

New national enterprise approach for air platform protection

At Farnborough International Airshow, the UK Ministry of Defence (MOD), Leonardo UK, Thales UK and Chemring Countermeasures are delighted to announce the formation of Team Pellonia.

A collaborative national enterprise approach to delivering UK next-generation air survivability (NGAS) solutions, the team will ensure that UK armed forces' air platforms have access to the best possible protective equipment while maintaining strategic skills and capabilities onshore.

Named after the Roman goddess who was renowned for protecting people from their enemies, Team Pellonia will see the UK Ministry of Defence, led by the Royal Air Force (RAF), Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) and Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) working in a close relationship with a best-of-British industry team comprising:

- Leonardo UK: the UK's onshore provider of integrated air platform protection capabilities, including advanced radio frequency (RF) and infrared (IR) sensors and effectors
- Thales in the UK: the UK's producer of a world-class infra-red based threat warning system and intelligent countermeasures dispensing system
- Chemring Countermeasures: the UK-based global leader in design, development, testing and manufacture of RF and IR countermeasures, including active decoys and threat agnostic countermeasures

Together, the team represents UK onshore knowledge and capability in the field of air platform protection. Team Pellonia will develop integrated self-protection systems for UK armed forces' platforms, with a mission to ensure that aircraft crews can respond to emerging threats with life-saving speed and agility.

Air Vice-Marshal Lincoln Taylor CB OBE, Chief of Staff – Capability, Royal Air Force said:

Survivability is at the heart of the UK's operational independence. As part of Team Pellonia, the UK MOD will strive to ensure that UK NGAS capabilities are available to meet the UK's air platform protection requirements. This will provide the best possible protection for our people and capabilities, ensuring that MOD and Industry investment is perfectly aligned as we develop the next-generation of capabilities.

The announcement builds on the individual strategic partnering arrangements signed by the 3 companies with the MOD over the last 12 months, as well as on the team members' rich history of collaboration on UK platform protection capabilities. Leonardo provides integrated defensive suites for RAF Typhoons

and the majority of the UK's helicopter fleet including the AW159 Wildcat, AW101 Merlin and Apache AH-64E. Many of these systems incorporate electronics from Thales, while Chemring countermeasures are widely employed across the UK's fleets. Team Pellonia will act as a catalyst to deepen this cooperation further and deliver enterprise-wide innovation.

The team are already on contract to deliver protection systems for the RAF's fleet of Shadow surveillance aircraft and the new Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning (AEW) aircraft. Looking to the future, a number of UK air platforms will be reviewed in the coming years. Team Pellonia will drive to ensure that UK NGAS capabilities are available to meet defence's needs.

Team Pellonia partners will work together to offer defence platform-level integrated self-protection systems based on Leonardo's Modular Advanced Platform Protection System (MAPPS) architecture. Depending on the platform requirements, sensors and effectors could include Leonardo's Miysis Directed Infrared Countermeasure (DIRCM), Thales's Elix-IR® Threat Warning System (TWS), Thales's Vicon XF Countermeasures Dispensing System (CMDS) and Chemring's full suite of expendable countermeasures.

As the science inside UK defence and security, Dstl will act as technical partner to the team throughout the capability development, system integration and entry into service process, providing quality assurance throughout to ensure military advantage now and into the future.

As well as working together to provide the advanced capabilities of today, the Team Pellonia members will work together to agree a roadmap for investment that draws on the strengths of each team member in a collaborative enterprise-wide approach to the future survivability of air platforms. UK allies that share similar requirements will also be able to access self-protection systems from Team Pellonia. These systems will be compliant with the NATO Defensive Aids System (NDAS) standard and therefore have substantial export potential, bringing economic and social value back to the UK.

The close relationships forged through Team Pellonia will give UK defence and UK industry the confidence to invest in and develop cutting-edge new capabilities and maintain critical skills onshore, ensuring that the UK's armed forces continue to have access to the latest protective technologies for years to come.