

Press release

June 17, 2009

The MIDCAS consortium awarded MID-air collision avoidance system contract

The MIDCAS consortium, composed of 13 European industries, has been awarded the MID-air Collision Avoidance System contract by the European Defence Agency, EDA, on behalf of the contributing member states (France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Sweden, appointed as lead nation). The value of the contract is approximately € 50 million and the project will last for four years.

The pilot's responsibility to see and avoid needs an equivalent mechanism in unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), hence a Sense & Avoid system to determine the presence of potential collision threats and maneuvering clear of them.

The overall objectives of MIDCAS are to demonstrate the technology for a Sense & Avoid system for UAS to be able to fulfill the requirements for traffic separation and mid-air collision avoidance in non segregated airspace and, in close cooperation with European organizations, e.g. Eurocontrol, EUROCAE (European Organisation for Civil Aviation Equipment) and EASA (European Aviation Safety Agency), to provide the technical background for them to establish a Sense & Avoid standard. Transatlantic coordination will be conducted throughout the project with organizations such as the RTCA (Radio Technical Commission for Aeronautics) and FAA (the Federal Aviation Authority).

“The project brings together 13 of the leading European aerospace industries who will gather the multiple European initiatives on Sense & Avoid to achieve a coherent route forward, supported by the European Defence Agency's route map to unmanned aircraft system traffic insertion,” says Lennart Sindahl, Executive Vice President for Saab AB and head of the business segment Aeronautics. “Only by close cooperation we can reach a high level of acceptance and a common European agreement on how to resolve the Sense & Avoid issue. The technology is a key element to start exploring the great potential of using unmanned systems for civil security and military use”



The MIDCAS project major goals are:

- Support for progress on standards based on European knowledge coordinated with European stakeholders
- A mid-air collision avoidance system functional design
- Safety assessment based on extensive simulations supported by flight test validations
- A Sense & Avoid system demonstrator for use in flight demonstrations
- In-flight demonstration starting with manned aircraft followed by real UAS flights during a total of four flight test campaigns with the intention to achieve final UAS flights in non-segregated airspace.

The MIDCAS consortium is composed of the following co-contractors:

Saab AB (appointed as coordinator)

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

Sagem (Safran Group)

Selex Communications S.p.A

SELEX Sistemi Integrati S.p.A

THALES Systèmes Aéroportés S.A.

