



Photo Release -- Northrop Grumman Commemorates 20 Year UK Partnership in Delivering Directional Infrared Countermeasures (DIRCM)

September 15, 2015

LONDON, Sept. 15, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- Northrop Grumman Corporation (NYSE:NOC) is commemorating the 20th anniversary of the initial contract awarded by the U.K. Ministry of Defence (MOD) for the development of directional infrared countermeasures (DIRCM).

A photo accompanying this release is available at: <http://media.globenewswire.com/noc/mediagallery.html?pkgid=36045>

The system developed by Northrop Grumman jointly with Selex ES has provided protection against sophisticated infrared guided missile threats for more than 1,200 U.S. and allied aircraft and amassed more than 1 million combat hours without allowing a single strike to a protected aircraft.

Critical to the safety of aircrews, DIRCM automatically detects a missile launch, determines if it is a threat and activates a high-intensity laser-based countermeasure system to track and defeat the missile.

"The aspect of this programme that we are most proud of is that no protected aircraft has ever been lost or hit by a heat seeking missile," said Carl Smith, vice president, infrared countermeasures, Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems. "We are honoured to have been entrusted by the MoD for two decades to provide this lifesaving technology. We look forward to continuing to work together to enhance the system so we can be sure that no lives will ever be lost with this capability onboard."

"This collaboration has been vital for the defence industry," said Andrew Tyler, chief executive, U.K. & Europe, Northrop Grumman. "DIRCM is a strategically important, lifesaving technology and has been hugely successful in delivering a mission-critical capability for protecting the U.K.'s front line and other aircraft."

The U.K. established the first DIRCM programme in 1989 following threats from terrorist groups to attack aircraft using man-portable air-defence systems (MANPADs). The U.S. joined the program after an AC-130H gunship was shot down outside of Kuwait City during Operation Desert Storm in 1991. Fourteen crew members aboard the aircraft were lost, making it the largest single loss of life by the U.S. Air Force during the war. A contract was subsequently awarded to Northrop Grumman in 1995 to install DIRCM on several platforms, including small helicopters and large fixed-wing aircraft.

More than 1,200 aircraft in 55 variations have now been fitted with Northrop Grumman's laser-based DIRCM technology. The company's system approach supports forward and backward compatibility of spiral upgrades for missile-warners and lasers. The system's processors also interface with other subsystems, such as radar warning receivers, radio frequency countermeasures and flares, to provide multispectral situational awareness and self-protection.

A team led by Northrop Grumman was recently awarded a contract to provide Common Infrared Countermeasures (CIRCM), the newest generation of laser DIRCM technology, to the U.S. Army for use on small and medium rotary wing aircraft. Selex ES is a core member of that team.

Northrop Grumman is a leading global security company providing innovative systems, products and solutions in unmanned systems, cyber, C4ISR, and logistics and modernization to government and commercial customers worldwide. Please visit www.northropgrumman.com for more information.

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Northrop Grumman has yielded five generations of IRCM protection from the initial UK MoD lamp-based system to today's Common Infrared Countermeasures (CIRCM) system.

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