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European workshop for MIDCAS

Representatives from European aviation authorities, air traffic management organisations and aviation industries gathered today in Brussels to attend the first workshop of the European collaboration project MIDCAS, Mid-Air Collision Avoidance System.

In the future, unmanned aerial vehicles, UAVs, will operate in civilian airspace along with other aircraft. For this to work, the unmanned craft must have a system for detecting and avoiding other aircraft; what is known as a sense and avoid system.

In June 2009, The European Defence Agency (EDA) ordered the development of a sense and avoid system from the European MIDCAS consortium. The consortium consists of 13 aviation industries from five countries and Sweden's Saab is leading the project which will last for four years. The project will also conduct technical studies, leading to a unified standard for sense and avoid systems for flight in civilian airspace.

Today's workshop at Eurocontrol's premises in Brussels involved around 70 representatives from various European aviation authorities, air traffic control organisations, aviation industries and research organisations.

"The goal of our first workshop is to communicate the way forward in the project, including how the project is made up but also how we imagine working on standardisation issues related to the system's technical development. The participants at the workshop form a vital support group for us and we will continue with workshops of this kind about once every six months," explains Johan Pellebergs, principal project manager for the MIDCAS.

The standardisation work will be conducted under EUROCAE, the European Organisation for Civil Aviation Equipment.





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The development of standards and systems will go hand-in-hand, resulting in the flight of an Italian UAV (Sky-Y) by the end of 2012.

“Sense and avoid is one of the key technology challenges identified in the Air4All Roadmap. Developing such a capability as MIDCAS will have an important effect on how we operate unmanned aerial systems, UAS, in the future. The road ahead of us up to 2015 will require additional efforts in fields such as standardisation, certification, continued airworthiness and air traffic management as well as related technology developments. It is the combined effort of all stakeholders that will make the routine operation of civilian, security and defence-related UAS in general air traffic a reality. I am convinced that a fruitful and mutually beneficial dialogue between the defence, security and civilian sector will allow Europe to become a major player in preparing the future of UAS, looking beyond European borders to establish global standards with allies and partners”, says Martin Stoussavljewitsch at EDA, European Defence Agency.

The MIDCAS consortium

Saab

Alenia Aeronautica S.p.A

Diehl BGT Defence GmbH & Co. KG

Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt e. V. in der Helmholtz-Gemeinschaft

EADS Deutschland GmbH

ESG Elektroniksystem- und Logistik-GmbH

Galileo Avionica S.p.A

INDRA SISTEMAS S.A

Italian Aerospace Research Centre CIRA S.c.p.A

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