

CIS

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Airbus Defence and Space to connect French Navy vessels to the Comcept satellite communication system

- After the Comcept system was brought into service in 2015 with initial operational capability, it is now to be extended to French Navy vessels

The French Defence Procurement Agency (DGA) has awarded Airbus Defence and Space and Actia Telecom a contract to equip 17 French Navy vessels with the capability to connect up to the Comcept broadband communication system.

Comcept is an 'all IP' (Internet Protocol) technology broadband satellite communication network whose initial operational capability was brought into service in the French Armed Forces in 2015. This system aims to respond to the increase in data exchanges between military equipment and information systems, adding on to the Syracuse satellite system via new satellite transmission capacities in the Ka band, especially those of the Franco-Italian military satellite Athena-Fidus, or via capacities in the Ku and C bands.

The first seventeen vessels are going to be equipped with new navalised satcom terminals. The contract also plans to install teleports both in mainland France and in the territories overseas to ensure connection to the Ministry of Defence's terrestrial networks. The installation of Comcept on board vessels will allow all satellite broadband needs to be catered for within a global, unified system shared first by the Army and the Air Force, and now by the Navy.

The French Armed Forces had the opportunity to try out the Comcept system in 2015 during its initial implementation. It is planned to ramp up the deployment of user ground stations over 2016.

"As the leading operator of military Satcom services in the world, Airbus Defence and Space has shown the capacity of its French team to support the Ministry of Defence in the development of satellite military communication in a cost-effective manner," said Eric Soulères, head of Technical Authority at Airbus Defence and Space's Communications, Intelligence & Security division.

The core of the Comcept network comprises two redundant mission centres to manage the network and teleports that ensure the transfer of data between the satellite and the terrestrial networks of the Ministry of Defence. The armed forces are equipped with fixed and deployable stations of different sizes (ranging from 70 cm and transportable in a case up to 2.4 m in a shelter) designed by Actia Telecom and Airbus Defence and Space. More than 200 stations have already been delivered.

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At the end of 2012, the DGA entrusted Airbus Defence and Space and Actia Telecom with development of the Comcept network, with the contract planned to run for 17 years. As prime contractor, Airbus Defence and Space is responsible for system engineering and the supply of network core equipment as well as through-life support services. Actia Telecom, a Brittany SME specialised in satellite communications and supplier to the French Ministry of Defence, conducts the engineering, integration and through-life support services for user ground stations.

About Airbus Defence and Space

Airbus Defence and Space, a division of Airbus Group, is Europe's number one defence and space enterprise and the second largest space business worldwide. Its activities include space, military aircraft and related systems and services. It employs more than 38,000 people and in 2015 generated revenues of over 13 billion Euros.

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