

SPACE SYSTEMS

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Airbus Defence and Space to guide lunar lander to the Moon

- **ESA awards new contract to continue developing PILOT lunar landing system**

Airbus Defence and Space, the world's second largest space company, and the European Space Agency (ESA), have signed a contract for the early development of a system that will ensure the safe and precise landing of the Russian Luna-Resource lunar lander.

The contract covers the Phase B and advanced C development steps for the PILOT (Precise and Intelligent Landing using Onboard Technologies) system, a key European element to be flown on the robotic Luna-Resource lander mission as part of the ESA cooperation with Roscosmos on exploration.

ESA and Airbus Defence and Space signed the contract on June 2, 2016 at the ILA airshow in Berlin, Germany.

PILOT, which is being developed by Airbus Defence and Space's facilities in Bremen, Germany, and in Toulouse, France, together with partners across Europe and in Canada, combines navigation techniques with hazard detection and avoidance to support the spacecraft's systems. PILOT will provide key information to the Luna-Resource spacecraft during its autonomous landing phase in the last minutes of the lander's descent to the surface of the Moon.

"PILOT builds upon Airbus Defence and Space's experience in Moon exploration and visual navigation, and is a key addition to our portfolio of exploration activities focusing on the Moon," said François Auque, Head of Space Systems. "By leading activities on PILOT, the Orion spacecraft, the Lunar Polar Sample Return Study, and architectural Moon exploration scenario studies, our teams are key partners supporting ESA's exploration of lunar space and the Moon's surface."

"PILOT puts ESA at the heart of the next phase of lunar exploration and will guide European technology to the surface of the Moon for the first time. It is part of our exciting vision for space exploration that will deliver new knowledge, innovation and inspiration for Europe," said David Parker, Director of Human Spaceflight and Robotic Exploration at ESA.

With almost 10 years of experience in the field of lunar exploration studies and technology development, this initiative strengthens Airbus Defence and Space's position in this area.

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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