Thales Delivers the World's 1st Autonomous Mine Hunting System to the Royal Navy



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- Thales has reached a historic milestone by delivering the first end-to-end autonomous maritime mine hunting system to the Royal Navy. This achievement comes under the aegis of the Joint Armament Cooperation Organization (OCCAr) and within the framework of the Franco-British MMCM (Maritime Mine Counter Measures) project.

- This cutting-edge system places the UK and France at the

forefront of naval innovation. Utilising cyber-secured autonomous drones equipped with Artificial Intelligence (AI), Thales is revolutionising mine countermeasures operations with unprecedented precision and safety.

- Thales relies on 200 skilled jobs, thereby contributing to the dynamism of the British defence industry.

Marking a technological breakthrough in the conduct of mine countermeasure missions, this system drastically reduces the exposure risk for personnel on board ships while contributing to the safety of maritime routes, the backbone of the global economy.

The Royal Navy will receive its first four systems over the course of the year. Each system includes several integrated pieces of equipment and subsystems, enabling the accomplishment of highly complex missions: an Unmanned Surface Vehicle (USV), an advanced towed sonar (TSAM) with a cutting-edge multivision sonar (SAMDIS), a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV), and a lightweight operations centre (e-POC), all supported by a secure command and control system.

Thanks to its expertise in sensors, data analysis, and machine learning, Thales has developed a sonar analysis application, Mi-Map, which processes sonar data up to four times faster, allowing even more precise detection and classification of sea floor mines.

Deployed and operated from a mother ship and coastal bases, the platforms can handle vast volumes of data, enabling operators to expedite the process of identifying and neutralising mines. This innovative system aligns with the British government’s ambitious policy to position the UK as a global leader in autonomous maritime technologies.

Minister for Defence Procurement and Industry, Rt Hon Maria

Eagle MP, said: “This delivery marks a significant milestone in our mine-hunting capabilities and the autonomous technology will keep Britain and our Royal Navy sailors safer by identifiying & removing them from mines. It has also supported hundreds of skilled jobs across UK industry – a clear demonstration that defence is an engine for economic growth.”

Rebecca Smith, Member of Parliament for South West Devon, attended the ceremony at the Thales Maritime Autonomy Centre in Plymouth, officially marking the delivery of this cutting-edge technology capable of detecting and neutralising the growing threat of naval mines.

“I welcome today’s announcement by Thales regarding the delivery to the Royal Navy of the world’s first end-to-end autonomous mine hunting system. I am pleased to see that a city with such a prestigious naval history as Plymouth now finds itself at the heart of a future rich in innovations for the Royal Navy. I hope we continue to see new activities develop, resulting in new local jobs in high-tech maritime areas. In the current climate, it is important to ensure strong military and industrial cooperation across Europe, and I am proud to see Plymouth playing a key role in effectively supporting the relationship between the UK and France”, declared Rebecca Smith, MP South West Devon

Phil Siveter, CEO of Thales in the UK, stated, “We are extremely proud to deliver the world’s first end-to-end autonomous mine hunting system to the Royal Navy. With the introduction of AI and advanced sensor technology, this innovation marks a new era in naval defence and underlines our unwavering commitment to providing cutting-edge solutions that enhance the capabilities of our armed forces. The Royal Navy will now have a powerful tool to protect its national interests and maintain safety at sea.”

A historic partner of the Royal Navy for over a century, Thales has long contributed to the advanced technologies that

equip its sonar and mine hunting systems. The Franco-British MMCM program highlights Thales’s determination to provide world-class capabilities in these areas. Significant investments made by the UK have maintained over 200 skilled jobs, particularly at Thales sites in Somerset and Plymouth, strengthening the entire ecosystem of suppliers and partners.