

PRESS RELEASE

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Naval Group to produce an autonomous underwater drone demonstrator for the French Defence Procurement Agency (DGA)

On December 28, 2023, DGA awarded Naval Group a framework agreement for the design, production and testing of an Unmanned Combat Underwater Vehicle (UCUV) demonstrator. A first follow-on contract was also signed for the design and development of Naval Group's Autonomous Decision-Making Process (ADMP) and secure autonomous navigation.

This framework agreement follows on the contract awarded to Naval Group on May 4, 2023 for the study of the main use cases and system architecture of an UCUV. The objective is to conduct studies and evaluate the technologies identified to meet the French Navy's main use cases, and thus design and develop the UCUV demonstrator.

Aurore Neuschwander, Naval Group's Director of Drones, Autonomous Systems and Underwater Weapons, stated: *"Naval Group is very proud to support the French Ministry of Armed Forces in the study of this innovative and disruptive naval capability. We will leverage the know-how we acquired in naval unmanned systems over the last ten years, and in particular our XL-UUV demonstrator, which will serve as a platform for technology integration and testing. This ambitious project will contribute to the creation of a French industry of excellence in naval unmanned systems, of which Naval Group will be one of the federators".*

The first subsequent contract to this framework agreement will run for 24 months. It will enable the development of a version of the Autonomous Decision-Making Process (ADMP or ADC@ in French, for Autonomie Décisionnelle contrôlée) designed to strengthen mission planning and monitoring, and secure surface and underwater navigation which are essential functions for an autonomous, enduring, multi-mission system.

Other follow-on contracts are planned in order to develop the technologies needed to meet the challenges of long endurance, underwater detection and sub-order implementation.

Unmanned systems at the heart of collaborative naval combat

Unmanned systems play an increasingly important role in naval combat, providing navies with the technological and tactical superiority they need. With the UCUV project, France joins a very select group of countries engaged in the definition, development and evaluation of a first XL-UUV (Extra-Large Unmanned Underwater Vehicle). Through this project, the French Ministry of Armed Forces will benefit from technological breakthroughs and innovations in the fields of robotics, drones and

artificial intelligence, in order to evaluate a new naval capability that could provide a medium-term operational response to new areas of conflict and asymmetric combat.

Naval Group's XL UUV Demonstrator at the heart of the UCUV project

The XL UUV Demonstrator, whose sea qualification was completed at the end of summer 2023, will be a key component of the UCUV project. It will enable short-cycle evaluation of the technologies, such as ADMP and energy, needed to confirm the technical choices linked to the design of the future UCUV demonstrator. This innovative method will provide agile guidance for the project, enabling the UCUV demonstrator to be built within the defined budget and schedule.

Autonomous Decision-Making Process (ADMP), the on-board brain of autonomous systems

In an environment where communications are limited and sometimes impossible or unwanted, it is essential to be able to guarantee a mission's success with complete confidence. With this logic in mind, Naval Group has developed ADMP, which aims providing a capability extension to unmanned systems operation in the context of a long-term mission, by enabling them to carry out their missions without remote control, thus making them autonomous systems.

Thanks to continuous replanning based on tactical situation analysis, ADMP enables autonomous systems to adapt to tactical hazards, to the environment where they operate and to potential damage. This system enables autonomous systems to accomplish their mission alone or in collaboration, while respecting the doctrine of use.

ADMP guarantees compliance with the human operator's orders in terms of mission objectives, rules of behavior and degrees of freedom left to the autonomous system.

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About Naval Group

Naval Group is a partner to its customers' maritime sovereignty. An international player in naval defence and heir to French naval know-how, Naval Group develops innovative solutions to meet the needs of navies. Present throughout the entire life cycle of the ships, the group designs, builds, integrates and maintains submarines and surface ships, as well as their systems and equipment, through to dismantling. It also provides services for shipyards and naval bases. A high-tech company, it builds on its exceptional expertise, its unique design and production resources and its ability to set up strategic partnerships and successful transfers of technology. Attentive to the challenges of corporate social responsibility, Naval Group is a member of the United Nations Global Compact. With operations on five continents, the group has a turnover of 4.3 billion euros and employs 16028 people (full-time equivalents / 2022 data).

