EDGE’s Pioneering SkyKnight Air Defence Missile System Details Major Programme Milestones



EDGE Group entity, HALCON, a regional leader in the production and supply of precision-guided weapons, has announced the successful achievement of a series of major developments for its SkyKnight air defence missile system, which include the completion of the system’s naval missile concept design.

The updates were provided at the Dubai Airshow 2021, where HALCON detailed the significant progress being made to SkyKnight, which was first unveiled at the International Defence Exhibition (IDEX) in Abu Dhabi in February. The first-ever UAE designed and manufactured counter-rocket, artillery, and mortar (C-RAM) missile system, SkyKnight was purposely designed to counter the full spectrum of modern threats, providing early warning signals and precise surface-to-air intercept capabilities.

A SkyKnight naval launcher design and prototype is on display at Dubai Airshow 2021, showcasing the expanding range of applications of the air defence missile system.

Development of the actual SkyKnight system commenced in August 2020 with a full

strength team. Key milestones achieved in the last 12 months extend to the first missile tests out of a canister; full system requirement reviews for user needs and system design; subsystem design; and wind tunnel test model design and manufacturing.

Commenting on the progress to date, Saeed Al Mansoori, CEO of HALCON said: “The development of SkyKnight in its own right, and its inclusion in Rheinmetall AG’s Skynex air defence system are significant milestone developments for the UAE’s defence sector. To then go on to chart the impressive progress we are under the programme is extremely gratifying and speaks to the talent of our team, EDGE’s ability to act with pace and agility, and the benefit of partnering with established global players.”

The first prototype parts for SkyKnight were made by the special manufacturing group at HALCON earlier this year, with a second missile firing scheduled to take place before the end of the year. All of the subcontractors on the programme are identified and registered, permitting system integration work to commence in earnest.

Dr. Gerrit Viljoen, Chief Technology Officer of the Missiles & Weapons cluster at EDGE commented: “SkyKnight is a significant and complex undertaking, which requires all the skill, knowledge, and expertise we can bring to bear in order for it to be successful. We believe we possess those elements and more, and shall continue working diligently on building a system that has international appeal and will help build on EDGE’s and the UAE’s export credentials and manufacturing prowess.”

As previously announced, EDGE, parent company of HALCON, had been developing a short-range air defence system, as had Germany-based Rheinmetall AG, which was actively seeking a missile system to form part of its Skynex air defence system. The companies decided to jointly offer a solution, with HALCON providing SkyKnight, the missile system to the highly regarded Oerlikon Skynex air defence system.