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Rheinmetall 4SEEN debuts at CANSEC 2012

The sea doesn't divide, it connects! The world's great trade routes span the oceans, and the same applies to the lines of communication that keep our troops supplied when deployed overseas. Heavy equipment, materiel and rations often reach the area of operations by sea.

At the same time, oceangoing 4th Generation Warfare units find themselves confronting asymmetric threats in littoral zones as well as on the high seas. Thanks to their advanced sensors, effectors, early warning and weapon engagement systems, warships such as corvettes, frigates and destroyers are able to detect and neutralize attacks by pirates, criminal gangs armed with modern weaponry, non-state actors and/or suicide bombers. By contrast, auxiliary ships, patrol craft and coast guard vessels are seldom equipped with high-performance systems of this type. This is where Rheinmetall's new "4SEEN" concept comes in, which the Düsseldorf, Germany-based Group is displaying for the first time in public at CANSEC 2012.

4SEEN is a reasonably priced combination of a commercial bridge system (radar and navigation) with "man in the loop" target acquisition, validation, engagement, and after-action assessment. Representing a capabilities-oriented approach to self-defence, the design is based on a modular, scalable concept. Unlike larger, more complex combat management system (CMS) designs, which often draw on products from several different manufacturers, the individual components that make up 4SEEN – including the sensors, effectors, control hardware and software as well as logistical aspects such as spare parts, maintenance, training and documentation – all come from a single source. Compared with a full-fledged CMS concept, this approach cuts costs significantly. Furthermore, though 4SEEN is a standalone system, it can also be integrated into existing CMS structures. It is thus ideal for equipping less complex, less expensive seagoing vessels.

Monitoring, evaluation, engagement, neutralization ...

To stay on top of the situation at all times, 4SEEN uses commercial off-the-shelf components and systems that are already standard equipment on boats and ships, such as radar and electronic chart display systems. Depending on customer requirements, the 4SEEN control unit can be configured to match the design of

individual vessels, and installed either on the bridge or elsewhere on board. Electro-optical sensors such as the MSP600 or FIRST monitor the area around the vessel, reconnoitring potential threats. The system can be augmented with additional sensors.

A Rheinmetall SAS situational awareness system aids the crew in evaluating the threat. Intuitive menu prompting and interfaces facilitate decision-making. Owing to the man-in-the-loop function, the final decision to engage a target remains with the commander. Moreover, SAS is designed to meet the needs of multiple vessels simultaneously and/or to support combined operations on shore.

Various effectors are available, including stabilized weapon stations armed with machine guns, automatic cannon or automatic grenade launchers, the latter two capable of firing airburst ammunition. Rheinmetall, one of the most trusted names in the global defence industry, is able to offer its 12.7mm machine gun, or its 20mm, 25mm or 30mm automatic cannon. The 30mm cannon can be supplied with airburst ammunition; alternatively, it is also possible to integrate weapons from other manufacturers. Moreover, a number of different ammunition types are available as well, e.g. kinetic energy rounds. Other Rheinmetall effectors suitable for inclusion in 4SEEN are countermeasure systems such as MASS or ROSY.

True to its single source approach, Rheinmetall also supplies passive protection components, coupled with comprehensive and efficient logistical support, including documentation and computerized customer service.

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