

Basildon, October 3rd 2013

Selex ES Thermal Imaging Cameras provide footage for new BBC Nature Series

Selex ES, a Finmeccanica company, has provided the BBC with thermal imaging (TI) technology which was used to film its new television series 'The Great British Year' and will show previously unseen footage of nocturnal animal behaviour.

The four part series which launches on Wednesday 2 October at 21.00 has been produced by James Brickell, a BAFTA Award winning Producer from the BBC's Natural History Unit. This the first time ever that the BBC has used Selex ES thermal imaging (TI) cameras to help produce their world class nature programmes. The SLX Merlin TI camera was used for filming and the SLX Hawk TI camera was used for spotting and cueing the cameramen, both of which are manufactured at Selex ES sites in Basildon and Southampton, utilising the company's own detectors.

The technology captures, with quality and clarity, images of seldom seen animal behaviour with owls hunting along with badgers, foxes, hares, rabbits, bats and voles, all going about their lives in the pitch black darkness.

In order to adapt their equipment for this unique filming environment, a team from Selex ES adapted and developed the military-based imager into a useful media industry product with the aim of making the whole system "one man portable" and easy to use "straight from the box" with minimal instruction. The team created a solution of using a touch screen tablet at the rear of the imager by which the cameraman can control the focus, zoom, gain etc. A miniature monitor / video recorder was mounted on top completing the system allowing the cameraman to be self-sufficient in the field.

Selex ES's 6 wheeled Pinzgauer Mobile Surveillance Vehicle (MSV) will feature in the 10 minute long "Making Of" feature at the end of Episode 1. The Pinzgauer MSV provided the film crew with a self-sufficient autonomous detecting capability in the isolated area of the Essex countryside.