



## **AQUILA selected by UK Ministry of Defence to transform air traffic management of all military airfields**

29 October 2014 – AQUILA, a joint venture between NATS and Thales, has signed a contract to deliver Marshall, the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD) programme to transform terminal air traffic management at military airfields. The contract is valued at around £1.5bn over the course of its 22 year life-span.

Marshall seeks to ensure a safe, efficient and sustainable Air Traffic Management (ATM) service for the UK Armed Forces. It will modernise ATM at over 100 MOD locations, in the UK and overseas, including more than 60 airfields and ranges.

AQUILA will deliver a system-wide modernisation and rationalisation of the current fragmented system, and establish a flexible ATM service – one that complies with known regulatory requirements and which is future-proofed to meet any potential change in the regulatory and technological landscape.

The contract scope supports ATM terminal operations, which will continue to be delivered by military air traffic operators. AQUILA will deliver new equipment, system upgrades, maintenance, support services and training. The AQUILA solution introduces four new ATM hubs – allowing services to be centralised, streamlining delivery and making better use of new technology. Overseas airfields, Royal Navy Air Stations and the more geographically isolated UK airfields and ranges will continue to operate on a stand-alone basis, but with fully modernised approach and visual control rooms.

Maintenance services will be delivered through a regional support model of six UK regions, ensuring quick response times whenever an issue is identified. The regional teams will be supported 24/7 by a dedicated technical service desk located at NATS' Control Centre in Hampshire; this centralised function will be staffed by highly-qualified ATM engineers, and will be responsible for service control and monitoring.

The MOD expects AQUILA's solution to deliver the UK Government savings of approximately £1bn over the contract duration.

AQUILA assumes responsibility for Marshall services on 1 April 2015. An asset replacement programme to install advanced ATM equipment will be phased in from that date; this will include new and upgraded surveillance radars, control and navigations systems.

Richard Deakin, CEO of NATS, said: "Marshall promises a genuine transformation for the UK's military ATM. I'm delighted that the AQUILA proposal has been selected, as it was low risk, with proven credibility to deliver ATM service transformation in the UK, and with safety at its heart. Our solution will help the MOD achieve very significant cost savings over many

years. By selecting AQUILA, the MOD is leading the world in extending the joint military/civil ATM approach, and Marshall will be a global showcase for the benefits it can deliver.”

Victor Chavez, CEO of Thales UK, said: “AQUILA brings together the best-in-class providers of ATM systems and services to deliver the optimum solution for UK military air operations. Thales will draw on its extensive experience of delivering mission critical services to the MOD, and from other infrastructure projects that have demanded 24/7 service availability and required significant upgrades on infrastructure that is in constant use. Marshall will showcase the best in UK innovation – from the delivery model and the long-term partnership with the MOD, to the leading-edge technology that will be deployed at the airfields.”

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### **Note to Editors**

- Included in Marshall is the provision of modern assets for three sets of fixed deployable and five sets of tactical deployable (man portable) air traffic control systems.
- Marshall also includes the provision of Air Traffic Control Officers at six military airfields (Gibraltar, Wattisham, Middle Wallop, Netheravon, Barkston Heath and Woodvale), where service is currently provided by civilian controllers.
- The term “terminal air traffic management” refers to take off, climb, approach, landing, and ground movements.
- The £1.5bn contract value excludes VAT.
- NATS and Thales formed AQUILA in 2010 to deliver Marshall.
- NATS is the UK’s leading air traffic management provider, delivering services at 15 major commercial airports in the UK, and handling 2.2 million flights through UK-controlled airspace every year. NATS has a proven track record of working in a joint and integrated way with the military, combining on a number of projects to enable long term savings and efficiencies.
- Thales is the world leader in air traffic management, with 170 customers worldwide, and the primary supplier of equipment and services for UK ATM. Thales is also an established provider of mission critical services to the MOD and Transport for London, among others; these activities provide on-going reliance, continued improvement and value for money. Existing service activities for the MOD include providing ISTAR capability in theatre, signal-in-space air navigation services, and air crew training.

### **About NATS**

NATS is a leading air navigation services specialist, handling 2.2 million flights in 2013/14, covering the UK and eastern North Atlantic. NATS provides air traffic control from centres at Swanwick, Hampshire and Prestwick, Ayrshire. NATS also provides air traffic control services at 15 UK airports including Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Birmingham, Manchester,

Edinburgh and Glasgow; at Gibraltar Airport and, in a joint venture with Ferrovial, at a number of airport towers in Spain.

Building on its reputation for operational excellence and innovation, NATS also offers aerodrome, data, engineering and consultancy solutions to customers worldwide, including airports, air traffic service providers and Governments. There is more information on the NATS website at [www.nats.aero](http://www.nats.aero)

### **About Thales**

Thales is a global technology leader in the Aerospace, Transportation and Defence & Security markets. In 2013, the company generated revenues of €14.2 billion (equivalent to £11.5 billion) with 65,000 employees in 56 countries. With its 25,000 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.

Thales UK employs 7,500 staff based at 35 locations. In 2013 Thales UK's revenues were around £1.3 billion.

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