



Naval Group and ECA Group offer an innovative mine hunting solution to Belgium and the Netherlands

Naval Group and ECA Group recently established a technological and commercial partnership in the field of unmanned mine warfare. The first practical application was completed as part of the response to the consultation launched by Belgium for a Belgian-Dutch cooperation for the supply of 12 mine hunters.

Mine hunting practices are being revolutionized through the massive use of unmanned systems operating on the surface, in the air and in the sea. This paradigm shift will lead to transformations that will affect naval forces as a whole. The future mine warfare capability should be established, and then develop, based on threats and technological progress in the areas of staff, equipment, interoperability and organization, concepts and doctrine, infrastructures and logistics.

In preparation for this near future, Naval Group and ECA Group recently established a technological and commercial partnership in unmanned mine warfare, aimed at developing and promoting an offer of military mine countermeasure vessels (MCM) integrating drones, sonars, sweep and remotely operated systems.

As partners in a consortium formed for this call for tender, Naval Group and ECA Group are offering an innovative solution for robotic mine warfare, which is fully integrated on board an MCM military vessel. The two partners have combined all their most effective and robust sea-proven solutions, already in mission with other clients, to provide the Belgian and Dutch naval forces with a comprehensive, integrated and cyber-secure solution at a cost-effective ownership cost. In addition to these solutions, the two partners have formed a project management team based in Belgium, which will rely on various local partners, with whom alliances have already been established.

This partnership brings together the skills of Naval Group, European leader in naval defense, responsible for designing, supplying and maintaining military vessels carrying drones, with those of ECA Group, a robotics specialized Group with expertise in mine warfare developed over several decades, responsible for designing and providing resources that may be launched onto minefields (drones, sonars, etc.).

This extension of a collaboration born 60 years ago aims to integrate UMIS™ unmanned systems on board Naval Group vessels to offer launching and recovery systems guaranteeing a high level of availability of these resources at sea, and to integrate them into the vessel's warfare system to manage their mission from end to end.

About Naval Group

Naval Group is the European leader in naval defense. A high-tech company, Naval Group uses its exceptional know-how, unique industrial resources and ability to establish innovative strategic partnerships to meet its clients' requirements. The Group designs, produces and maintains submarines and surface vessels. It also provides services for naval shipyards and bases. Always at the forefront of innovation, in recent years the company has led various developments regarding drones, their integration and their supervision on vessels. Committed to corporate social responsibility challenges, Naval Group is a member of the United Nations Global Compact. In 2017, the Group generated revenue of €3.7 billion and had 13,429 employees.

About ECA Group

ECA Group is an expert in naval drones and unmanned systems and one of the global leaders in this sector for the last 50 years. Moreover, the beginnings of ECA Group in naval robotics took place alongside Naval Group: ECA Group had been tasked with creating a free submarine model at the end of the 60s, which was implemented by Naval Group in St-Tropez. Following that, Naval Group and ECA Group collaborated on developing the first MIDS (Mine Identification and Destruction System) in the world, the PAP guided self-propelled mine clearance ROV. Still used by the French Navy, this robot has been sold in several hundred copies across more than 30 countries.

Today, ECA Group masters underwater drones just as well as surface or air drones, enabling it to offer a very wide and complete range of UMIS™ drone systems suited to all types and sizes of military vessels.

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