

Thales partners with Schiebel for the French DGA VTOL UAV trials

In December 2009, the French Defence Procurement Agency (DGA) selected Schiebel's unmanned aerial system Camcopter S-100 to run a series of comprehensive trials to assess the operational advantages of a VTOL (Vertical Takeoff and Landing) UAV system. These trials will take place during the first half of 2010 on various sites representative of land /urban and coastal operations, operated by French Army and Navy forces representatives.

Leveraging its expertise in airworthiness and flight certification, as well as its involvement in French and European air safety regulations, and its European leadership in Unmanned Airborne Systems, Thales will support Schiebel in the management of these VTOL trials. The tests are to take place on a Camcopter S-100 fitted with a Thales Agile 2 Electro Optical and Infra Red (EO /IR) payload.



Schiebel's unmanned aerial system
Camcopter S-100
Source: Thales

This contract represents a further step forward in the European roadmap for UAV systems and confirms Thales as a key partner in UAV mission systems.

In its comprehensive approach to meet the UAV system requirements of European forces, Thales is a driving force in the emergence of collaborative projects, such as WIMAAS (Wide Maritime Area Airborne Surveillance) intended to facilitate the exchange and fusion of data between passive and active assets. Thales is also involved in the numerous research programmes around the insertion of UAVs into civil airspace like ASTRAEA (UK); MIDCAS (Europe)– sense & avoid, or SIGAT which aims at defining the appropriate radio frequency regarding command and control and payloads data links for future UAS integration into the General Air Traffic.

Thales is currently leading the Technical Design Study D2AD – the design and demonstration of an automatic take-off, landing and deck landing system for rotorcraft UAVs, set to be a vital component of future tactical UAV programmes.