South Korea relies on Thales’ systems to avoid friendly fire incidents

- At the heart of coalition missions in the theatre of operations, it is essential for the forces to distinguish between friendly and enemy targets in order to avoid friendly fire incidents.
- South Korea’s Defense Acquisition Programme Administration (DAPA) has awarded a contract to LIG Nex1 who is Thales’ local partner for the supply of IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) systems to replace Mode 4 with Mode 5 for enhancement capability.
- Short range TSA 1412 interrogators will be produced by local partners based on license production supported by Thales and will be Mode 5 compliant and certified to the latest NATO standard, which will soon be mandatory on coalition operations. The mid-range TSA 2522 interrogators will be upgraded.

Thales IFF systems will be integrated by LIG Nex1 who has been selected by DAPA, South Korea’s Defense Acquisition Program Administration, to supply TSA 1412 IFF (identification Friend or Foe) interrogators for integration with man-portable missile systems and TSA 2522 for air defence vehicles. For this contract, Thales has teamed with a South Korean partner, LIG Nex1 and will transfer production to local SMEs. This is the third major order for the TSA 1412, which is the most compact Mode 5 IFF interrogator on the market and has also been sold to the United States and Japan as well as several European countries including the United Kingdom and Sweden.

Thales and South Korean partner LIG Nex1 were selected after a request for proposals to support the country’s air defence capabilities. The key success factor was Thales’s capacity to work with South Korean industry, and in particular with smaller partner companies that will produce the equipment locally.

IFF systems identify friendly platforms in the theatre of operations to prevent incidents of friendly fire and contribute to air traffic surveillance. The TSA 1412 is part of Thales’s BlueGate family of IFF systems. This short-range/very short-range interrogator is the most lightweight on the market (less
than 2 kg) and is ideally suited to man-portable weapon systems and short range air defence systems (SHORADS). It will be integrated with South Korea’s K-SAM, Biho-hybrid, TPS-830K and KP-SAM defence systems.

The TSA 1412 implements Mode 5 certification, which is mandatory for NATO-led coalition forces from 2020. Certification was awarded by AIMS1, the United States body that guarantees interoperability of US and NATO systems.

Thales is a world leader in the IFF market and offers a complete range of systems designed to meet the full spectrum of current and future IFF requirements for the armed forces. More than 20,000 Thales IFF systems are in service on more than 100 types of air, land and naval platforms in 70 countries.

Thales’s IFF solutions have also been selected by South Korea for Land, Air and Naval forces.

"This latest contract award is a strong endorsement of our partnership with LIG Nex1 and the benefits of technical and commercial cooperation with local industry, and in particular with the South Korean SMEs that will produce our systems, which will support the South Korean defence industry’s moves to scale up production of high-end products." Sandy Gillio, Thales Country Director in South Korea.

1 AIMS: Air Traffic Radar Control Beacon System Identification Friend or Foe MKXIIIA System. AIMS is directed by the US Department of Defense and provides an independent office for the certification of IFF systems that is recognised around the world.

About Thales

Thales (Euronext Paris: HO) is a global technology leader shaping the world of tomorrow today. The Group provides solutions, services and products to customers in the aeronautics, space, transport, digital identity and security, and defence markets. With 80,000 employees in 68 countries, Thales generated sales of €19 billion in 2018 (on a pro forma basis including Gemalto).

Thales is investing in particular in digital innovations — connectivity, Big Data, artificial intelligence and cybersecurity — technologies that support businesses, organisations and governments in their decisive moments.