

UK Downselects to 2 in EWCM Increment 1A Competition

By Richard Scott

Trainable decoy launcher solutions offered by Elbit Systems UK and Cohort subsidiary SEA remain in contention to meet the UK Royal Navy's (RN's) Electronic Warfare Counter Measures (EWCM) Increment 1a requirement, industry sources say. A third contender, Safran Electronics & Defense, has been dropped from the competition.

EWCM forms part of the RN's overarching Maritime Electronic Warfare Programme (MEWP), which is intended to recapitalize surface ship electronic surveillance, electronic warfare command and control (EWC2), and soft-kill anti-ship missile defense (ASMD). MEWP also encompasses the Maritime Electronic Warfare System Integrated Capability (MEWSIC), which is delivering a new wideband digital radar electronic support measures sensor and an EWC2 subsystem; EWCM will function under the command and control of this EWC2 capability.

EWCM Increment 1a is focused on the acquisition of a new trainable decoy launcher system that will be capable of deploying both future and legacy countermeasure rounds: the latter stipulation requires compatibility with the 130-mm caliber Mk 216 and Mk 217 radio frequency (RF) distraction decoys, and the 130-mm MK 245 submunition-based infrared seduction decoy.

Following a period of industry engagement, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) launched the EWCM Increment 1a competition last year. Elbit Systems UK is believed to have offered a customized variant of its Deseaver Mk 4 trainable decoy control and launching system, while SEA is understood to have proposed a new launcher system using a training mechanism from

Chess Dynamics and EW mission data support expertise from MASS (both sister Cohort subsidiaries). Safran had proposed a so-called Configuration D variant of its New Generation Dagaie System.

Industry sources say that Safran was eliminated from contention earlier this year, leaving the MoD to complete final technical and commercial evaluations of bids from Elbit Systems UK and SEA. A preferred supplier is expected to be confirmed sometime in the third quarter of 2023, with a contract award to follow before the end of the year.

A follow-on EWCM increment 1b procurement is intended to deliver a new RF active decoy into RN service.