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SELEX S&AS Launches Unique Mini Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) – Damselfly at ParcAberporth 2007

SELEX Sensors and Airborne Systems (S&AS), a Finmeccanica company, will unveil a model of its brand new tactical UAV Damselfly at the ParcAberporth Unmanned Systems event on 11-12th July.

This new UAV is designed to be especially effective in specific circumstances where Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) is required due to restricted space for launch and recovery operations, for example from a ship, or in urban areas where similarly sized UAVs have not previously been able to fly. Damselfly combines Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) with a graceful transition to horizontal flight by means of a vectored thrust combined propulsion and lift system.

Damselfly lifts and hovers on four pillars of air through independently directed nozzles co-ordinated by some extremely advanced avionics. This configuration enables Damselfly to have the hover capability of a helicopter but with outstanding wind gust resistance and a small landing and take off footprint. The technology actively resists lateral forces making it ideal for use on ships or for use in so called “Urban Canyons”.

Once airborne, the thrust nozzles swing back, allowing a graceful transition to high speed forward flight on its conventional wings. Damselfly will use the same common ground station as ASIO, STRIX and OTUS, SELEX S&AS’s other mini-UAVs and will, depending on the configuration, offer a variety of payload capabilities.

Damselfly will serve both the military and civilian markets and is ideally suited for Homeland Security roles. The aircraft is capable of take-off and landing in very small areas, whilst reaching top speeds of 150kt (280km/h), and can be built to mini or larger configurations, depending on the specific requirement.

An electric-powered subscale demonstrator of the new UAV - with a span of around 1m - has been undergoing successful hover trials since early April. Further flight trials including transition are planned from November at the ParcAberporth range, with the demonstrator to be converted to an internal combustion engine for the trials.

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David Lazarus, Head of ISTAR and UAV marketing at SELEX S&AS, said "Damselfly is an extremely exciting addition to our UAV portfolio. We have invested significantly in its development and it provides further evidence to our customers of our commitment. Damselfly shows that SELEX S&AS is right at the forefront of UAV development for both military and civilian roles."

Notes to Editors:

None

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