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CAMCOPTER[®] S-100 SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETES TWO-WEEK BORDER PATROL EXERCISE IN AUSTRIA

Vienna, 3 October 2006 – Schiebel's CAMCOPTER[®] S-100 VTOL UAV successfully completed a two-week border patrol exercise for the Austrian Ministry of Interior (Bundesministerium für Inneres - BM.I) from 18 to 28 September, 2006. The S-100 completed a total of 9 routine night flights along a 70 km (43 mi) stretch of the Austrian/Slovakian border, a mission normally performed by manned helicopters.

The BM.I was extremely impressed by the S-100's performance. "Schiebel's CAMCOPTER[®] S-100 has been found to be a thoroughly reliable, efficient and tactical tool for police border patrol operations," said Chief Inspector Kurt Brunner, programme manager for BM.I. "The development of this UAV over the last years has resulted in a high-tech aircraft that is able to professionally fulfil a wide range of applications, both in the military and police spheres, as well as catastrophe and rescue response."

Flying at night at an altitude of 1,500 ft (450 m) above ground level, the CAMCOPTER[®] S-100 regularly detected points of interest at ranges of over 3,000 m (3,300 yards), using the thermal imager on the installed IAI/Tamam POP200 stabilized EO/IR gimbal system. The S-100 was controlled by Schiebel operators, flying pre-programmed paths that could be interrupted at any time to survey specific points of interest or known "hot spots" used by human traffickers.

The payload itself was operated by the same police officers that normally operate similar payloads aboard the BM.I's manned helicopters. The payload operator communicated with both Austrian and Slovakian police and military teams in the field to investigate any suspicious activity detected from the S-100. Video was recorded onboard and at the control station, as well as being forwarded via network to a nearby command post.

The two-week demonstration is the first known integration of a UAV system in live border patrol operations along the European Union (Schengen area) border. The successful tests bode well for future UAV employments along the border, which is set to expand in 2007.

All flights were staged from the top of Braunsberg nearby the town of Hainburg, a 346 meter (1,100 ft) tall mountain overlooking the Danube River and the Slovakian capital of Bratislava. Two "standard" missions were programmed, one 50 km (31 mi) to the north, along the March River, and one 20 km (12 mi) to the south along the border to the town of Kittsee. The flight paths, programmed under the supervision of AustroControl, the Austrian aviation authority, avoided flight over built-up areas, as well as the nature preserve along the March river.

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While the patrols were normally for best observation flown at an airspeed between 30 and 50 kts (55 to 93 km/h), they were often interrupted by placing the S-100 in an automatic hover to observe specific areas for longer periods. Flights varied in duration from one to two and a half hours.

The S-100, which already flies with an “experimental” registration in Austria, received approval for the flights in civilian airspace by means of an extension to its existing AustroControl-issued “Permission to Fly”. This extension was dependent upon a configuration and safety audit, which confirmed that the S-100 is being operated and maintained in accordance with manned aircraft standards. In order to assure separation from manned aircraft, a NOTAM was issued establishing a temporary restricted area below 2,000 ft (610 m) in the border area. In addition, the S-100 was equipped with a Mode-C transponder enabling the air traffic control centres at the nearby Vienna Schwechat and Bratislava International airports to track each flight.

About Schiebel:

Founded in 1951, the Vienna-based Schiebel Group of companies focuses on the development, testing and production of state-of-the-art mine detection equipment and the acclaimed CAMCOPTER® Unmanned Aerial Vehicle System. Schiebel has built an international reputation for producing quality defense and humanitarian products, which are backed by exceptional after-sales service and support. All products are quality controlled to meet ISO 9001 standards. With headquarters in Vienna, Austria, Schiebel now maintains production facilities in Wiener Neustadt, Austria, and Abu Dhabi, UAE, as well as offices in Washington, DC, New Delhi and Phnom Penh.

About the CAMCOPTER® S-100:

Schiebel's latest CAMCOPTER® S-100 UAV System has been developed to carry various sensors for both military and civilian applications. The Aerial Vehicle is launched automatically via Vertical Take-off and Landing (VTOL), eliminating the need for a pre-prepared area or additional launch and recovery equipment. It navigates via pre-programmed GPS waypoints, or can be operated manually through a simple, yet highly stable, flight control system. The S-100 like its predecessor, it is capable of landing on helicopter deck-equipped ships without the use of additional landing equipment. Its AV fuselage is a carbon-fibre monocoque providing maximum capacity for a wide range of payload/endurance combinations. In a standard configuration, the AV is capable of carrying a 55 lbs payload for up to 6 hours.

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