

SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE OPTS FOR ARGOS 410-Z SYSTEM Arm Scor last month awarded Denel Optronics a contract for the supply of the Argos 410-Z Military airborne observation system to the South African Air Force (SAAF) for its Cessna Caravan aircraft.



The Argos system mounted on a Cessna Caravan (German registration), similar to the installation for the South African Air Force aircraft.

The Argos 410-Z enhances and expands the aircraft's ability to perform long-range search and rescue, surveillance, reconnaissance, and other observation missions.

"We are delighted with this Arm Scor contract which once again underwrites our commitment to support our local defence force with state-of-the-art technology products," says Theo Kleynhans, acting general manager of Denel Optronics.

German company Carl Zeiss Optronics GmbH signed an agreement with Denel on 14 March 2007 to acquire a majority stake in Denel Optronics as part of the Denel's restructuring process.

The Argos 410-Z is a stabilised airborne observation system equipped with the latest generation Carl Zeiss Optronics thermal imager, a 3-CCD daylight TV camera with powerful zoom lens, eye-safe laser rangefinder, autotracker, and mission awareness positioning system (MAPS). The MAPS function provides the operator with GPS coordinates of "objects of interest" by means of a high accuracy integrated inertial measurement unit (IMU).

Denel Optronics have been showcasing its Argos 410-Z at several major global airshows in recent times, notably ILA in Berlin, Farnborough in the UK and Eurosatory in Paris, as well as at South Africa's AAD (Africa Aerospace & Defence) in Cape Town. It attracted major interest from international aircraft manufacturers, systems houses and military customers (end-users) looking to retrofit their existing systems.

Built to military specifications the Argos 410-Z offers outstanding day and night image quality. The Carl Zeiss Optronics ATTICA thermal imager is known for generating clear,

focused images. With its four fields of view and advanced image processing features, including edge enhancement, local adaptive dynamic compression and electronic zoom, it offers exceptional detection, recognition and identification ranges.

Further information about the Argos 410-Z (the 'Z' denotes the system is equipped with the Zeiss thermal imager) is available on the website:

www.deneloptronics.co.za <<http://www.deneloptronics.co.za>>.

More on Denel Optronics and Carl Zeiss Optronics:

In terms of the agreement signed with Denel on 14 March, Carl Zeiss Optronics initially takes a 70% holding in the new South African entity, while Denel retains the other 30%. The German company is a member of the Carl Zeiss Group, the world's leading manufacturer of high-tech optical and opto-electronic industrial, medical and research solutions and lifestyle products.

The new optronics business, to be known as Carl Zeiss Optronics (Pty) Ltd., will compete on international markets for the design, manufacturing and support of optical and opto-electronic systems in the civil security and defence fields.

Denel Optronics are actively engaged with potential export customers for the Argos 410-Z with Carl Zeiss Optronics recently announcing that it will become the stronghold for sensor supply and support for European customers.

As a result both military and civilian customers across Europe will benefit from accelerated turnaround times, customer support, and on-the-spot service.

"This move will address the current logistic shortfall where European OEMs and end-users of all airborne sensor systems need, for example, to work with teams in the US or elsewhere outside Europe," says Hans-Juergen Wiemer, Director Airborne Sensor Systems, Carl Zeiss Optronics. "We predict it will provide a major boost to activity in European and other international markets."

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