

Leonardo wins National Award for Innovation with its environmental protection project in the aeronautical sector

- **Leonardo is the first company in the aerospace sector to develop a system able to eliminate chromium from the corrosion protection process of aluminum aerostructures**
- **The project helps reduce environmental impact and is fully aligned with European legislation on the use of chemicals**
- **Profumo: "This is the result of team work carried out in our laboratories, tangible proof of Leonardo's commitment to research and development of innovative technologies and solutions in the aerospace sector."**
- **Environmental sustainability is one of the themes of Leonardo's strategy**

Rome, 4 March 2019 – Leonardo has won the most prestigious Italian award dedicated to innovation, the National Award for Innovation. The initiative, promoted by the Cotec Foundation, annually studies the innovative projects of companies, universities, public administrations and individual inventors. The award ceremony was held today in the presence of the President of the Senate, Maria Elisabetta Alberti Casellati.

Leonardo's project, developed by its Aircraft division, will have a significant impact on eliminating the use of chromium in the corrosion protection processes for aluminum aerostructures, as recommended by the European Union REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and restriction of CHEMicals), which defines the hazards and risks associated with the use of certain chemicals.

Alessandro Profumo, Leonardo CEO, underlined: "The winning project is the result of the team work carried out in our laboratories, tangible proof of Leonardo's commitment to research and development of innovative technologies and solutions in the aerospace sector. Attention to rapidly changing international scenario and the need to address these new stringent measures to limit environmental impact are priority issues for the company, which can offer an important contribution to sustainable growth of the sector."

The result achieved by Leonardo is a major innovation on a global scale that highlights the Company as a leader among the major international players in the sector for the elimination of hexavalent chromium from all the anti-corrosion treatment phases of aluminum structures. The new process, that is now in the process of industrialisation, will be introduced across the company's production sites and then shared with other industries.

The award-winning electrochemical treatment solution, for which a patent application has been filed, protects aluminum aerostructures, which make up about 80% of a conventional aircraft, from oxidation. The innovation marks the transition from a process that involves the use of hexavalent chromium, a material recognised as toxic by REACH legislation, to a process that completely eliminates its use, even in the pre-treatment and post-treatment phases. An ecologically-compliant alternative that is environmentally and economically sustainable has finally been devised: sulphur-tartaric anodic oxidation.

The experimentation phase of the project, which had already been selected as one of the winners of the Leonardo 2018 Innovation Award, involved an intensive series of tests in the laboratory, with the testing of about 1,500 samples. This demonstrated that the process can obtain equivalent chemical-physical and mechanical performances to the process of anodising chromium.

Leonardo, a global high-technology company, is among the top ten world players in Aerospace, Defence and Security and Italy's main industrial company. Organized into five business divisions, Leonardo has a significant industrial presence in Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland and the USA, where it also operates through subsidiaries such as Leonardo DRS (defence electronics), and joint ventures and partnerships: ATR, MBDA, Telespazio, Thales Alenia Space and Avio. Leonardo competes in the most important international markets by leveraging its areas of technological and product leadership (Helicopters, Aircraft, Aerostructures, Electronics, Cyber Security and Space). Listed on the Milan Stock Exchange (LDO), in 2017 Leonardo recorded consolidated restated revenues of €11.7 billion and invested €1.5 billion in Research and Development. The Group has been part of the Dow Jones Sustainability Index since 2010.