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Finmeccanica – Selex ES’s mini and micro UAVs see success in tests for the Forza NEC programme

Finmeccanica - Selex ES’s ASIO-B and SPYBALL-B UAVs have passed their factory acceptance tests, leaving them ready for delivery to the Italian Army for its Forza NEC modernisation programme.

With the systems ready to be welcomed into operation, the Italian Army will soon be able to benefit from the effective support that mini-micro UAVs can provide for a wide range of mission types. Troops and vehicles will be more aware and better protected whether facing attacks on convoys or forward operating bases or fighting in dangerous urban areas.

All this is made possible due to the UAV’s ability to gather, process and transmit images and geo-referenced data in a reliable and precise fashion. It means that dangers can be quickly identified and reported straight back to troops.

ASIO-B and SPYBALL-B are operated from control stations that look and operate much like oversized video game control pads. They’ll soon be joined by a third member of the family, the CREX-B, another small fixed-wing unmanned aerial system produced by Finmeccanica - Selex ES. Carried in backpacks and simple to fly, all three of the Finmeccanica - Selex ES mini drones are designed to meet the requirements of the Italian Armed Forces and the latest NATO standards. This makes them ideal for use in international and joint operations with NATO allies.

Notes to editors

Finmeccanica – Selex ES’s mini / micro unmanned aerial vehicles

Finmeccanica - Selex ES’s micro and mini UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) weight up to two kilos (micro) and up to 20 kilos (mini). They share a common system architecture and ground control station hardware and meet demanding industry regulations including the new Italian Directorate of Air Armaments AER.P-2 and NATO’s STANAG 4703 standard. They are able to gather data and information and store and distribute it via datalink. This makes them ideal for complex operations based on data exchange networks for command and control.

The Finmeccanica – Selex ES ASIO-B is a fully automatic electrical vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) mini Unmanned Aerial System (UAS). It is a fan-ducted system so that it can be flown in closed spaces and in people’s presence. It is used for surveillance, monitoring and intelligence roles.

The system has a bit more than eight kilos maximum takeoff weight (MTOW), a 30 minute endurance, a radio link of over ten kilometers in the line of sight (LOS) and an operative range of seven kilometers. The system can carry stabilized colour or infrared cameras which are software and mechanically pan & tilt stabilized. It is completely back packable and can be deployed and operated from a moving truck.

The Finmeccanica – Selex ES SPYBALL-B is a fan-ducted mini electrical VTOL (Vertical Take-Off and Landing) system that can be packed and man-carried with a hovering capability specifically designed for close or over the hill surveillance and Army protection, particularly in urban areas. The system has a maximum takeoff weight (MTOW) of two kilos, an endurance of 25 minutes, five kilometer radio Link (LOS) and operative range. The system can carry stabilized colour or infrared cameras which are software and mechanically pan & tilt stabilized for the best image precision.

The Finmeccanica – Selex ES CREX-B is a fixed wing micro electrical unmanned aerial system which can be assembled and disassembled in a few minutes. CREX-B features an easy hand-release method of take off which allows the operator to launch the UAV from a hidden or close place or moving vehicle. Its design and propulsion system guarantees optimal stabilisation in windy conditions and a very low noise signature. The system has a maximum takeoff weight (MTOW) of two kilos, an endurance of over 75 minutes and a radio link up to 15 km in line of sight (LOS). The system can carry stabilized colour or infrared cameras which are software and mechanically pan & tilt stabilized for the best image precision.