



French Ministry of Defence selects Thales for CONTACT programme

Thales is to supply French armed forces with next-generation air and naval tactical radios with faster transmission speeds, enhanced security and extended interoperability.

The first tranche of development work for the CONTACT programme is valued at €263 million.

Neuilly, 21 June 2012 - The French defence procurement agency (DGA) officially notified Thales of the award of the development contract for the CONTACT programme on 21 June. This strategic programme is designed to equip the majority of the French forces' platforms with next-generation tactical radios incorporating innovative software-defined radio technology.

"We are very proud to have been selected to design and build a complete theatre communications system comprising future air and naval tactical radios and associated waveforms, which will give French forces the joint communications capabilities they need to accomplish their missions effectively," said Luc Vigneron, Chairman & CEO of Thales. "The CONTACT programme is strategically important for the French armed forces and key to France's national sovereignty, and it also provides a solid framework for the future development of software-defined radio at the international level."

Network-centric operations hinge on the ability to move ever-increasing volumes of information between all the players in the battlespace. Communication systems are therefore central to this trend and have a key role to play in the critical decision chain, especially in complex environments and multinational coalition operations.

To accommodate this growing complexity, six European nations—Finland, France, Italy, Poland, Spain and Sweden—launched the ESSOR project (European Secure Software defined Radio) in 2009. ESSOR aims to establish a baseline standard for development and production of military software-defined radios in Europe. An ESSOR reference architecture has been defined and shared between the European partners, compatible with the U.S. SCA standard, and a coalition high-data-rate (HDR) waveform has been developed to provide the basis for a new standard.

The CONTACT programme will therefore draw on a foundation of communication architecture standards and on the European waveform developed by the ESSOR partners to guarantee interoperability. Software radios and waveforms developed within this framework will meet new requirements with high operational value as armed forces transition to the digitised battlespace and increase their reliance on C4I, video transmissions and other value-added services during multinational operations.

Future CONTACT radio products will be fielded with the French Army, Air Force and Navy, providing faster transmission speeds, better security and heightened interoperability. They will be interoperable with the communication systems of other nations to support coalition operations.

NEWS

DIRECTION DE LA COMMUNICATION | CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS



These products will be interoperable with the PR4G waveform, thus assuring upward interoperability with PR4G radio equipment currently in service.

This contract award is a further endorsement of Thales's defence communications technology and will sustain the company's world-class expertise in the field of tactical communications. With CONTACT, Thales has consolidated its worldwide leadership in defence communications and now has an opportunity to repeat the export success of its PR4G system (more than 150,000 radios in service in 40 countries).

Development work will be carried out mainly in the Paris region and at Cholet, and all the manufacturing will be conducted at Cholet and Brive.

About Thales

Thales is a global technology leader for the Defence & Security and the Aerospace & Transportation markets. In 2011, the company generated revenues of €13 billion with 67,000 employees in 56 countries. With its 22,500 engineers and researchers, Thales has a unique capability to design, develop and deploy equipment, systems and services that meet the most complex security requirements. Thales has an exceptional international footprint, with operations around the world working with customers and local partners.

www.thalesgroup.com

Follow Thales on Twitter : @ThalesPress

Press contact:

Thales, Media Relations – Land & Naval Defence

Sonia Le Guével

Tel: +33 (0)1 57 77 91 60

sonia.leguevel@thalesgroup.com

NEWS

DIRECTION DE LA COMMUNICATION | CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

45, rue de Villiers – 92526 Neuilly-sur-Seine Cedex – France – Tel: +33 (0)1 57 77 86 26 – Fax: +33 (0)1 57 77 87 44

www.thalesgroup.com