



## Thales reaches another key milestone in its phased array RBE2 radar programme

### *The production phase for Europe's first-ever AESA combat radar is launched*

**Neuilly-sur-Seine, 3 November 2008** – Thales, European leader in electronic combat systems, today announced that its Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) RBE2 radar has reached a significant new milestone with the end of its hardware development phase.

This announcement signals the beginning of the first AESA product delivery phase and the validation of the new software functions, which will further enhance the radar's capacities. This milestone is the last in a long line of key events that Thales has seen with the development of its state-of-the-art radar – AESA flight tests first began in 2003; the radar's concepts were validated in 2005; the industrialisation phase was launched in 2006; and this final phase sees the end of the development period and the beginning of production of the hardware model. Final validation of software functions is expected to end in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2010 with the delivery of AESA radars to Dassault.

Earlier this year, the company saw the successful completion of a series of flight tests on the Rafale itself, giving further positive results of the radar's performance in an operational configuration.

Pierre-Yves Chaltiel, Senior Vice President, in charge of Thales' aerospace solutions for government sector comments, *"Thales' AESA radar is the furthest advanced radar of its kind in Europe. With several years advance on competitor solutions, Thales' technology is unrivalled and we are extremely proud to be launching the production phase of this cutting edge radar."*

In 2006, the French defence procurement agency agreed to a Roadmap that will deliver Rafale fighter aircraft with a new generation of sensors including the AESA RBE2 radar to the French Air Force and Navy by 2012.

Full integration of the AESA RBE2 positions the Rafale as the only combat aircraft of its category equipped with active arrays for both its radar and electronic warfare suite. This outstanding system that allows a 360-degree smart antenna array coverage, is a real technological breakthrough on-board the aircraft.

Customer evaluation of the Rafale combat aircraft is now carried out with these high technology systems on-board, offering the Rafale an unrivalled advantage in current worldwide competitions.

Thales has been developing its own European advanced AESA radar technology since the 1990s. With its long experience in radar technology for combat aircraft and in Passive Antenna Electronic Scanning functions qualified for the Rafale' RBE2 radar, Thales has developed AESA radar prototypes and tested them on both Rafale and Hack (Mirage 2000 test bed) aircraft since 2003.

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### **About Thales**

Thales is a leading international electronics and systems group, addressing defence, aerospace and security markets worldwide. Thales' leading-edge technology is supported by 22,000 R&D engineers who offer a capability unmatched in Europe to develop and deploy field-proven mission-critical information systems. To this end, the group's civil and military businesses develop in parallel and share a common base of technologies to serve a single objective: the security of people, property and nations. The group builds its growth on its unique multi-domestic strategy based on trusted partnerships with national customers and market players, while leveraging its global expertise to support local technology and industrial development. Thales employs 68,000 people in 50 countries with 2007 revenues of €12.3 billion.

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