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EURONAVAL 2010

DOING IT THE FRENCH WAY



Fig. 1: The huge stand of DCNS was always packed with visitors, actively engaged in discussions with company officials. (Photo: w/ Mönch Publishing Group)

Organised under the joint patronage of the French Ministry of Defence and the Secretariat-General for the Sea, EURONAVAL 2010 was held from October 25 – 29 at the Paris-Le Bourget exhibition centre. Having always been Europe's leading naval defence and maritime show, EURONAVAL has recently established itself also as a leading event for naval drones and satellite applications from communications, navigation and weather to defence and security. As often heard, *"smaller and lighter appears to be the name of the game in future naval systems"*, with a number of manufacturers (e.g., Controp Precision Technologies, IAI Elta Systems and Rafael from Israel, but also GEM elettronica, Nexter Systems and Sagem Défense Sécurité) offering increasingly miniaturised day/night sensors, laser imaging systems, identification friend or foe (IFF) devices, electronic warfare suites, and remotely controlled, small-calibre, rapid-fire guns to replace legacy equipment. According to EURONAVAL Chairman Jean-Marie Poimboeuf this year there were over 400 exhibitors from 37 countries with expanded participation from Germany, Israel, Italy, Russia and the United States; and there were some 80 delegations and 300 guests of honour expected from more than 60 countries.

FRANCE AS A DOMINATING HOST NATION

Despite this international scoring, France was a clearly visible host nation of this event. French players in the 'state actions at sea' sector included all related Government organisations and parts of the sea services. Given the yet again increased size of the French stands (and Italian stands, as well as those of the international players THALES, MBDA and BADS), and the fact that Swedish firms decided to abstain, the alleged increased international flavour appears a little relativised. The size of the stands of DCNS (see figure 1), THALES and Finmeccanica were only surpassed by that of the French MoD, and even the booths of Northrop Grumman or Lockheed Martin were smaller than those of DCI/NAFVCO or CMN. Rheinmetall and TKMS had the largest German stands, matched by those of the national pavilions Naval Team Denmark and Holland (NB: Damen Schelde Naval Shipbuilding was absent, as was TNO). One new player was observed with a big stand, the EU Military Staff (see figure 2).

NAVAL FORCES heard from an unnamed Swedish source in the very strong Swedish delegation that the reason for Swedish companies not exhibiting was the same that led other nations in the past to withdraw from the exhibition (although they did come back). And, tri-service oriented companies have decided to put their money in future on tri-service exhibitions, like DSEI or IDEX and IMDEX, in view of the increasing prices of EURONAVAL booths but also to better reflect their tri-service portfolio. The underwater-oriented part of Saab will concentrate in future on UDT Europe.

But in fairness one must say that Saab was in no small way represented by *Saab Denmark* exhibiting as part of *Naval Team Denmark*, displaying all ROV/AUV, the (Danish) Smart MCM system, the 9LV Mk 4 combat

system, the SEA GIRAFFE AMB Multi-mission radar system, SATCOM on the move, or the SKELDAR UAV – all part of the Saab Sweden portfolio. Also the Saab RBS15 Mk3 was on display at *Diehl BGT Defence*, and *ATLAS Elektronik* was displaying the Saab DOUBLE EAGLE versions which this German company integrated in the Dutch TRIPARTITE Upgrade programme. So maybe, it was a clever move to give the junior branch Saab Denmark a high visibility. But the possible future focus by some companies on tri-service exhibitions will clearly be watched by the organisers.

An increased feature was the static displays, which in itself may document a departure from the purely maritime nature of EURONAVAL: in the hall were RHIBs; the F406 reconnaissance aircraft of *Cessna/Reims Aviation*, the NH90 helicopter of *NH Industries*, and the *EADS-CASA 212-300 AVIOCAR* transport aircraft, as well as Sagem's innovative PATROLLER-S surveillance UAV for Homeland Security requirements were on static display outside.

In an outstanding presentation, ECA demonstrated their INSPECTOR USV on the river Seine with its forward looking sonar for minehunting, intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, maritime interdiction operations and coastal/port security (see figure 3). The USV was operated from the *bateau mouche* (where

the selected guests were embarked), although for Seine river legislative reasons two operators had to be onboard the USV, and results of the sonar scan were transmitted to a screen onboard the Seine boat. When darkness came the *bateau mouche* departed its Quai de Grenelle berth, passed the Eiffel tower, the Quai d'Orsey and Hôtel des Invalides, and turned back at the Tuileries close to the Louvre – a first-class well-staged event.

On Wednesday and Thursday a conference was conducted on the premises, with the Chiefs of Navy of the French, Brazilian, and Russian Navy presenting their views, followed by the Chairmen of DCNS, MBDA, BAE Systems, Northrop Grumman Marine Group, and OSK presenting their industrial viewpoints on day one, and day two focussing on Maritime Safety and Security in France and in Europe under the aegis of the French Secretary-General for the Sea.

SELECTED NEWS FROM THE FLOOR

At DCNS it has become customary to present a ship R&D concept at each EURONAVAL. This time it was a submersible fast surface vessel, the SMX-25, and the ADVANCESEA wave-piercing corvette design. The SMX-25 combines a fast surface ship (38 knots provided by three gas turbines working on three pump jets) with a wave-piercing hull, able to carry 16 VL missiles and four HWT and able to engage surface and subsurface targets with deployed USV and UAV. The SMX-25 can dive and travel with a maximum submerged speed of 10 knots propelled by a quiet electrical pod. The SMX-



Fig. 3: ECA presented on the River Seine their Unmanned Surface Vehicle INSPECTOR on the river Seine with its forward looking sonar for minehunting, intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, maritime interdiction operations and coastal/port security (here lifted out of the water). The USV was operated from the *bateau mouche* (where the selected guests were embarked), although for Seine river legislative reasons two operators had to be onboard the USV, and results of the sonar scan were transmitted to a screen onboard the Seine boat. (Photo: wl / Mönch Publishing Group)

Fig. 2: As far as we are aware, it was a 'first' for the European Union Military Staff to be represented with a large booth at an international defence exhibition, with naval officers available to answer questions. (Photo: wl / Mönch Publishing Group)



25 has a surfaced displacement of 2,840 tons and of 4,850 tons submerged. The 109m long vessel has 27 crew members and can embark some 10 additional Special Forces. The idea is to get the ship to the operations area fast and then to conduct in a stealth mode reconnaissance, combat, INTEL or SOF operations submerged (see figure 4).

The ADVANCESEA concept features electrical motors based on superconductivity, batteries capable of instantaneously delivering high power, and a real-time energy management system able to offer real energy convergence between the combat and platform systems. But the ship is not only a technology demonstrator; ADVANCESEA would be a combat ship of 4,500 tons displacement with 120m length which would be equipped with an electro-magnetic gun system, VL missile systems, and capable of operating helicopters as well as UAV (from a combined hangar/flight deck for manned/unmanned flight operations). Also fea-