

Leonardo deploys its Falco EVO Remotely-Piloted Air System for drone-based maritime surveillance as part of the Frontex test programme

- Under the service contract, the Leonardo Falco EVO will undertake up to 300 flight hours of maritime surveillance patrol across the Italian and Maltese civil airspace
- Leonardo, a leading European player in comprehensive RPAS ISR systems, is providing the Falco EVO configured with an extended-range day/night ISR capability, flight crews and a maintenance team
- **Alessandro Profumo: “We are proud to be able to demonstrate the Falco EVO’s capabilities to our Security Forces and to the European Frontex agency, who are facing on-going and evolving surveillance challenges posed by maritime borders. We are ready to leverage the years of experience we have gained through operations for the United Nations and many international customers”**

Rome, 6 December 2018 – Leonardo’s Falco EVO Remotely-Piloted Air System (RPAS), in a maritime patrol configuration, has been deployed from Lampedusa airport (Lampedusa Island) as part of the Frontex surveillance research programme to test its ability to monitor the European Union’s external borders.

Frontex is exploring the surveillance capability of medium-altitude, long-endurance RPAS as well as evaluating cost efficiency and endurance. Leonardo was selected by the European agency under a service contract tender for drone operations for maritime surveillance across the Italian and Maltese civil airspace. The current agreement provides for 300 flight hours and may be extended into a longer-term agreement.

Under the deployment, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) activities are organised by Guardia di Finanza under coordination of the Ministry of Interior and are undertaken by Leonardo from Lampedusa also thanks to the decisive support and collaboration of ENAC and ENAV. Leonardo’s flight crews and maintenance teams are present to support the operations with the Falco EVO, which is equipped with a complete on-board sensor suite including the Company’s Gabbiano TS Ultra Light radar. This configuration allows it to carry out extended-range day and night-time missions.

“We are proud to be able to demonstrate the capabilities of our Falco EVO to Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, which is facing the on-going and evolving surveillance challenges posed by maritime borders. We are ready to leverage our years of experience in drone-based surveillance operations, working with the United Nations and many other international customers,” said Alessandro Profumo, CEO of Leonardo. “I wish to thank all the Italian stakeholders who contributed to

this important achievement and I am convinced that this fruitful partnering approach will allow Frontex to define the best possible use for drone-based technologies.”

The Falco EVO will operate under a “Permit to Fly” issued by the Italian Civil Aviation Authority (ENAC), which authorizes flights in the Italian and Maltese Flight Information Region (FIR)’s civil airspace. The innovative agreement reached with ENAC guarantees compliance with national and international regulations and coordination with relevant authorities. The agreement also provides for close involvement from the Guardia di Finanza as subject matter experts with operational experience in defining mission profiles and ensuring the best operational conditions in which to undertake the 300-hours test programme.

The Falco EVO configuration being deployed includes a high-definition InfraRed (IR) electro-optical system, a Beyond-Line-Of-Sight (BLOS) satellite data-link system, a new propulsion system based on a heavy-fuel engine, an Automatic Identification System (AIS) and a complete communications relay suite.

Leonardo is the only European company providing a comprehensive RPAS ISR capability, from the design of each system element all the way through to operations. Today the Company is an international pioneer in the operation of unmanned flights on behalf of civil organizations in “non-segregated”, transnational airspace.

Under an innovative business model, Leonardo owns and operates its Falco family of RPAS and provides surveillance information and data directly to its customers. This ‘managed service’ model is expected to be an area of growth for Leonardo which is expanding its ‘drones as a service’ offering to customers such as the police and emergency responders in line with the growth path outlined in the Company’s industrial plan.