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Finmeccanica – Selex ES laser business in Edinburgh sees major export success in 2014

Huge international success of the laser business in Scotland

- New orders from the US, Europe and Middle East
- Lasers will be key parts of advanced air programmes such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter
- Edinburgh site is also home to internationally competitive radar business

During IDEX Exhibition, which takes place from 22nd to 26th February in Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates) Finmeccanica – Selex ES announced that in 2014 the company's Edinburgh-based advanced laser business continued to be a huge success, growing significantly over the course of the year. The orders will keep Scotland at the forefront of international high-tech design and manufacturing.

Of particular note, all of the orders were for export. Most of the high-energy lasers are destined for the United States where they will go on to become key components in major aircraft programmes such as the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II fighter and Apache helicopter. Advanced ground-based laser systems were also sold to customers in Europe and the Middle East.

The fact that all the contracts were secured internationally, often in markets that tend to favour home-grown equipment, is testament to the world-leading quality of Finmeccanica – Selex ES's laser products and the talent of the company's engineers.

One of the reasons that Finmeccanica – Selex ES is able to produce such products is due to its world-class laser research programme which in turn relies on the company's links with leading Scottish academic institutions. Many of the company's laser engineers graduated at Heriot-Watt and Edinburgh universities and, in 2013, the firm joined forces with Heriot-Watt University to fund and create the "Selex ES Professorial Chair in Laser Devices and Engineering" at the university's School of Engineering.

In Edinburgh, Finmeccanica – Selex ES directly employs over 1,900 people at its site in Crewe Toll. Last month the company signed a contract (worth more than 400 million Euros to Finmeccanica – Selex ES) to lead the development of the new Captor-E radar, manufactured in the Scottish site, for the Eurofighter Typhoon. In 2013 the Edinburgh site celebrated its 70th anniversary, having first opened in 1943 for the production of gyro gun sights for the Spitfire. Today the site, which has won Queen's awards for both international trade and innovation, is a centre of excellence for radar and microelectronics as well for its high-energy lasers.