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SELEX Communications awarded contract for Wireless Communications System for new UK Carriers

SELEX Communications, a Finmeccanica company, has signed the design phase contract with the Aircraft Carrier Alliance (ACA) to supply the Wireless Communications System (WCS) for the Royal Navy's Queen Elizabeth (QE) Class Carriers.

The company's extensive experience in both naval communications and commercial TETRA radio technology enabled it to provide a solution offering a comprehensive understanding of the requirement, and of the needs of the users for reliable and high-availability communications providing seamless coverage, both above and below decks.

SELEX Communications will fully engage with the ACA to de-risk wherever possible and identify opportunities to reduce the time required installing equipment on board ship. The company's partnering approach will also include running cost-reduction workshops to identify opportunities to save money. On successful completion of the design phase of the programme, the potential production option contract will result in delivery of the first ship-set to the agreed timescales.

The company's pedigree in supplying TETRA systems across a wide range of environments, from ship-based systems to networks covering entire countries, along with its proven in-service range of products (including intrinsically safe handsets) will ensure reliability of service and guaranteed availability.

The QE Class WCS will enable teams to be structured in a well-organised hierarchy of talk groups with calls initiated by push-to-talk control. Users in one talk group will be able to communicate easily within that group on an all-informed basis, independent of other talk groups. To optimise priorities and safety, calls made in a command group will override calls in subordinate groups. The QE Class WCS will support up to 1,600 users and up to 200 talk groups.

SELEX Communications Vice President for Networked Communications, John Rosie, says, "We are proposing a low risk, cost-effective but innovative system design, the baseline of which is already in naval service. Our offer responded in full to the customer's requirements and the identified solution makes extensive use of Commercial Off-The-Shelf products to ensure the best value for money. We have extensive TETRA expertise. The system is designed to enable ease of upgrade with technology developments so that capability can be sustained through-life. In line with our commitment to Business Winning and inter-site co-operation, thanks to all in the team for pulling off this success."

