

Atlantique 2 upgrade contract signed

*Dassault Aviation and Thales to modernise
French Navy's Atlantique 2 maritime patrol aircraft in partnership with DCNS and SIAé¹*

Brest, 4 October 2013 – Dassault Aviation and Thales welcome the award by the French Ministry of Defence of the contract to modernise the French Navy's fleet of Atlantique 2 (ATL2) maritime patrol aircraft. Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian signed the contract at a ceremony to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Thales facility in Brest (French Brittany), in the presence of Laurent Collet-Billon (DGA), Eric Trappier (Dassault Aviation), Jean-Bernard Lévy (Thales), Patrick Boissier (DCNS) and Patrick Dufour (SIAé).

The contract was negotiated with the French Defence Procurement Agency (DGA) and calls for the modernisation of the mission systems of fifteen ATL2s. The main aims of the programme are to develop, then integrate on board the aircraft, next-generation technologies for a new tactical mission system and state-of-the-art sensor subsystems and display consoles. The integrated systems will be among the most sophisticated in the entire aerospace industry. France is the only country apart from the United States to produce maritime patrol aircraft capable of deploying both advanced sensor suites (optronic, radar, acoustic) and a wide range of weapon systems (anti-ship missiles, torpedoes, laser-guided weapons).

The upgrade programme will improve the ATL2's ability to deal with new and emerging threats under all weather conditions, both in strategic deterrence roles and in asymmetric conflicts involving quiet and stealthy submarines, high-speed craft, land vehicles, etc. The aircraft will be equipped to remain in operational service beyond 2030.

The programme will be conducted by Dassault Aviation and Thales (co-contractors) in partnership with DCNS and working with the SIAé.

Dassault Aviation will be in charge of developing the core system, including the LOTI² mission software developed by DCNS. Dassault Aviation will also be responsible for subsystems integration and the conversion of a "prototype" aircraft for flight testing.

Thales will develop the radar/IFF³ subsystem and the latest-generation digital acoustic processing subsystem (STAN). The radar will benefit from the latest technologies based on those developed for the Rafale. The STAN subsystem will process signals from all existing and future sonobuoys, detecting targets over a wider frequency range and making it possible to counter new types of threats.

DCNS will develop the LOTI software, which will establish an overall tactical picture based on data from different sensors, and manage the deployment of torpedoes, missiles and other weapons. This collaborative system enables several operators to interact at the same time.

The SIAé will be responsible for developing the upgraded tactical display consoles and managing full-rate aircraft upgrade operations.

The programme will help to maintain key skills required by the defence industry in areas ranging from undersea warfare and next-generation acoustics to radars for combat and surveillance roles and complex systems architecture and integration. The development and production work will support jobs in several regions of France for both the main contractors and their partner SMEs.

¹ SIAé: Service Industriel de l'Aéronautique (France's integrated support service for military aircraft)

² LOTI: Logiciel Opérationnel de Traitement de l'Information (operational software for information processing)

³ IFF: Identification Friend or Foe

Sensor developments will build on the results of government-funded advanced study programmes in underwater detection and combat aircraft radars, including the RBE2 active electronically scanned array radar (AESA) developed for the Rafale.

Notes to editors:

Dassault Aviation delivered the French Navy's fleet of ATL2 aircraft during the 1990s to conduct air missions in support of France's deterrence capabilities (for the FOST strategic ocean force and its fleet of nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarines) and the country's other strategic missions (knowledge, anticipation, prevention and protection) in a diverse threat environment.

About Dassault Aviation

With more than 8,000 military and civil aircraft delivered to 83 countries over the past 60 years, and having logged nearly 28 million flight hours to date, Dassault Aviation can offer recognized know-how and experience in the design, development, sale and support of all types of aircraft, from the Rafale fighter to the Falcon range of high-end business jets. In 2012, Dassault Aviation reported revenues of €3.94 billion, with around 11,600 employees. www.dassault-aviation.com

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About Thales

Thales is a global technology leader for the Aerospace & Transport and Defence & Security markets. In 2012, the company generated revenues of €14.2 billion with 65,000 employees in 56 countries. With its 25,000 engineers and researchers, Thales has a unique capability to design, develop and deploy equipment, systems and services that meet the most complex security requirements. Thales has an exceptional international footprint, with operations around the world working with customers and local partners. www.thalesgroup.com

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