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27 Companies agree to form NCO Industry Consortium. Saab participates in Industry-led Consortium for Net-Centric Operations

Washington, D.C. – Sept. 28 2004 – The Network Centric Operations Industry Consortium, (NCOIC), a major international, industry-wide consortium, was announced today, combining the technology and expertise of 27 major companies to recommend a unified approach to creating a global network-centric environment.

Members are BAE Systems, Boeing, CACI International, Carrillo Business Technologies, Cisco Systems, EADS, EMC, Ericsson, Factiva, Finmeccanica, General Dynamics, Hewlett-Packard, Honeywell, IBM, Innerwall, L-3 Communications, Lockheed Martin Corporation, Microsoft, Northrop Grumman, Oracle, Raytheon, Rockwell Collins, Saab, SAIC, Smith's Aerospace, Sun Microsystems and Thales North America, Inc., with The Open Group acting as the management company.

NCOIC was created in response to customer requests that industry assume a more prominent role in achieving network-centric capability. The unique charter of the NCOIC makes it complementary to, not competitive with, those other consortia, industry associations, and government bodies that are also working toward the same goal of enabling customers to transform to network centric operations. The focus for the members is to collaborate on the details of the basic infrastructure that will enable net-centric operations, while still enabling robust and healthy competition across the industry.

The consortium will review requirements for information systems and platforms, recommend established standards, incorporate best-of-industry products, and seek government and commercial acceptance to consortium plans on an ongoing basis. This will help to ensure that the established architecture standards continue to meet the needs of governments and private industry worldwide.

Wide acceptance and use of these standards will ensure that systems and platforms, regardless of producer, meet the minimum interoperability requirements established by the customer community. Standardization will enable customers to rely upon and accepted technical foundation, continuously updated and consistent with advancing technology that can be applied to all programs. System developers will benefit from increased reusability, significant reductions in development cost, faster time-to-market, and increased leverage of rapidly advancing information technology. Information technology providers and other members of the commercial industry are expected to

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realize significantly improved market opportunities as a result of the increased capability and interoperability of their products.

Once formed, the consortium's primary objective will be to recommend industry-led open standards to define a common architectural approach to interoperability that is fully compliant with the needs of both government and industry. The consortium will be open and inclusive, thus bringing best of –industry technology and practice together in order to accelerate the availability of this technology to customers seeking to operate in a net-centric environment.

The group's working vision statement is: "Industry, working together, to provide our customers a net-centric environment where all classes of information systems interoperate by integrating existing and emerging open standards into a common evolving global framework that employs a common set of principles and processes."

Saab is one of the world's leading high-technology companies, with its main operations focusing on defence, aviation and space. The group covers a broad spectrum of competence and capabilities in systems integration.

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