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SELEX S&AS Mini UAVs take to the skies at ParcAberporth Unmanned Systems Event 2007

SELEX Sensors and Airborne Systems (S&AS), a Finmeccanica company, will demonstrate its exciting capability in the UAV sector by flying its new military and civil Mini-Unmanned Aerial Systems, STRIX, OTUS and Asio at the 2007 ParcAberporth Unmanned Systems Event on the 11-12th July. Also on display will be the tactical unmanned system Falco, which first flew at this event last year, and is currently performing well in international markets.

The new mini UAVs incorporate some of the most advanced technology on the market. They are man portable, electrically powered and can be operated in automatic or semi automatic modes. Programmed from a common ground station these platforms fly automatically to designated waypoints and with automatic take off and landing, require no piloting skills to operate. They can be used stand alone or as a critical node in a fully integrated networked surveillance system with payloads that can be controlled manually at any time during the flight.

STRIX can be launched by hand or catapult. OTUS is designed to support tactical units with short range "over the hill" and "around the corner" intelligence and local situational awareness. STRIX is designed for use by Special Forces and typically operates at 300-3000ft from the ground providing medium range surveillance and reconnaissance.

ASIO is a Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) ducted fan system. It is specifically designed for "hover and stare" or "perch and stare" operations for local area surveillance. It can be used for forward scout missions and/ or Special Operations support.

The Mini UAVs, which have developed in collaboration with Italian partners UTRI and ALPI Aviation, are primarily for military applications however all three systems have valuable civilian applications and can be deployed by law enforcement or emergency services as well as by commercial organisations such as railways and utilities.

SELEX S&AS is right at the forefront of UAV development for both military and civilian roles and last year invested in a dedicated UAV Centre of Excellence at ParcAberporth with the aim of providing comprehensive facilities for the integration, test and demonstration of UAVs. This facility is now set to become a cornerstone in the present and future of the Welsh aerospace sector.

These latest mini UAVs complete the SELEX S&AS ISTAR capability that also features the MALE and reconnaissance systems known as FALCO and NIBBIO, a proven ground control station capability and a full range of cutting edge payloads, many of which are produced in-house, providing customers with a powerful array of sensor systems. Key payloads include:-

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- PicoSAR, an Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar which is designed to be a compact, lightweight airborne ground surveillance radar.
- PALS, an Electronic Support Measure (ESM) system which examines the radar emissions from ships and, by using a library of contact information, can passively identify and track vessels of interest.
- Gabbiano Radar, the latest Galileo Avionica airborne multi-mode surveillance radar. Gabbiano is a family of radar operating in X band and suitable to perform surveillance over ground, along coast and over sea in all weather conditions.
- The multisensor hyperspectral camera is as modular airborne hyperspectral camera developed by Galileo Avionica. It is composed by two electro-optical heads operating from the VNIR to the SWIR bands (0.4 to 2.5 micron), and a Digital Data Acquisition System. Creating a distinctive spectral fingerprint for every observed object including vegetation, minerals, gases and liquids, the camera can assess the difference even if it is invisible to the naked eye.
- EOST 45, based on a three sensors E/O payload it is suitable for light platforms (UAS, short range aircraft and light helicopters) and uses, both during day and night, a thermal Imager operating in the Medium wavelength spectrum.

The range of UAVs together with the facilities available at SELEX S&AS's UAV Centre of Excellence offers the customer a wide scope of capabilities which are ideally suited for Homeland Security as well as military applications as the variety of UAVs offer solutions for a range of varied requirements. These applications can find use in police, coast guard and fire fighting, and STRIX can be utilised for a land resource role such as crop monitoring etc.

David Lazarus, SELEX S&AS UK, Head of ISTAR and UAV Marketing, said: "We are delighted to be able to show customers our new UAV systems. It is tremendously important for us to offer the capability of deploying our world-leading sensor systems on these platforms and we are sure that our customers will be impressed by the versatility and reliability of our UAVs – making our proven technology even more useful across a whole range of applications."

Notes to Editors:

None

For further information contact:

<p>Jane McGirk, Head of External Communications SELEX Sensors and Airborne Systems UK Tel: +44 (0) 131 343 8993 Mob: +44 (0) 7736 810172 Email: jane.mcgirk@selex-sas.com</p>	<p>Solange Distefano Pozzuoli Galileo Avionica Press Office Tel: +39 06 41883852 Mob. +39 335 7499374 Email:solange.distefanopozzuoli@galileoavionica.it</p>
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