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Persistent Surveillance System (PSS) from Rheinmetall: wide area perimeter protection from above

The Persistent Surveillance System (PSS) helps to protect critical military and civilian infrastructure. This compact multi-sensor tactical surveillance system enables wide-area observation, detection, identification, and monitoring at forward operating bases, outposts or even critical segments of international borders. Moreover, the PSS can operate day and night in all weathers. The system is thus ideal for protecting large areas of rough terrain.

Specifically designed for wide areas protection and automatic intruder detection, the PSS consists of the Persistent Surveillance Aerostat (PSA) and the Persistent Surveillance Tower (PST). The PSA is an aerostat with a stabilized electro-optical sensor, operating 300 metres above the ground. Installed on a 32-metre-tall, trailer-mounted tower, the PST is a stabilized electro-optical sensor and radar unit, including laser pointer and laser rangefinder. The system, which generates real-time geo-referenced imagery, has a maximum detection range of 20 km, while its ground moving target radar can track targets up to 10 km away.

Using the SC2PS application, all the sensors can be operated from a single container-sized or trailer-mounted ground control station, where the sensor data are displayed and exploited. An RF data link between the ground control station and sensors is available as an option.

It takes just sixty minutes for a three-person team to set up or take down the system, and only one person to operate it. The total training time requirement is in the region of 10-15 days. Able to function for 48-72 hours between helium top-ups, the Persistent Surveillance System lives up to its name.

Since the initial fielding of Persistent Surveillance on Aerostat (PSA) systems in Afghanistan in November 2009, the Canadian Forces have also deployed the PSS during security operations for the Winter Olympics and Paralympic Games in Vancouver and at the G8 and G20 summits in 2010 in Canada. In addition, the NATO-compatible PSS has been used in various multinational troop exercises and demonstrations.

Furthermore, Rheinmetall recently booked an order for the PSS from a private sector corporation that plans to deploy the system to protect its facilities in unstable regions.

Tried and tested in military and homeland security missions, the PSS has proved to be an invaluable tool for detecting and identifying potential threats and targets.

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