

Southampton, August 28th 2013

Selex ES upgrades air traffic control radars to protect them from 4G disruption

Selex ES, a Finmeccanica company, has completed phase one of a project to upgrade more than half of the UK's air traffic management S-band radars to protect them from potential disruptions caused by the 4G mobile network. Contracted by the UK Ministry of Defence for military airports and sponsored by the Department for Transport for civilian airports, the completion of phase one means that the radars in London and the South East of England are ready for 4G to go live on the 29th August.

Selex ES is currently ahead of schedule on the rest of the project and will modify radars as far North as the Shetland Islands and as far West as Newquay as the 4G spectrum continues to be rolled out across the UK.

Air Traffic Management (ATM) radars, which are used by air traffic control centres to locate and direct aircraft, operate in the 2.7GHz band, adjacent to the 2.6GHz band used by the new, high-speed 4G network for mobile phones. Because of this, radars operating in the 2.7GHz band can be disrupted by 'noise' from the 4G network, necessitating the upgrades.

Selex ES has developed a protection solution, known as 'remediation', for four UK-based radar types which are manufactured and supported by Selex ES; the Watchman, S511, AR15 and ATCR33. Together, these systems make up more than 50% of the UK's air traffic management radars. The remediation solution allows the radars to operate in the 2.7 to 3.6MHz band, ensuring they are not susceptible to 4G wireless LTE transmissions.

"We've delivered all of the modification kits to the MoD ahead of schedule and are progressing well towards having all of the nominated UK air traffic management radars modified by the September 30th deadline" said Mike Bradshaw, EVP Customer Relationships for Selex ES's security and smart systems division, adding "The continued success of the programme will allow the UK government to roll out the 4G network on schedule while air traffic management radars across the UK continue to operate normally".