



BELGIUM NAVAL & ROBOTICS

PRESS RELEASE

The Belgian-Dutch minehunter replacement programme carried out by Belgium Naval & Robotics successfully reaches the milestone “Preliminary Design Review”

On 18 December 2020, the Belgium Naval & Robotics teams reached a new contract milestone, the programme is still on track. This programme will supply the Belgian and Dutch navies with twelve minehunters equipped with unmanned systems (toolboxes).

“Achieving the Preliminary Design Review confirms that the overall design meets all the client’s contractual requirements. Nearly 200 staff members, employed at the Naval Group sites in Lorient, Ollioules, Nantes-Indret, Angoulême-Ruelle and Paris, have been working hard for months to be able to come up with more than 80 deliverables by mid-November defining the ship and all her systems.” explains Eric Perrot, Naval Group programme director.

This milestone also marks the programme's gradual transition towards the Kership teams. Naval Group is in charge of the preliminary design of the ships and works closely together with Kership. They will start on the detailed design of the ships as of February 2021, followed by their construction.

The construction of the first ship will start in the summer of 2021 and the delivery is planned for 2024.

For the unmanned systems, the completion of this milestone was formalized by the delivery and acceptance of the documentation defining operational use concepts, functional and technical architectures as well as preliminary safety studies of each system (surface drone USV INSPECTOR 125, underwater drone AUV A18-M, towed sonar T18-M, inspection and neutralization drones SEASCAN MK2 and K-STER, aerial drone UAV, the sweep system and containers). *“In the midst of the health crisis, more than 100 ECA GROUP*

employees have contributed to the completion of this important milestone in 2020. We remain fully committed to our customer to reach the following milestones and to start the production of the prototypes in 2021," underlines Jean-Louis Sambarino, ECA GROUP programme director.

This milestone proves once again the resilience of the Naval Group and ECA Group teams. Despite the complex sanitary conditions imposed on the Belgian-Dutch programme just eighteen months after its launch, everything is well on schedule.

"Thanks to their diligence and expertise, Belgium Naval & Robotics managed to deliver all the documents of the Preliminary Design Review on time. The adjustments made by BNR as a result of our in-depth analysis, numerous comments and questions, have been swift and constructive. My binational project team and I are confident and look forward to the Critical Design Reviews."
Captain Claude Bultot, rMCM programme director for the Belgian navy.

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BELGIUM NAVAL & ROBOTICS is the name of the Naval Group – ECA Group consortium set up to meet the Belgian-Dutch tender for the replacement and initial support of the mine warfare capability.

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