

## EUROPE

## Slovenia orders Patria AMVs

The Slovenian Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed a contract on 19 December for 135 Patria 8 x 8 Armoured Modular Vehicles (AMVs), including a variant equipped with the Finnish company's NEMO advanced mortar system.

Slovenia's order for NEMO marks the system's first export sale.

The \$166.61 billion (USD365.9 million) deal – between the Slovenian MoD, Patria and Rotis (a Slovenian company representing Patria) – features extensive industrial offsets for Slovenian manufacturers.

"Patria will produce the vehicle and the mortars through direct participation of local partners," said Jorma Wiltakorpi, Patria chief executive officer and president.

Under the terms of the contract, the Slovenian MoD stated that the army will receive command vehicles along with four other versions of the AMV, to be equipped respectively with a 30 mm automatic cannon and Rafael Spike anti-armour missile launcher; a 40 mm automatic grenade launcher; a 12.7 mm machine gun; and the NEMO 120 mm smoothbore turreted mortar.

The Slovenian Army will take delivery of the AMVs between 2008 and 2013, with the first vehicle arriving from Finland by the end of 2007. The vehicle is yet to receive a Slovenian designation.

Describing the vehicle as "the backbone" of the armed forces, Slovenian Defence Minister Karl Ejavec added that domestic companies will undertake a 30.1 per cent workshare on the contract, with the remainder covered by industrial offsets.

Slovenian industry's involvement will include "the production of elements and major components", according to Ivan Crnkovic, president of Rotis. Electrical appliance manufacturer Gorenje will manage assembly of the vehicles.

Slovenia announced the selection of Patria's AMV during the June 2006 Eurosatory land systems exhibition in Paris. Patria had faced competition from Slovenian manufacturer Sistem-ska Tehnika, which offered the Krpan 8 x 8 wheeled armoured personnel carrier – a variant of the Steyr-Daimler-Puch Pandur II 8 x 8.

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## Thales wins Danish AAW system contract

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**T**hales Nederland has secured a contract to supply the anti-air warfare (AAW) suite for three new Patrol Ships (Patroljeskibe) to be built for the Royal Danish Navy (RDN).

Based on the same 138 m hull-form as the RDN's two new combat support ships, HDMS *Absalon* and HDMS *Esbern Snare*, the 6,000-ton displacement Patrol Ship design has been evolved to incorporate an area air-defence capability based on the Raytheon Standard Missile SM-2 Block IIIA missile.

The ship's AAW suite is required to provide surveillance, tracking, threat evaluation, weapon assignment, illumination and missile guidance management in support of SM-2 Block IIIA and the RIM-162 Evolved Seasparrow Missile (ESSM).

Denmark's Naval Materiel Command (NMC) – subsumed into the Danish Defence Acquisition and Logistics Organization as of 1 January 2007 – and Hengelo-based Thales Nederland signed the contract on 19 December after several months of negotiation. No details of the contract value have been disclosed.

• The AAW suite for Denmark's three new Patrol Ships will feature the APAR multifunction radar, SMART-L volume search radar and an associated fire-control cluster

Thales Nederland was announced as preferred supplier for the AAW suite in August 2006, winning out in a head-to-head competition with BAE Systems Integrated System Technologies. According to Thales, the NMC made its decision on the basis "of its track record and proven performance", adding that "integration with US missiles was considered a major factor". The company is also supplying its SMART-S Mk 2 medium-range radar for installation aboard *Absalon* and *Esbern Snare*.

The Thales Nederland AAW suite selected for



Thales Nederland will supply the AAW suite for Denmark's new Patrol Ships

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the Patrol Ship programme features the APAR I/J-band multifunction radar (providing interrupted continuous-wave illumination guidance to SM-2 and ESSM missiles), SMART-L D-band volume search radar and AAW fire control functionality already operational aboard the Royal Netherlands Navy's four De Zeven Provinciën-class LCF frigates and the German Navy's three F 124 Sachsen-class frigates. This commonality, Thales said, will enable the RDN to benefit from close co-operation with the Dutch and German navies on logistics and future upgrade programmes.

This includes the inherent growth potential to take on a tactical ballistic missile defence (TBMD) role. A first demonstration of this capability was provided by the RNLN frigate *HrMs Tromp*, using a SMART-L radar with an extended long-range waveform modification mode, in recent US Navy TBMD trials off Hawaii.

In an associated development, on 20 December NMC awarded Odense Steel Shipyard (part of A P Moller - Maersk Group) a contract for the detailed design and construction of the three Patrol Ships at its Odense-Lindø yard.

Manufacturing work will commence in 2008, with the vessels scheduled for delivery to the RDN between early 2011 and mid-2012.

## Hungary orders Sofar unmanned aerial systems

The Hungarian Ministry of Defence has ordered two WB Electronics Sofar small unmanned aerial systems, including training, under a EUR800,000 (USD1.05 million) contract signed on 19 December.

Each system consists of three unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and portable and vehicle-mounted ground control stations; the Hungarian Army already operates Mercedes-Benz 270-series all-terrain utility vehicles and these were specified for the requirement.

Poland's WB Electronics initially competed against Israel's Elbit Systems, bidding Skylark I, and Hungary's Combat Kereskedelmi, bidding Israel Aerospace Industries' BirdEye 400, but the Skylark was eliminated because it did not meet requirements while Com-

bat Kereskedelmi did not submit a final bid, according to defence sources. Hungary is the launch customer for this configuration of Sofar: a joint development by WB Electronics and Israel's Top I Vision.

Sofar is a slightly modified variant of the Top I Vision Casper 250, which weighs up to 4.8 kg, is 1.7 m long and has a 2.5 m wing span. Flying at speeds between 20 km/h-92 km/h, the Sofar UAV has an endurance of up to 90 minutes at altitudes between 70 m-1,000 m and can operate up to 15 km from the ground station.

WB Electronics is responsible for the ground segment and some onboard improvements to the UAV, which may also be built in Poland. Deliveries are expected to be completed by June 2007.

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