

DSEi: Rockwell Collins to exploit off-the-shelf procurement trend in Europe

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Key Points

Rockwell Collins plans to take advantage of the trend towards off-the-shelf procurement in Europe to lever in technologies developed in the US.

The EMEA division of the US communications group will showcase its Sentinel integrated soldier system, StrikeHawk tactical digital downlink receiver and Firestorm integrated targeting system at DSEi in London.

Rockwell Collins plans to accelerate its growth beyond core North American markets by exploiting the austerity-driven trend towards greater off-the-shelf procurement in Europe and the need to achieve higher levels of interoperability with the US.

Claude Alber, Rockwell Collins' vice-president and managing director of the group's Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) unit, outlined a strategy of offering US-developed systems in Europe through the company's regional businesses.

"We have a strong technology base in the US and we [Rockwell Collins] already have 2,200 employees here [in EMEA] who are well positioned to deliver customised and cost-effective solutions using US technology," Alber told *Jane's* on 8 September. "This will enable cost-effective solutions to meet the needs of our ministries of defence at a time of budget problems."

Alber highlighted the group's delivery of software-defined radios (SDR) to Sweden as an example. The Rockwell Collins Tactical Data Radio System (TDRS) was selected by Sweden's Defence Material Administration (FMV) in 2005, with deliveries from 2007. Work on SDRs that meet the requirements for the software communications architecture (SCA) framework for France is ongoing.

He said: "These are examples of systems developed in the US and adapted for the European market. This is a perfect example of our strategy,"

Alber's comments came ahead of the DSEi exhibition, which will be held in London from 14 to 16 September. Technologies to be showcased by Rockwell Collins EMEA at DSEi include the Sentinel integrated soldier system, a communications solution that allows ground forces to share multimedia information as part of wider situational awareness networks. The system was privately funded by Rockwell Collins.

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The group will also exhibit the StrikeHawk tactical digital and analog downlink receiver, which provides ground forces with real-time imagery from targeting pods and unmanned air systems, as well as the Firestorm integrated targeting system, which allows ground personnel to integrate with airborne assets.

Rockwell Collins' EMEA business has grown from revenues of USD500 million per annum to USD1 billion during the last 10 years. Its sales account for about 21 per cent of group turnover. One in 10 of the group's staff is based within the EMEA unit.

Some of the growth is a result of acquisitions made since 2005, which included Teldix in Germany (a supplier of electronic systems relating to military aviation); Swe-dish satellite systems in Sweden; simulation group Evans and Sutherland; and visual display company SEOS in the UK.

Alber said: "We are constantly on the lookout for new acquisitions. We are not targeting one or two specific technologies. Typically, we apply the equation that one plus one must equal three: the result must be greater than the sum of the parts.

"Our strategy in Europe will also focus on the formation of alliances. We are looking at the whole spectrum of opportunities."

Rockwell Collins' largest markets outside the US are France, Germany, Saudi Arabia and the UK.
