

## **Leonardo inaugurates its new airborne systems facility in L'Aquila, making the Abruzzo region a hub for Leonardo's high-tech production**

---

- **The site, built according to the highest environmental and earthquake-resistant standards, is focused on Leonardo's airborne systems activity and employs around 140 people**
- **Covering more than 4,500 square metres, the new facility is home to advanced technology including Mode-5 identification friend/foe (IFF) systems and airborne communications equipment**

**L'Aquila, 25 July 2017** – Today Leonardo officially inaugurated its airborne systems facility in L'Aquila, Italy. L'Aquila, the capital of Italy's Abruzzo region, is one of the birthplaces of Leonardo's airborne and space systems division and is also home to Thales Alenia Space (a joint venture between Thales, 67% and Leonardo, 33%) which opened a major site in the city in 2013. In the wider region, Leonardo has two additional international centres of excellence; a cyber security site in Chieti and Telespazio's Space Centre in Fucino (Telespazio is a joint venture between Leonardo, 67% and Thales, 33%) which together employ around 850 staff.

"The opening of a new industrial park, where state-of-the-art technologies are developed by highly skilled, specialist staff, is a concrete symbol of Leonardo's commitment to the revival of the Abruzzo region's economy" said CEO Profumo, adding "The expertise of our people here in L'Aquila contributed to Leonardo having recently been awarded a major contract by the UK Ministry of Defence to upgrade the Identification Friend/Foe (IFF) systems on more than 350 aircraft, ships and ground emplacements. We are confident that this site will be an important driver for growth in the region".

Leonardo started reconstruction of the site immediately following an earthquake in 2009 that damaged the structural integrity of the original buildings. During the re-building, employees were temporarily moved to facilities at the Tecnopolo d'Abruzzo industrial park to keep production on schedule and ensure continuity for customers and suppliers.

The new site, which was completed with the support of the Abruzzo regional authorities, covers an area of 4,500 square metres. Built to high standards that include earthquake resistant construction, the site is also highly energy efficient and can produce electricity from renewable sources. Leonardo entrusted the construction of the new site to its group service provider Leonardo Global Solutions.

The industrial park as a whole comprises two main production facilities, one of which is the newly inaugurated site, and hosts a total of 450 staff. 140 are Leonardo employees, predominantly engineers and highly-specialised technicians, while 300 work for Thales Alenia Space in a 22,000 square metre site that includes production areas, clean rooms and offices.

Activities at the new L'Aquila base are focused on the design and certification of Identification Friend/Foe systems for civilian and military aircraft and equipment for airborne communications. Technologies developed on-site are particularly critical to military operations as they allow pilots to automatically recognise 'allied' aircraft and to exchange information with them. Leonardo is a leader in IFF technology, having secured significant contracts in countries including Italy, the UK, Sweden and Japan. Market prospects are strong, as by 2020 all NATO nations will be required to upgrade their IFF equipment to the latest 'Mode 5' standard, as offered by Leonardo in L'Aquila, to continue to embark on joint operations.