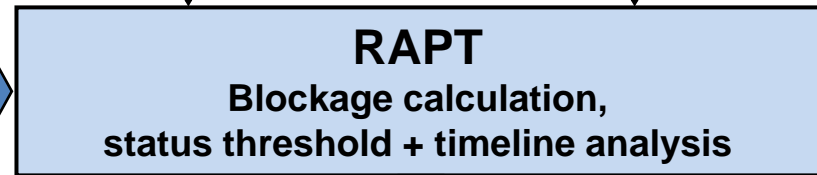
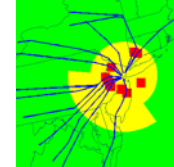
Weather Avoidance Field (WAF)



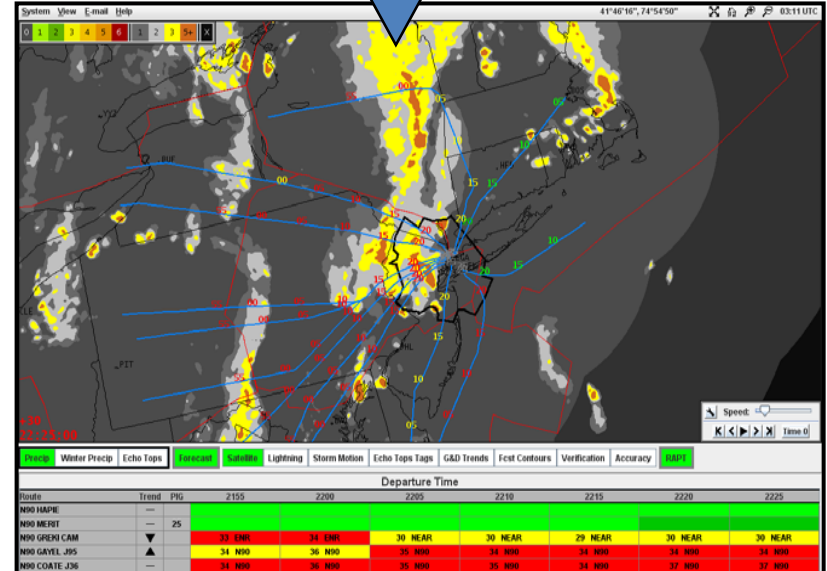
Departure route database



Deviation sensitivity field

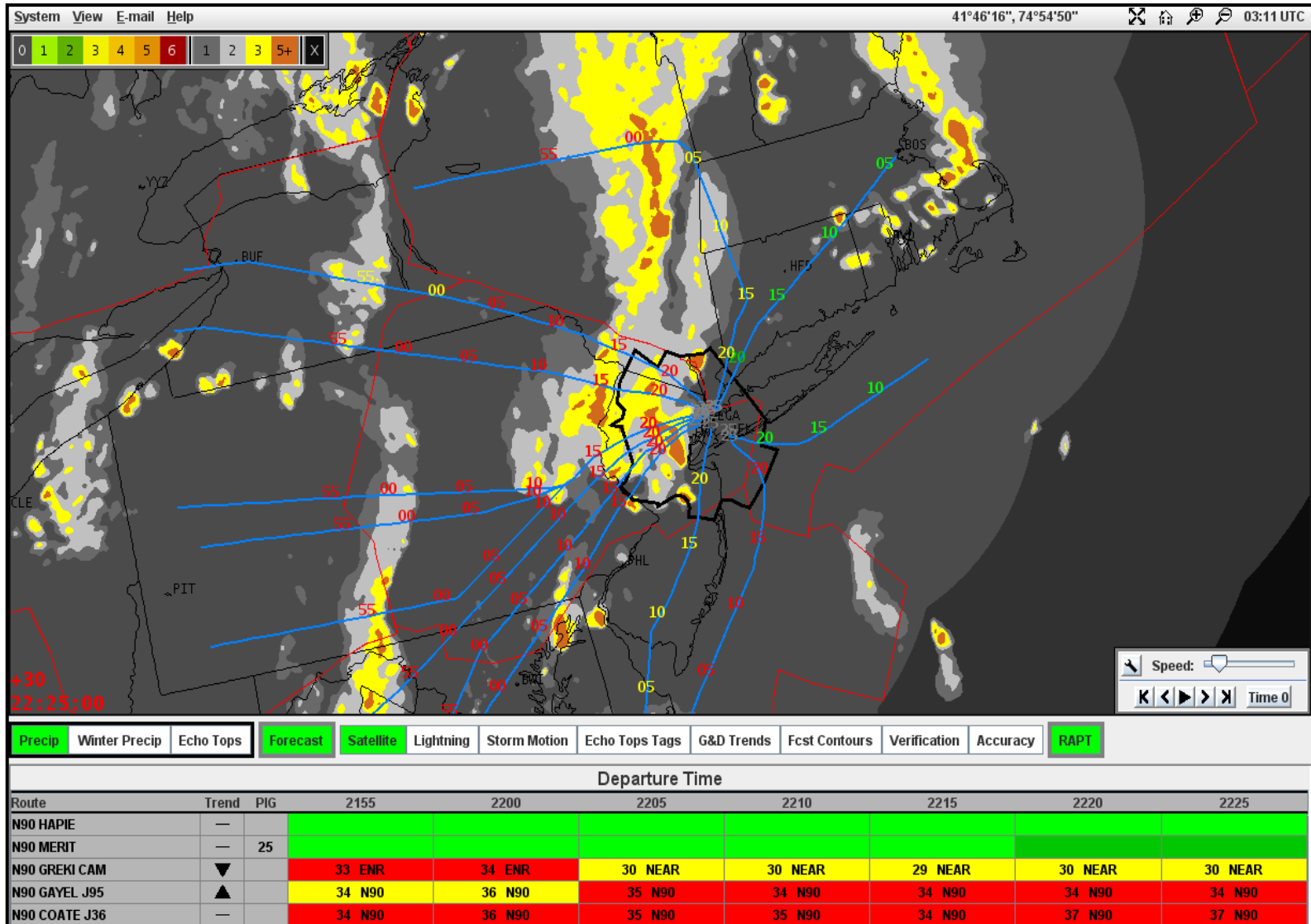


RAPT provides 30 minute forecast of departure route impacts via dedicated and web-based displays deployed to FAA and airline facilities





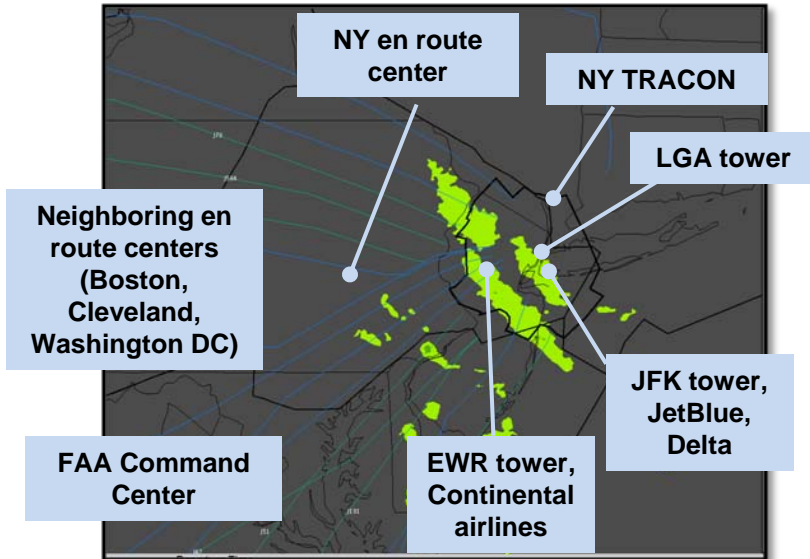
RAPT User Interface



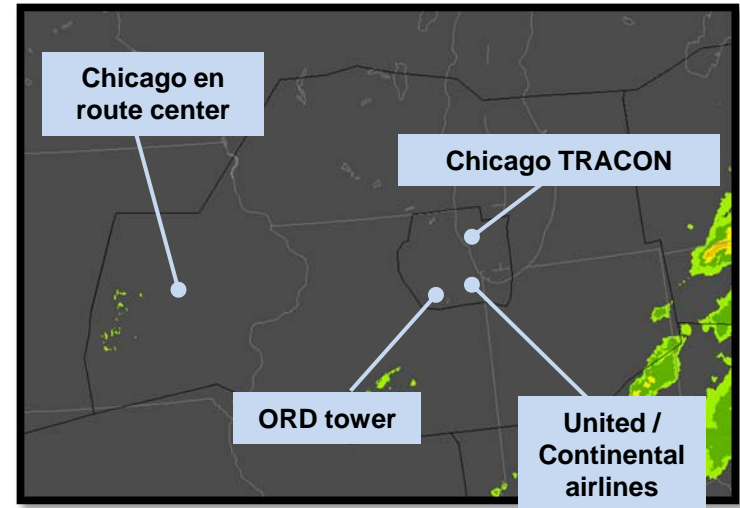


RAPT Evaluations

New York



Chicago

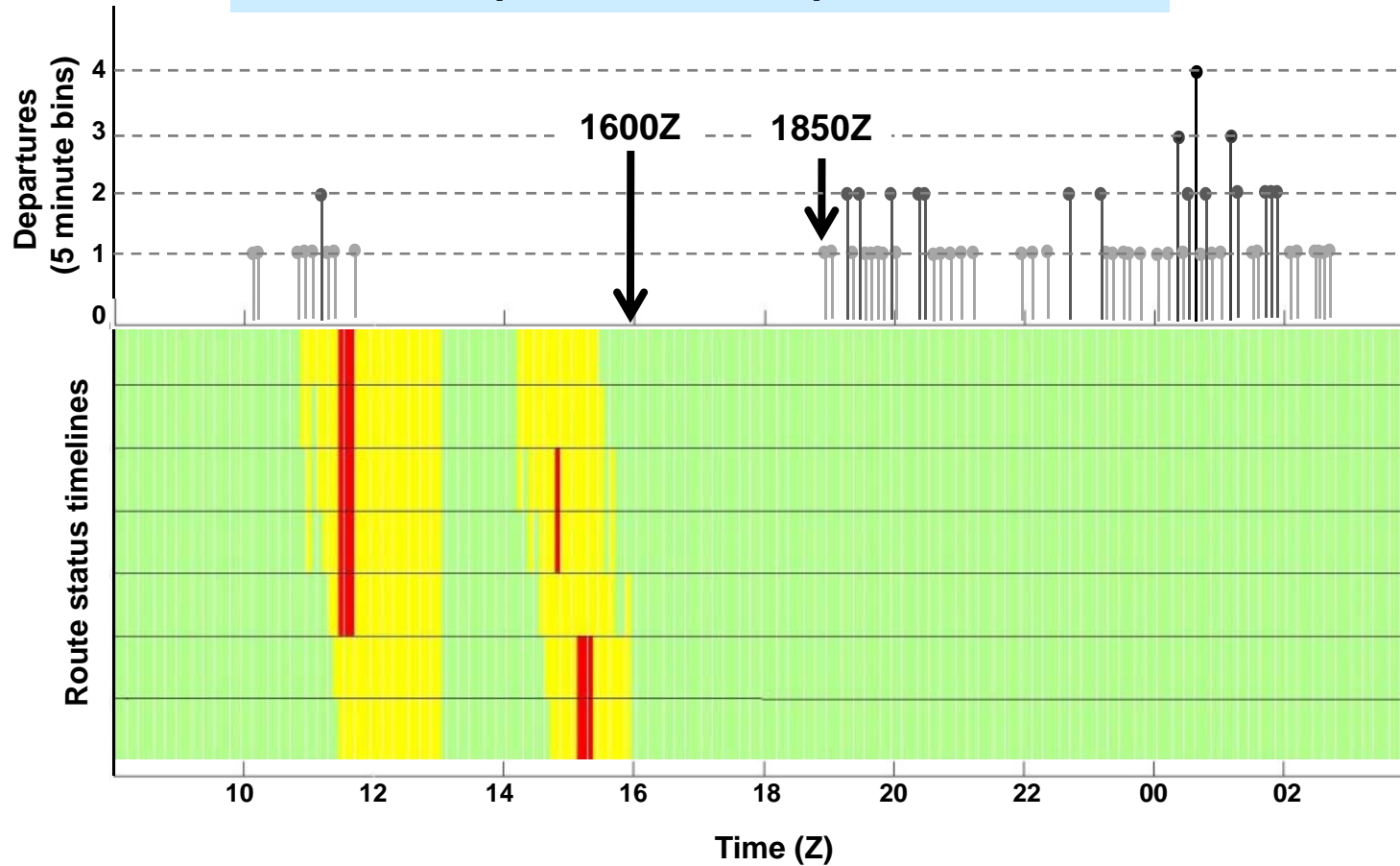


- **Deployment included annual training, user group meetings, and operational evaluations**
 - NY (2007–2009): concept development, investment decision
 - Chicago (2010, 2012): extension of concept, site adaptation
- **Evaluations combined simultaneous observations at all operational facilities with data analysis from several thunderstorm events**



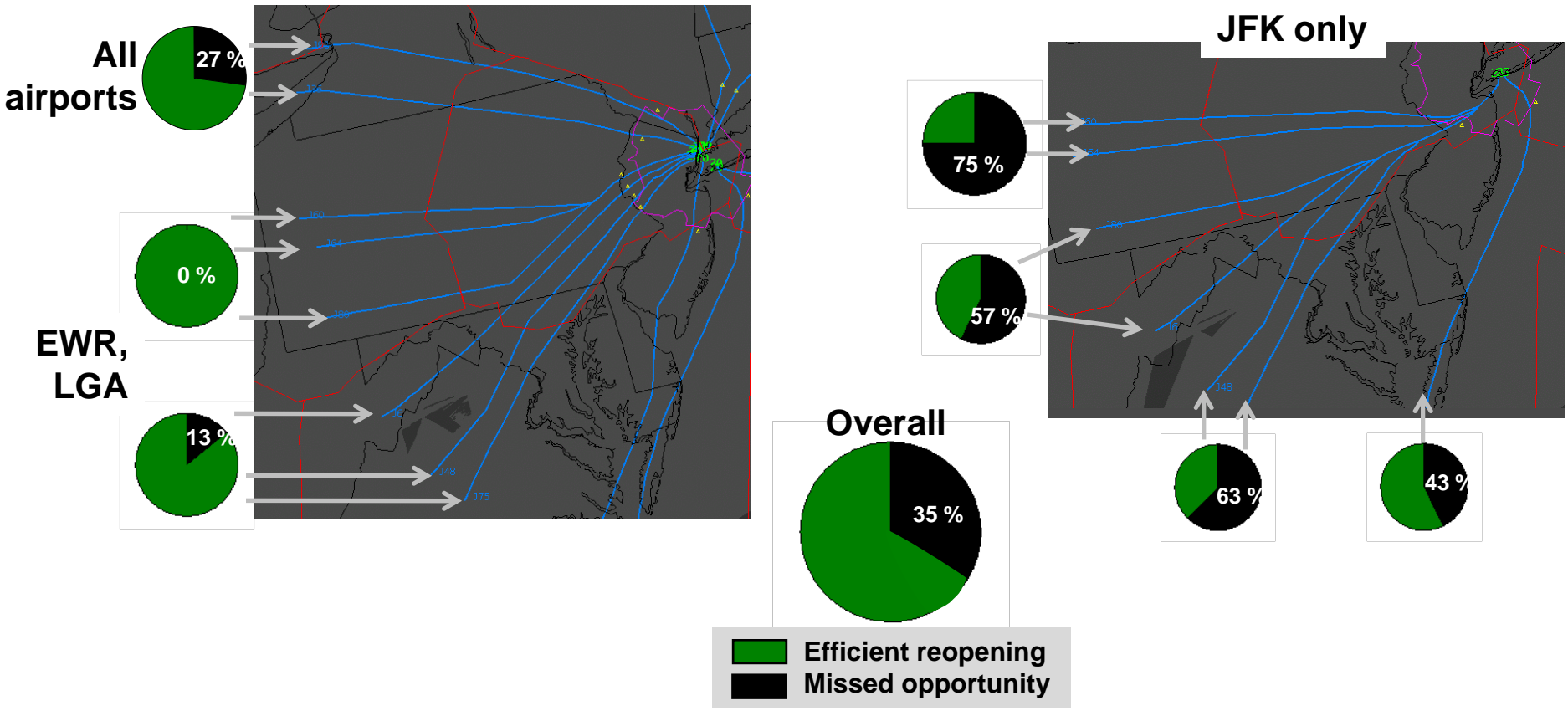
Example Post-impact Green Missed Opportunity

2 hour, 50 minute gap between end of weather impact and first departure





Missed Opportunities for Timely Route Reopening on Post-Impact Green



11 days studied (2008): 113 post-impact green opportunity events

Efficient reopening = departure within 15 minutes of Green

Missed opportunity = no departure within 15 minutes



Developments in Response

GREEN = GO



RED = PLAN REROUTE



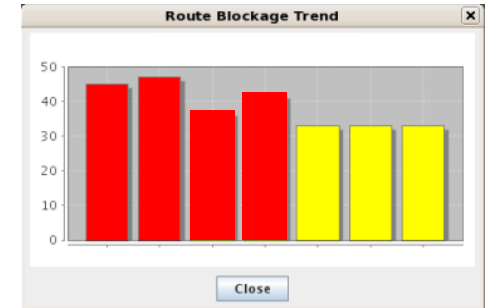
Route	Trend	PIG	2155
N90 HAPIE	—		Green
N90 MERIT	—	25	Green
N90 GAYEL J95	▲		33 ENR
N90 COATE J36	—		34 N90

Post-impact
Green timer

**YELLOW = USE JUDGMENT
(apply / reduce restrictions)**



Route	Trend	PIG	2155
N90 HAPIE	—		Green
N90 MERIT	—	25	Green
N90 GAYEL J95	▼		33 ENR
N90 COATE J36	▲		34 N90



Past blockage and echo
top trends

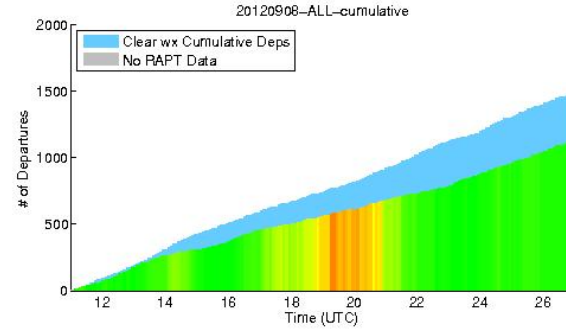
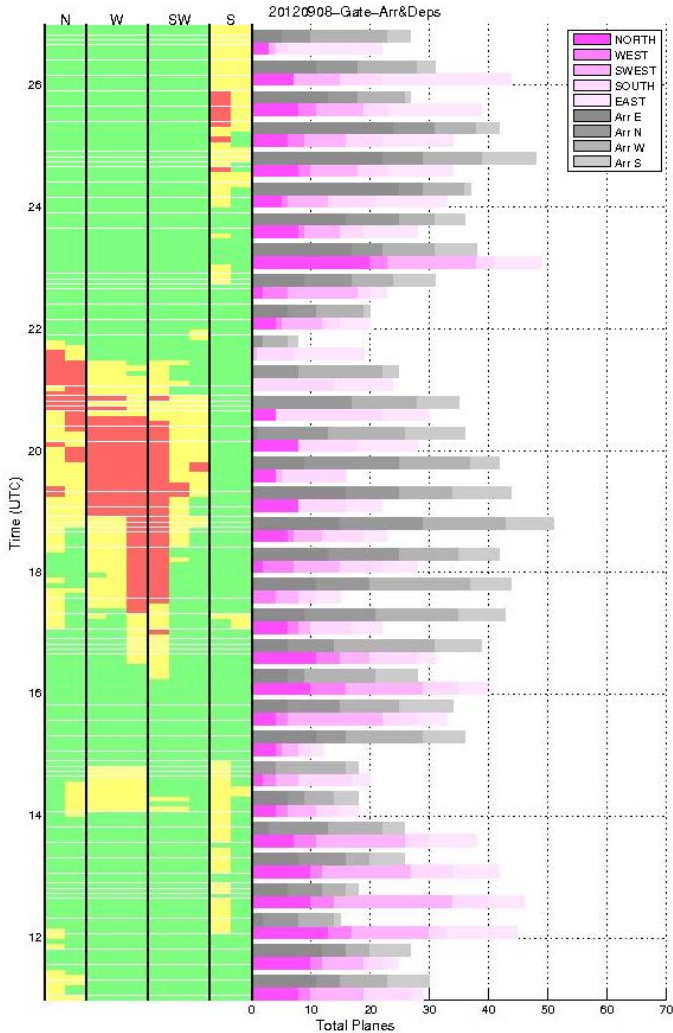
- Refocus training, ConOps on high confidence, high value decisions
- Provide additional information where uncertainty is high
- Provide automated next-day analysis and performance metrics



Additional Feedback to the User: Daily performance summaries

NY RAPT/Route Usage Analysis - 08 September 2012

[How to interpret these plots](#)



Cumulative Departure Plots

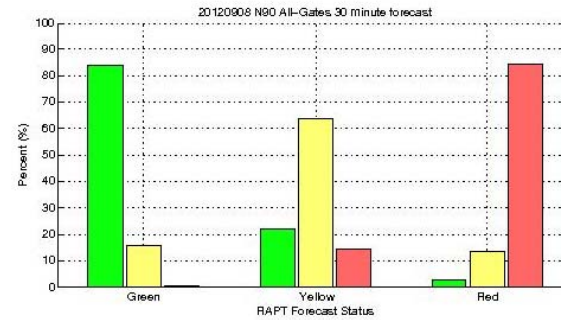
[Airport Departures](#)

Route Groupings ▾

RAPT Route Departure Plots

[RAPT "Post-Impact GREEN" Statistics](#)

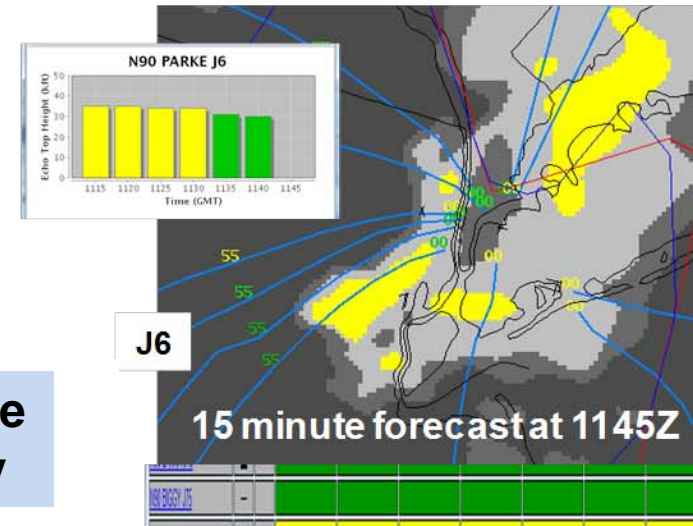
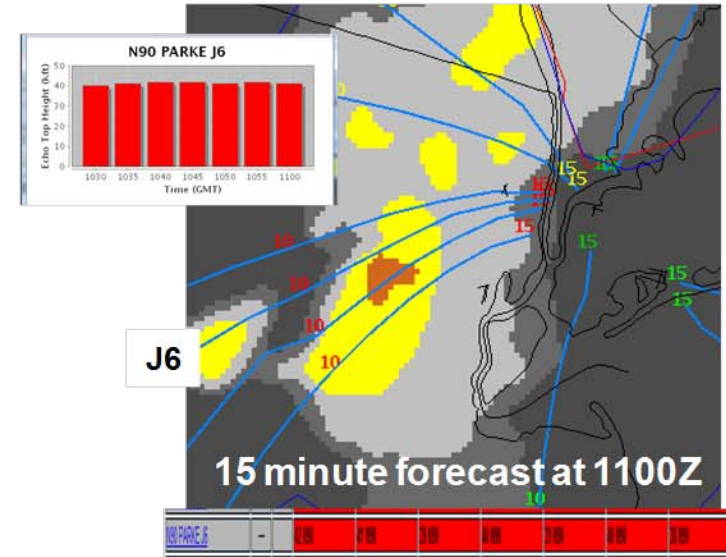
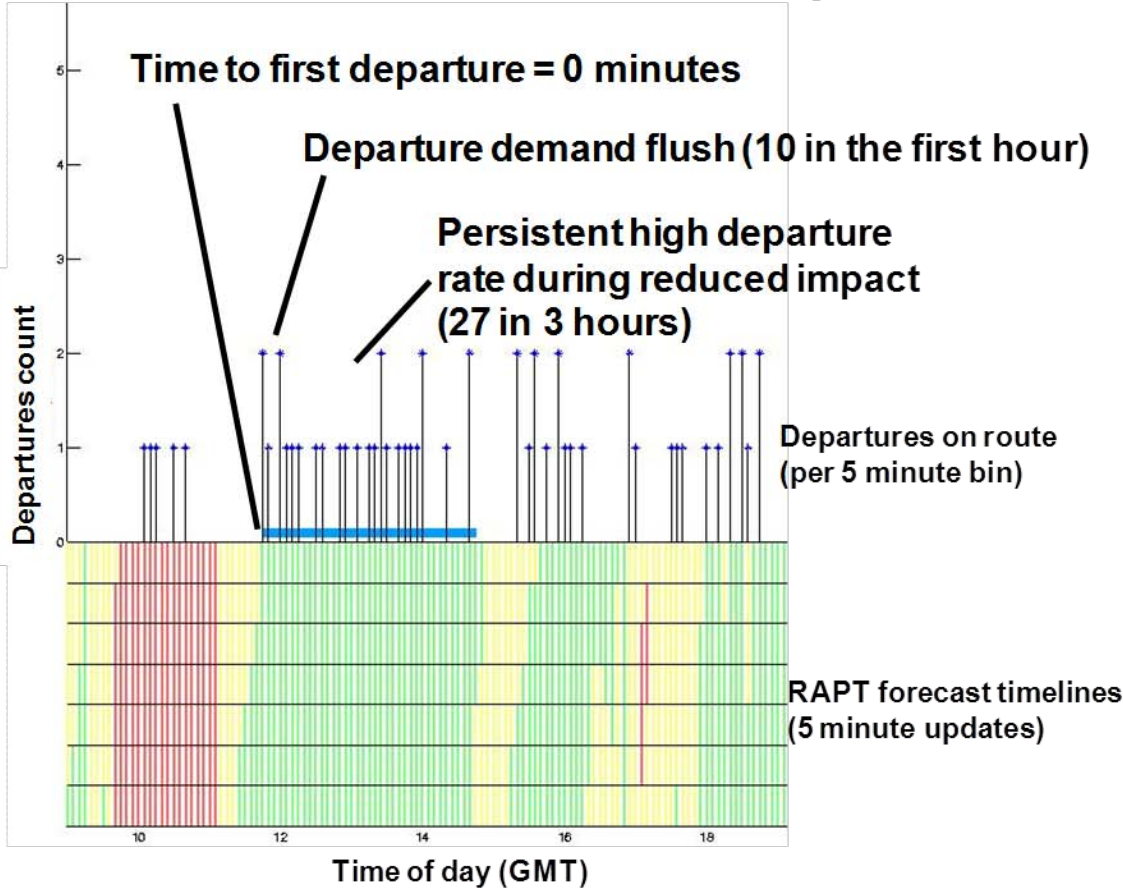
Routes ▾





Using RAPT to Proactively Reopen a Departure Route

July 29, 2010

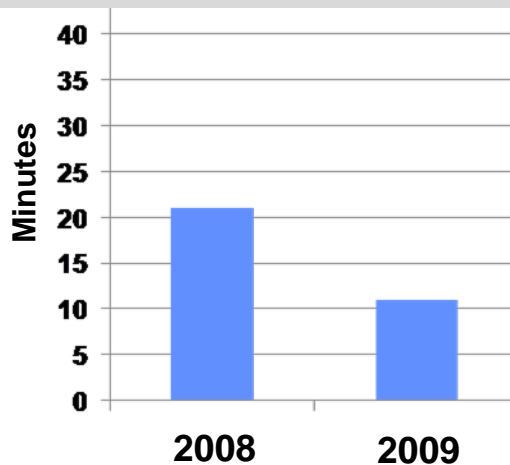


Proactive re-opening of closed route releases pent-up demand efficiently



Impacts

Post-impact Green: Mean Time to First Departure



	Delay savings (hours)
2007 TOTAL	2,366
2008 TOTAL	2,618
2009 TOTAL	5,549

- **Improved performance and evidence of procedural evolution**
 - More rapid, higher-volume route re-opening
 - Reduced reliance on pathfinders to validate open routes
 - Proactive ‘open on Yellow’ in anticipation of Green
- **RAPT slated for FAA deployment to Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington DC, New York**



Summary

- **Models and algorithms need to be matched to actual operations via the available data**
- **Broad access to data, coupled with advanced techniques, are enabling new direct algorithmic design methods**
- **Many exciting challenges remain in Air Traffic Control**
 - Extracting benefit from advances in Communications, Navigation, and Surveillance
 - Push toward more effective design and assessment methods

