DIU Awards ThinKom Contract to Evaluate Comms Antenna for Navy Ships

HAWTHORNE, Calif. – The Defense Innovation Unit (DIU) has awarded a contract to ThinKom Solutions to test and evaluate one of the company's commercial off-the-shelf aeronautical phased-array antenna systems as a solution for next-generation communications on U.S. Navy ships, the company said in a release.

Under the seven-month contract, ThinKom is delivering a ThinAir Ka2517 antenna system for on-board testing to meet Navy requirements for multidomain tactical communications. The Ka-band antenna, based on the company's patented VICTS technology, will demonstrate the capability to be integrated onto a Navy ship. A concurrent design study phase will evaluate performance modifications requested by the Navy.

DIU is a U.S. Department of Defense organization focused exclusively on fielding and scaling commercial technology across the U.S. military to help solve critical problems. Through its agile processes, contract authorities and diverse team of experts, DIU has reduced the time it takes to identify a problem, prototype a commercial solution and implement it into the field to 12 to 24 months.

ThinKom's industry-leading VICTS phased arrays are installed on more than 1,550 commercial aircraft and have accrued more than 17 million flight hours, demonstrating mean-time-between-failure rates well in excess of 100,000 hours. The Ka2517 terminals are in full production and currently operational on a fleet of U.S. government aircraft.

"ThinKom's VICTS technology currently meets all of the DIU

requirements for a low-cost, low-risk COTS solution that can be deployed on a DDG 1000-class destroyer," said Bill Milroy, chief technology officer for ThinKom Solutions. "With millions of hours of service under the extreme dynamic and environmental conditions of modern commercial and military jet aircraft, ThinKom's low-profile, compact VICTS antennas are ideally positioned to meet the Navy's performance requirements on a platform at sea."