

FOR DEFENCE AND SECURITY INDUSTRY

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1 | 2026



 **MESIT**

New M20A Headset by MESIT
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13 June 2026

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80 YEARS**

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YEARS



Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year we have prepared several changes for you, both in terms of graphics and content. Our editorial team strives to regularly inform you about the activities of the Czech defence and security industry, whether they involve companies that have been operating on the market for several decades – many of them having been our partners for 30 years – or entirely new small and medium-sized enterprises.

Since the main role of Review is to contribute to better communication between public administration and industry, to help navigate market opportunities, monitor technological trends, and provide manufacturers with information about the needs and requirements of both armed and unarmed security forces, the magazine's pages will newly be enriched – alongside the regular presentations of the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic, the Police of the Czech Republic, and the Czech Armed Forces – with interesting insights into the activities of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic and the Customs Administration of the Czech Republic.

As is now a tradition, we opened this year with the January Annual Meeting of the Representative Editorial Board of Review. We welcomed several new members and reflected on the year 2025. In their speeches, members of the Editorial Board presented their plans for the year ahead and expressed their thanks to Miloš Soukup and Eva Soukupová, who 30 years ago decided to establish the publishing house MSLine – at a time when defence was widely regarded as a necessary expenditure of the past. This point was also confirmed in his speech by the Deputy Minister of Defence and new member of the Editorial Board, René Schreier.

You can read the speeches delivered by the members of the Editorial Board at the end of this issue.

As the new Editor-in-Chief taking over the baton of this family enterprise, I would like to thank my parents for all the effort they invested in building what I dare say has become an important professional platform. And to our readers, I wish that our pages bring you the information you seek – information that, in today's challenging times, may in some measure help contribute to the security of us all.

Šárka Cook

Editor-in-Chief



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Police, Fire Rescue Service, Prison Service, Customs Administration, State Material Reserves Administration

– technology, equipment and gear for armed services and the Integrated Rescue System, etc.

General Assembly of the Defence and Security Industry Association of the Czech Republic

NATO Days and the Czech Air Force Days

Modernisation of the Czech Armed Forces and the involvement of Czech industry

- cybernetics, security and information protection, artificial intelligence, information and communication technologies, CBRN, military healthcare, personal security and protection
- presentations of Czech defence and security industry companies



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SDTC 2027–2028 coming soon



2025–2026

Security & Defence Technologies Catalogue

The 15th edition of the printed SDTC 2027–2028 catalogue maps the capabilities and competitiveness of the Czech defence and security industry.

SDTC Application



A Mobile Application

enabling the search for companies by industry category.

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General Manager of OPTOKON

Interview with the Chief

of the General Staff of the Czech Armed Forces

Security Is Not Free. We Must Stop
Pretending Everything Is Fine.

The Chief of the General Staff of the Czech Armed Forces, Army General Karel Řehka, whose term in office will end this year, has been actively involved in the development of the military. At the same time, he also serves on the prestigious Editorial Board of Review – the Defence and Security Industry Magazine. At the March conference “Our Security Is Not a Given,” he emphasized the key needs of the Czech Armed Forces, which he also discussed in the following interview.



General, we are entering 2026. What are the most important priorities for the Czech Armed Forces at this time?

You know, my highest priority remains essentially the same, but it grows more urgent with every year: real combat readiness, not just readiness on paper, and the immediate deployability of our units. We must stop merely planning and start fully operating in the new framework. That includes completing the transition to a three-tier command structure and ensuring top-tier host nation support for allied units that may transit through our territory.

But the army is not just about the stars on the shoulders of generals sitting in offices. The army stands and falls with the privates and corporals in mechanized squads. It stands on what we call our “silver corps” — the non-commissioned officers and warrant officers who train for real combat in mud and freezing conditions. Those of us at the General Staff are here only to create the conditions for them to

succeed, to provide equipment and room for growth. If we fail in the background, they will pay the highest price on the battlefield.

Looking further ahead, toward 2030 – could you outline the army’s needs in terms of modernization and new equipment?

The key for the coming years is building the necessary infrastructure. We cannot purchase modern “toys” without having somewhere to park them or the capacity to service them. This concerns mainly the 7th and 4th Brigades.

We must invest massively in drones and, above all, in counter-drone protection. This is a lesson we are learning in real time from the conflicts around us.

We also urgently need to replenish our stockpiles of ammunition and spare parts. We have an internal debt amounting to hundreds of billions of Czech crowns — a debt we borrowed from our own security over the past decades.

As a soldier, I will say it openly: nothing is more expensive than an army that is only half-ready. Such an army will protect no one in a crisis, and you will simply pour money into it without results. Time is the most valuable commodity we have right now, and we should not waste it.

How do you assess the level of the Czech defence industry in this context? Is the cooperation between the army and domestic companies effective?

The cooperation is at a very good level and is absolutely strategic for us. Security of supply during a crisis depends on what we can produce or repair at home.

The war in Ukraine has shown us that adaptation must be extremely fast. Changes to equipment or software must no longer take years, but months or even weeks.

I appreciate Czech companies that do not wait passively for orders or subsidies but take ini-



tiative and leadership in innovation themselves. I often ask them: When, if not now? Who, if not us? Too much is at stake for us to play it safe.

Defence spending has been increasing in nominal terms in recent years. Does that mean the army can breathe more easily?

Here I must be very honest with both the public and politicians, even though it may not be popular: in reality, the budget is not increasing. Due to inflation and rising technology costs, it is stagnating, and in real purchasing power it is even declining. This trend is very dangerous.

We cannot launch large strategic projects while dozens of smaller but equally important ones must be postponed indefinitely.

We must stop pretending that everything is perfectly fine. My role as Chief of the General Staff is to provide honest and unfiltered military advice. I am not here to say things that sound good over coffee, but to clearly identify risks as they truly are.

Air defence and new technologies such as AI are major topics today. Where do we currently stand?

Air defence was neglected in the Czech Republic for years — quite literally starved of resources. Now we are starting from the bottom again.

We are acquiring the SPYDER air defence system, MADR radars, and preparing for the arrival of the F-35 aircraft. But air defence is not

just about missiles. It is a comprehensive system that also includes warfare in the electromagnetic spectrum and cyberspace.

If we want to avoid war, we must have such strong deterrence that no one dares to challenge us. We see the window of potential threat — when our readiness may be tested — within the next three to six years. Time is running short, and we must be prepared before that window opens.

The human factor remains a challenge. Since 2024, the army has been pushing for large-scale recruitment. Are you seeing results?

Personnel are our absolute priority. Without people, even the most expensive equipment is just a pile of metal.

We have improved salary conditions and benefits, and we are trying to cut down the excessive bureaucracy that discouraged many potential recruits.

But there is another dimension to it. Being a soldier is not just a job; it is a calling and an enormous privilege. The military is irreplaceable in confronting a technologically advanced aggressor.

In a modern state, you can outsource many things — from cleaning to IT services or even emergency medical services in peacetime — but you cannot outsource national defence. No one else will do it for us.

What about the Active Reserve? Are they in a better situation than the professional forces?

The situation in the Active Reserve largely mirrors that of the professional force, and we need to significantly strengthen this area.

The requirements placed on reservists are increasing. They are no longer just people “filling the numbers” but specialists who must be able to operate complex equipment.

All of us who wear the uniform have sworn an oath to risk even our lives in defence of our country. That is not an empty phrase; it is a commitment that our families and loved ones share with us. I have enormous respect for everyone who volunteers to take on this responsibility alongside their civilian job.

Cyber threats are a daily reality. Is our military “bulletproof” in this area?

Our Information and Cyber Forces have already reached full operational capability, which means we can protect military systems very effectively.

However, I have serious concerns about the civilian sector. I warn against the uncritical import of technologies from hostile or risky countries into our critical infrastructure.

Russia and other actors aim to divide us, undermine our confidence and paralyze us before they even send a single soldier across the border. In times of crisis, the military is completely dependent on the resilience of civilian networks, energy infrastructure and transport systems. If the civilian sector collapses, the military’s hands will be tied.

What is your vision for the relationship between the army and ordinary citizens? Are we prepared as a society?

Defence of the state is not just the task of a few thousand people in camouflage uniforms. It is a whole-of-government and, above all, a whole-of-society issue.

In the military, we are doing everything we can with the resources available to us. But it is crucial to bring the topics of security and resilience into schools and into the education of the younger generation.

If we do not address these issues within the education system, we will not be able to compensate for that deficit later in real life. Unfortunately, the era of carefree complacency is over.

Now, after four years in office, I leave with a clear conscience, knowing that I have informed both the army and the public honestly and without embellishment. Security is not free — and it begins with each of us.

General, thank you for the interview and also for your membership on the prestigious Editorial Board of *Review – the Defence and Security Industry Magazine*. I wish you much success not only in your future professional career but also in your personal life.

Šárka Cook

Photo: Czech Armed Forces



New Headset M20A

a Communication Tool for the Modern Battlefield



The modern battlefield is characterised by high dynamics, a complex operational environment, and an increasing degree of technology deployment. In such conditions, communication ceases to be merely a supporting element and becomes one of the key factors influencing the success of the mission as well as the safety of the individual. The transfer of information must be fast, clear, and reliable – regardless of the level of noise and stress.

It is precisely in this area where headsets play a crucial role. It is not just about voice transmission, but about the comprehensive integration of the user with the communication system of the crew, the vehicle, and the surrounding environment. The new headset designated M20A is a response to the current requirements of modern armed forces and reflects experience from real-world operations as well as long-term development of tactical communication systems in R&D laboratories of MESIT (MEMBER OF OMNIPOL GROUP).

Design principles and philosophy

The M20A headset is based on the proven platform of the previous model, M20, which has already found use in various types of military operations. The primary objective of the development was to preserve the mechanical durability, ergonomics, and modularity of the original solution, while significantly advancing

the capabilities of the kit in terms of noise management and situational awareness. The design is conceived with an emphasis on a low profile, full integration of electronics, and minimisation of external elements that could be restrictive when used in combination with ballistic head protection. Soft earcups ensure not only high passive attenuation, but also comfort during long-term wear, which is essential especially during all-day operations.

Active and passive noise reduction in practice

One of the key innovations of the M20A model is the integration of an active noise reduction (ANR) system, which complements the high level of passive noise reduction. Together, they enable reliable communication even in environments with extreme noise levels, typical for example of military vehicles or helicopters. The principle of ANR involves analysing ambient

noise using integrated microphones and generating an anti-phase signal that significantly reduces unwanted noise. The result is a significant improvement in the intelligibility of voice communication and a reduction in the cognitive burden on operators during long-term deployment. While passive noise reduction is particularly effective at higher frequencies, ANR plays a crucial role in reducing low-frequency constant noise, typical of engines and power units in military equipment. The combination of both principles thus provides a balanced solution for a wide range of operational scenarios.

Monitoring and situational awareness

The M20A headset is equipped with four integrated microphones that provide continuous monitoring of the surrounding environment. This system enables the preservation of natural perception of ambient sounds and pro-



compatibility



ANR



orientation



accessories



extreme conditions

headband



neckband



rails



M20A allows 3 mounting options: Adjustable headband, neckband and helmet rail mount.



vides the user with 360° situational awareness. Sounds with a high sound pressure level are automatically attenuated to a safe level, while low-level sounds or distant signals are amplified. The user can thus perceive important acoustic stimuli – for example, commands, the movement of people or equipment – even in an environment where, without electronic support, they would not be audible. This capability is essential, especially during infantry operations, airborne deployment, or when operating near vehicles, where it is necessary to respond quickly to changes in the situation without losing orientation.

Ergonomics and control in combat conditions

The ergonomic design of the M20A headset is based on the requirements for intuitive and rapid operation while wearing gloves, in low visibility or stressful situations. Built-in control buttons allow you to switch on, switch off and make basic function settings without the need to handle external modules. Modular construction allows for various mounting options – adjustable headband, neckband, or



helmet rail adapters. Thanks to this, the headset can be easily adapted to the specific type of protective helmet and the user's preferences. Low weight and balanced load distribution help reduce fatigue during prolonged wear, which is a factor that directly affects the soldier's performance and concentration during the operation.

Integration into communication systems

The M20A headset is designed as a part of a broader system of tactical communication solutions. It is fully integrated with MESIT's communication systems and is also compatible with solutions from other leading manufacturers such as L3Harris or Thales. The headset is intended for use with tactical radios,

vehicle intercom systems, and on-board communication systems of military vehicles and other systems. This compatibility ensures a wide range of deployment options across units as well as in international operations, where interoperability is a key requirement.

Modern tactical communication systems cannot be regarded as a collection of isolated devices. Effective communication in combat and security operations arises only when individual elements are connected into a functional whole, enabling a smooth flow of information between individuals, vehicle crews, higher command levels, and the surrounding environment. The M20A headset is, in this context, the final, yet crucial, interface between human and technology.

MESIT has been developing tactical communication systems as a comprehensive solution designed for deployment in defence and security operations for many years. The basic principles of these systems are interoperability, modularity, and high resistance to interference, vibrations, and extreme climatic conditions. The architecture is designed so that individual components – radio systems, intercom systems, headsets, and public address systems – can operate independently, but at

the same time be integrated into a single communication system without limitations.

Radio systems and wireless communications

The fundamental building block for voice and data transmission in tactical operations is the tactical radio system. The RF40 software-defined radio system is designed for full deployment in all types of military operations, from combat units to logistics. Thanks to its modularity and robust construction, it is suitable both for individual use and for integration into vehicle and stationary assemblies. The core of the system solution is the compact hand-held multi-band radio RF40, which can be expanded with the VA40 power amplifier to create a powerful 50W vehicle-mounted or stationary configuration. This approach makes it possible to maintain a consistent user interface and operational logic of the system across different types of deployments. The RF40 represents the third generation of radios, building on the proven features of previous versions while introducing technological innovations such as secure multichannel operation and simultaneous voice and data communication in a fully-fledged MANET network.

In combination with the M20A headset, the RF40 creates a communication unit that enables clear voice transmission even in loud environments, both during infantry operations and when deployed in combat vehicles.

Vehicle intercom systems and crew coordination

In combat and special vehicles, the vehicle intercom system is a key element of internal communication. The VICM 200 COMBAT intercom is designed to ensure stable communication between crew members as well as integration with external communication devices. In conditions where rapid and accurate



The version with rail mounting allows the connection of additional accessories, night vision, etc.

information exchange is essential, the intercom represents a fundamental tool for crew coordination and effective task execution. The M20A headset here serves as a key interface, connecting individual crew members to both the intercom system and the radio system, while also ensuring hearing protection in the vehicle's extremely noisy environment.

PA systems and communication with the vehicle surroundings

A specific but increasingly important component of tactical communication systems are public address systems, also known as battlefield announcement systems. The VICM 300 PA system is designed for the transmission of voice announcements and warning signals to the vehicle surroundings, in situations where it is necessary to communicate with civilians, other units or potential threats, without the crew having to leave the protected space of the vehicle. The headset here serves as the primary control and monitoring interface for individual crew members. Using a headset, the operator can safely and clearly issue voice prompts to the PA system, monitor their progress, and at the same time remain fully connected to the intercom and radio network.

System access and the role of the M20A headset

All of the above-mentioned elements – radio systems, intercoms and PA solutions – are designed to form a unified communication unit. The M20A headset in this system does not merely serve as a passive accessory, but becomes an active component that fundamentally affects the quality of information transmission, user safety, and their ability to respond to the surrounding situation.

Thanks to a combination of active and passive noise reduction, environmental awareness and high ergonomics, the M20A enables effective use of all communication systems across various types of deployment – from infantry units, through combat vehicle crews, to special operations. It is precisely this systemic approach that distinguishes modern tactical communication systems from isolated technical solutions and reflects the real needs of today's armed forces.



Product testing is already carried out during the development phase in our own laboratories, focused on verifying acoustic properties, EMC and durability.

Durability and verification in real conditions

The M20A construction meets the relevant requirements of military standards MIL-STD and combines high mechanical resistance with resistance to external influences such as vibrations, dust, humidity, or temperature extremes. These properties are essential for reliable operation in diverse climatic and operational conditions.

Development and verification of properties are carried out in MESIT's internal testing laboratories, where products are tested under simulated extreme external conditions. This approach makes it possible to optimise functionality, reliability and service life already during the development phase and to minimise risks during subsequent deployment in operation. A significant competitive advantage of the company is the close integration of electronics development with its own engineering facilities. In addition to the design and manufacture of electronic systems, MESIT also possesses technological capacities for the production of precision mechanical components, including aluminium castings using the investment casting process, CNC machining, and metal surface treatments. All these activities – from design and engineering through to the manufacture of mechanical parts, installation of electronics, final assembly and testing – take place within a single production facility.

In an environment where the speed and clarity of information determine both success and safety, the M20A positions itself as a means that provides the user with exactly those qualities.

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Photo: Jan Schejbal, MO CR

AGADOS – Company of the Year in the Field of Ground Technology

On January 20, 2026, AGADOS participated in the Annual Meeting of the Editorial Board of Review for the Defence and Security Industry, which took place at the Army House in Prague (DAP).

The program also included a presentation of the new AGADOS PK-M mobile field kitchen, placed in front of the venue building. This was the first public presentation of this product. This kitchen is the smallest field kitchen in the company's portfolio to date and is designed as a compact, fully mobile, and affordable solution. It has a capacity to provide meals for approximately 100-150 people and is equipped with two removable cooking modules that enable the efficient preparation of hot meals and beverages in demanding operating conditions. Its launch is planned for the first quarter of 2026.

During an informal presentation, the kitchen was put into operation and visitors were offered hot drinks, which allowed for a practical demonstration of its functionality. Already



during the event itself, the prototype aroused considerable interest from the public, representatives from the Czech Army, and from the Integrated Rescue System.

During the meeting, an award ceremony was also held, at which AGADOS received the „Company of the Year in Land Technology“ award handed over by the Minister of Defence Jaromír Zůna. The company sees this award as confirmation of its long-term direction, based on the systematic work of the entire team and an emphasis on quality, technical excellence, and operational reliability. At the same time, it sees it as a commitment to further development, continuous improvement, and maintaining the high standards that are essential in the defence and security industry.

PK - M

Mobile field kitchen

Military Logistics | Crisis Management and Humanitarian Operations
Emergency Food | Civil Protection and Emergency Services



T A D E A S

Multi-purpose Armoured Vehicle on a Tatra Chassis

Companies operating under the Tatra Defence (TD) brand have been focusing for many years on land armoured and special-purpose vehicles. TD's portfolio includes vehicles such as the Pandur 8x8, TITUS, and most recently the TADEAS platform. TD has already achieved success with this platform, for example in Poland, where it will be produced under license for the Polish Armed Forces.

The TADEAS platform (TAtRa DEfence Armoured Solution) features a highly modular design and is available in a wide range of versions and modifications, intended for both military and civilian use. TADEAS is the result of cooperation between TD and the automotive manufacturer Tatra Trucks. It uses not only the chassis and engines from the third generation of the Tatra Force model line, but also a new onboard electronic platform, including a number of shared driver-workstation components. As for the chassis, the basic configuration is 6 × 6, but TD also offers 4 × 4 and 8 × 8 versions.

New superstructure with high durability and spacious interior

The TADEAS vehicle is primarily designed for the installation of electronic systems and for use in roles such as combat vehicles, command vehicles, engineering vehicles, communication vehicles, armoured ambulances, and also as special vehicles for rescue services, firefighters, police, and others. The TADEAS 6 × 6 version falls into the medium-to-heavy weight category. Depending on the level of equipment and protection, the payload can reach up to 10 tons, while the gross vehicle weight can reach up to 30 tons. In the 4 × 4 version, the maximum weight can be up to 22 tons with a payload exceeding 3 tons, while the 8 × 8 version can reach a maximum weight of 40 tons with a payload significantly exceeding 10 tons.

In designing the superstructure, engineers utilized the advantages of the Tatra chassis with its central backbone tube by mounting the rear part of the body directly to the chassis tube without an auxiliary subframe. Thanks to this, the interior of the superstructure has a large internal height. The superstructure is welded from armoured steel, and with additional armour the overall level of ballistic protection can reach level 4 according to STANAG 4569. Depending on user requirements, roof hatches, a rotating ring mount, or a remotely controlled weapon station (RCWS) can be installed in the roof.

The vehicle is designed as a two-section vehicle with the engine located at the front. The superstructure itself is a single internal space visually divided into two sections. In the front section, with one pair of side doors, there is space for the driver and commander, or possibly a third crew member. Behind this front (control or technological) compartment is a space in the basic 6 × 6 version designed for up to 11 members of an infantry squad or for the previously mentioned special installations. Access is provided through an electrohydraulically operated folding rear ramp. The concept of a modular hull also allows a variant with only the front crew cabin, while the rear area can be used as a platform or base for weapon systems, drone launch systems, radar equipment with antennas and sensors, recovery equipment, or utility superstructures such as water tanks, fuel tanks, firefighting agents, and similar systems.

Tatra chassis and a wide selection of power units

The chassis follows the classic Tatra design with a central backbone tube and independently suspended half-axles with air suspension. In the 6 × 6 version, the first and third axles are steerable, giving the vehicle a turning radius of only 7 meters. All axles have a load capacity of 10 tons and are equipped with a central tire inflation system that can be operated while driving. The TADEAS vehicle uses new-generation axles with wheel hub reductions, allowing either drum or disc brakes to be selected. TADEAS is equipped as standard with two separate fuel tanks (left and right) with a total capacity of 400 liters, providing a road range of up to 700 km.

The vehicle's design is highly universal with regard to engine options. The basic offering includes modernized air-cooled Tatra V8 engines of the T3-928 RE series with electronically controlled fuel injection pumps, with a displacement of 12.7 liters and three power variants – 300 kW, 340 kW, and 365 kW. These are complemented by liquid-cooled six-cylinder Caterpillar C9.3B engines with a displacement of 9.3 liters and switchable power outputs of 395 kW and 447 kW (so-called “battle mode”), as well as Cummins ISL engines with a displacement of 8.9 liters producing around 300 kW. The engines can be combined with fully automatic transmissions from Allison or ZF Ecolife II, or with the automated ZF Traxxon transmission. The chassis always includes a two-stage Tatra transfer gearbox with the option of shifting into neutral.

TATRA DEFENCE

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POWER



MOBILITY



SAFETY

Interview with Dr Kristýna Helm

Vice President of AOBP for International Relations

Kristýna Helm serves as Vice President and Deputy Executive Director of the Defence and Security Industry Association of the Czech Republic (AOBP). She also represents the Czech defence industry within the NATO Industrial Advisory Group (NIAG), is a member of the Board of the NATO Science and Technology Organization (NATO STO), and acts as the National Focal Point for the European Defence Fund. Dr Helm also lectures at the Prague University of Economics and Business as part of the executive international programme Understanding Defence from a Business Perspective, designed for managers and industry professionals.



In 2016, you joined AOBP as a Project Manager and have since come a long and demanding way. In less than ten years, you have advanced to the positions mentioned above and earned significant recognition. What is your motto, and what motivates you?

My greatest motivation is the work itself – I genuinely enjoy it, and I see profound meaning in it. I consider it both a great responsibility and a privilege to serve as a voice for an industry on whose capabilities our security depends. At the same time, the role offers a strong intellectual dimension. It is a highly

complex and demanding environment that requires constant monitoring of trends, seeking innovative solutions, and finding new ways of doing things. I have never experienced a single day at work without learning something new.

I also appreciate the opportunity to view issues from multiple perspectives – business, government, international organisations, and the research community. Above all, however, I consistently strive to work on myself. That is the one area in life we can fully influence as individuals. The first motto that comes to mind is: *“Be the change you wish to see in the*

world.” I believe this is attributed to Mahatma Gandhi.

My main questions will focus primarily on the Czech defence industry. In the current situation, given the war in Ukraine, significant opportunities are opening up for the defence and security sector. How would you describe the current state of the Czech defence and security industry, and what do you see as the greatest obstacles?

The development of the defence and security environment in Europe over the past decade



has been unprecedented, both in positive and negative respects. On the one hand, numerous new opportunities are emerging; on the other, the wave of EU and NATO initiatives has made the landscape increasingly complex and difficult to navigate. Companies are striving to keep pace so that they do not miss out.

At the same time, many new players from the civilian technology sphere are seeking to enter the defence sector, bringing technologies with potential dual-use applications. A great deal is happening simultaneously, and it is challenging not only to orient oneself in this environment but, more importantly, to make strategic decisions about what makes sense for a company and what does not.

Today, the Czech defence industry is in very good shape. It has customers worldwide, and companies are performing well. Major Czech groups are further strengthening their positions through acquisitions and, in certain contracts, are able to succeed even against strong Western competitors.

Where we are lagging behind, in my view, is in our ability to systematically capitalise on opportunities arising at the European level – both at the level of individual companies and at the level of the state. Most significant European initiatives require active state involvement, not merely industry participation. Here, we could draw inspiration from countries such

as France, Germany, Spain, as well as Finland or Greece, which utilise European instruments and programmes far more strategically.

This is unfortunate. It is not merely about financial resources for research and development – in the long term, it is about positioning within the European market. The objective of joint projects is that systems developed in Europe should also be jointly procured within Europe. If we are not present at the stage of their development, we risk not being present at the stage of their future procurement either.

Without highlighting specific industrial sectors, it is publicly known that drones are currently among the most in-demand technologies. Is the Czech industry advanced in this field as well? Does it possess high-level know-how comparable to other areas of the Czech defence industry, or is it still at an early stage? Where do you see the perspective of this sector, and what would you recommend to companies seeking to enter not only the domestic but also foreign markets?

This is a typical example of a field where interest has grown dramatically within just a few years. The war in Ukraine has clearly demonstrated how crucial a role unmanned systems can play.

At the same time, the market has become significantly saturated. A vast number of compa-

nies have emerged that manufacture or intend to manufacture drones. It is likely that some time will be needed before the market naturally consolidates and only those technologies with demonstrable capabilities and real-world validation remain.

The Czech industry possesses interesting know-how and technological potential in this area, but real-world testing will be key. I therefore recommend that companies seek opportunities for testing and for obtaining feedback from end users. Ukraine is currently one of the places where – subject to compliance with all applicable rules – such feedback can be obtained very quickly. This is invaluable not only for further development but also for clearly defining a company's unique selling point (USP), that is, what truly differentiates its technology from competitors.

As for the future of the sector, I personally see even stronger potential in the area of counter-drone systems. Demand from users – whether armed forces or security services – is growing very dynamically. Protection against unmanned systems is becoming a fundamental component of modern security.

This is also reflected in activities within the Czech Republic. This year, the experimental exercise Drone Shield will take place under NATO auspices, and AOBP is organising a specialised Industry Day focused on counter-drone protection for the Ministry of the Interior.

AOBP currently has more than 250 members, which represents a significant increase compared to last year. How do you explain this growth, and what kind of support do you guarantee to companies?

This development is primarily linked to increasing defence budgets across EU Member States and to the growing interest of companies in testing whether they can succeed in the defence sector. Defence is no longer a marginal topic – it has become a strategic priority, which naturally attracts new entities.

At the same time, we approach the admission of new members responsibly. With each company, we carefully assess its potential to apply its technologies or services within the defence sector, and we recommend membership only where it genuinely makes sense – both for the company itself and for the association as a whole.



AOBP organises or co-organises more than 70 events annually. We provide companies with up-to-date information on opportunities at both national and international levels and help them navigate the complex defence industry environment. A significant portion of our activities is focused on export support, while others aim at integrating Czech companies into international supply chains.

Professional consultations constitute a very important part of our work. These often save companies considerable time and effort, as we are able to direct them to the right information, partners, and concrete opportunities.

What about newly established companies – startups? Do you have any special programmes for them? At the 2021 edition of the IDET international trade fair, startups were given dedicated exhibition space for the first time, and the same was true at FUTURE FORCES FORUM. What opportunities do such companies have within AOBP membership?

We do not have many very early-stage startups among our members. When they approach us for consultation, we often direct them to specialised programmes such as NATO DIANA or the Czech accelerator Defence Hub operating under the auspices of CzechInvest. These instruments are usually more suitable for companies in the early stages of development.

Startup pavilions at trade fairs such as IDET or FUTURE FORCES FORUM represent a very good opportunity. Under preferential conditions, they enable young companies to present their technologies, establish initial contacts, and test market interest. We clearly support this approach.

In the defence industry, the most realistic path for startups is often cooperation with a prime contractor supplying the armed forces. If they manage to integrate their technology into a broader solution, they gain not only a valuable reference but also essential feedback from the end user.

Direct supply by early-stage companies to armed forces is, by contrast, very demanding. Entry into defence procurement systems requires numerous certifications, authorisations, and administrative procedures. Moreover, defence acquisition cycles are long-term, which may be financially and operationally challenging for startups.

Could you outline AOBP's main priorities and plans for 2026, both in the Czech Republic and abroad?

The main priority for 2026 is deeper involvement of the Czech defence industry in current NATO and EU programmes.

Already in the first months of the year, we managed to organise two major events. The conference “*Current NATO Programmes and Opportunities for the Czech Industry*”, held on 27 January 2026, brought together more than 80 senior representatives of the Czech defence industry and senior officials from key NATO structures – including NSPA, NCIA, Allied Command Transformation, STO, NIAG, and others. Such broad representation of virtually all relevant NATO entities working with industry has not previously been achieved in the Czech Republic. The greatest added value lay in the concrete and highly practical information on ongoing programmes and opportunities for engagement. Although the conference

was opened by the Minister of Defence and the Czech Ambassador to NATO, it was not a political event but a practically oriented forum providing the latest information on current programmes and opportunities for Czech companies.

On 17 February 2026, we followed up with an EDF Matchmaking event, which attracted more than 230 participants from across Europe to Prague. The objective was to connect partners for projects under the European Defence Fund 2026 calls. The morning session was divided: foreign participants received a detailed overview of the Czech defence industry, while Czech companies attended the National Information Day on the EDF, organised in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence. In the afternoon, all participants met for matchmaking at the DAP Hotel in Prague.

We have therefore started the year very intensively and intend to maintain this pace. We are planning a series of bilateral Industry Days, participation in key international trade fairs, and expert events focused on selected technological topics. The environment is evolving extremely rapidly, and our role is to ensure that Czech companies have timely information and can be actively and systematically involved in ongoing initiatives both domestically and internationally.

Madam Vice President, thank you for the interview. I wish you continued success and happiness in both your professional and personal life.

Šárka Cook

Photo: AOBP



 **AOBP**

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Military Repair Company Celebrates 80th Anniversary

The Military Repair Company (VOP CZ) is celebrating 80 years since its founding this year. The company will mark this significant anniversary with a series of events for professionals and the general public, culminating in a day for the public called VOPEN DAY. Among other things, visitors will have the opportunity to see the CV90 infantry fighting vehicle, which the company is preparing to manufacture.

The main part of the celebrations will take place on Saturday, **13 June 2026**, when VOP CZ will open its premises to the public. The programme will include demonstrations of military technology, musical accompaniment and accompanying activities for children.

"We want to show the public what goes on behind the gates of our company. We are preparing a varied programme and I can confirm that the public will be able to see the CV90 armoured vehicle, which we will be manufacturing here, live," said VOP CZ director Vlastimil Navrátil.

The year-long celebrations will also include a panel exhibition **entitled The History of Repair Services in the Czech Republic**, which will be officially opened in the second half of March with the participation of representatives of the Czech Armed Forces and the Ministry of Defence. The exhibition will be located in front of the General Staff building in Prague. Minister of Defence Jaromír Zůna has taken personal patronage of the entire celebrations.

The military repair company was established in 1946 on the premises of the former Šenov distillery, where a large amount of captured

equipment remained after the Second World War. The company gradually became a key expert in the repair and modernisation of tank equipment, from British Cromwell tanks to Soviet T-34 and T-55 tanks to T-72 tanks, which the company has been repairing since 1983. In 2010, VOP CZ also manufactured 107 PANDUR II armoured vehicles for the Czech Armed Forces. The company is currently preparing to manufacture CV90 combat vehicles for the Czech Armed Forces, welding armoured cabins for the German company KNDS and in cooperation with Rheinmetall, repairing Leopard 2A4 tanks.

"We have come a long way in 80 years. From a post-war collection point for military equipment, VOP has become an important state-owned company that plays a key role in ensuring the defence capability of the Czech Republic. We want to commemorate this anniversary in a dignified manner and at the same time thank all former and current employees. These are people who put their hearts and souls into their work," said VOP CZ director Vlastimil Navrátil.

VOP CZ (Military Repair Enterprise) is a state-owned enterprise founded in 1946. It provides repairs, servicing, modernisation and development of ground military equipment for both the Czech Armed Forces and other NATO member states' armies. It currently employs around 500 people. The company is located in Šenov near Nový Jičín, with another part of the company in Bludovice, also near Nový Jičín.





Military Repair Company Obtains Licence to Weld German-made Armoured Vehicles from the Bundeswehr



The military repair company (VOP CZ) has undergone important certification authorising it to weld German and Western military equipment. It is already fulfilling its first orders for the German arms manufacturer KNDS.

Thanks to the successful completion of the DIN 2303 / Q3 certification process, which represents the highest level of welding for land military equipment, the state-owned company can now manufacture a wide range of different military weldments of German and Western origin. The entire certification process took approximately one year and included a comprehensive audit of welding processes carried out by German experts, the production of control weldments and their subsequent ballistic testing in certified German Army testing laboratories. The process also included professional training for welders and other VOP CZ specialists.

The state-owned company is already fulfilling its first orders for the German military market through KNDS, for which it welds armoured cabins for IVECO GTF3 vehicles. At the same time, VOP CZ is negotiating with other German arms companies about further possible orders in the field of welding military products. During this year, the company plans to focus a significant part of its welding capacities on the German defence market, in which it sees long-term strategic potential.

In the future, VOP CZ plans to establish a large welding centre, which would concentrate orders for the production of military weldments for several parallel projects. In connection with this, the company plans to recruit up to a hundred new welders and other support professions.

Obtaining this authorisation has also placed the Czech state-owned company among the world leaders in the field of military welding and significantly strengthened the role of the Czech defence industry as an important supplier to the European defence sector.

“This is a very important milestone for us. We are strengthening our capabilities in the field of military welding and, at the same time, this step places us among the world’s suppliers of military weldments, which are in high demand in Europe. This has already been confirmed by the first requests for this highly specialised type of welding. What’s more, this is also very good news for our industrial region, as it will create a number of new jobs,” said VOP CZ director Vlastimil Navrátil.



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VTÚ–Explosia Memorandum

Strengthens Czech Research, Development and Self-Sufficiency in Ammunition

On 28 January this year, representatives of the Military Technical Institute (VTÚ) and Explosia signed a memorandum on strategic cooperation. This was not merely a formal confirmation of partnership. Through this step, both entities sent a clear signal that the Czech state intends to systematically strengthen its own capabilities in the development, testing, certification and production of ammunition. VTÚ plays the role of a national authority in this process – an expert guarantor involved in virtually all key defence projects of the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic. Explosia, for its part, serves as a strategic partner in ensuring the Czech Republic’s material and technological self-sufficiency in the field of energetic materials.

A National Authority in Practice

For many years, the Military Technical Institute has been one of the fundamental pillars of Czech defence research and development. Its role has evolved over time alongside technological progress and the changing needs of the armed forces, yet one principle has remained constant: providing the state with an independent expert authority. An institution capable of objectively verifying whether equipment, armaments and ammunition meet the required parameters and perform reliably in real operational conditions.

Today, VTÚ is a state enterprise established by the Ministry of Defence of the Czech Republic, and more than 80 percent of its output is directed to the defence sector. “We are not merely a service provider. We are a partner of

the state in building defence capabilities,” representatives of the institute emphasize.

VTÚ director Jiří Kašpárek describes it openly: “VTÚ is an enterprise whose portfolio includes the development of ammunition systems and their testing. These are two areas that are crucial for this cooperation. And because we are a state enterprise, it is natural for us to support Czech products and Czech manufacturers. It is a matter of self-sufficiency and of the Czech Republic’s strategic interest.”

Slavičín as a Development and Testing Centre

A specific and highly important part of VTÚ’s structure is its Weapons and Ammunition Division in Slavičín (VTÚVM). This facility concentrates capacities for the development, testing,

certification and prototype production of ammunition of various calibres. In the context of cooperation with Explosia, this branch plays a crucial role. “The memorandum we signed together is not the beginning of a new process,” Kašpárek explains. “It confirms cooperation that is already taking place. In essence, it means we are moving in the same direction and want to deepen our collaboration even further.”

Complementary Know-How

Explosia is a traditional Czech explosives manufacturer with a history dating back to 1920. Today it is a state-owned joint-stock company under the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Czech Republic and employs more than 700 people. Its portfolio includes industrial explosives, propellants and modern modular propelling charges for artillery systems.

It is precisely in this area that the competencies of both companies naturally intersect. “When developing ammunition systems, our first choice is a domestic producer of energetic materials – Explosia. Thanks to their know-how, they are able to prepare materials tailored to our needs,” says Kašpárek. From the other side of the partnership, Explosia’s CEO Tomáš Rubáček adds: “For us, VTÚ is a strong partner with unique expertise in testing and certification. This represents added value that Explosia can utilize in the development and production of its products.” In other words, one enterprise develops and produces key energetic materials, while the other guarantees their safety, parameters and certification. Without one, the other could not operate at full capacity.

From Diverging Priorities to a Shared Goal

Cooperation between the two enterprises has not always been this intensive. In the past, their priorities diverged.

“Until recently, Explosia’s main priority was the commercial dimension of large contracts, which meant that smaller-scale cooperation was not at the forefront of our company’s interest. Today, however, we recognize the need for cooperation even on projects that may be smaller in scope but significant in importance,” explains Explosia’s Chairman of the Board, Tomáš Rubáček. Director Kašpárek agrees: “Today the situation is different. Our priorities are aligned again. I see the memorandum as a clear agreement that we want to create conditions for even deeper cooperation.”

Responding to New Weapon Systems

The cooperation is already taking concrete form. It includes, for example, the qualifica-



tion of modular propelling charges for 155 mm ammunition used in the CAESAR artillery system, as well as preparations for the development and certification of 120 mm ammunition for Leopard 2 tanks. “New weapon systems are entering the Czech Armed Forces, and with them new ammunition calibres – the most prominent being 120 mm for tanks and 155 mm for artillery,” notes Kašpárek. “At first, these systems and their ammunition will mainly be procured abroad. Our long-term goal, however, is to gradually build domestic production capabilities.”

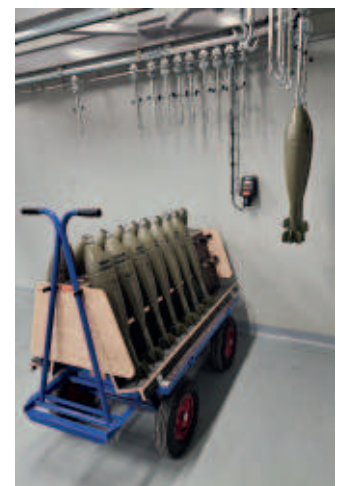
Certification Cannot Be Rushed – But the Process Can

Introducing new ammunition into service is a complex and time-consuming process. There are, however, ways to make it more efficient without compromising safety or quality. The tests themselves cannot be shortened. If they take six months, they cannot be administratively reduced to two. This is determined by legislative and allied requirements. However, the overall process can be accelerated by using test results from other independent facilities. This is where the partnership with Explosia offers significant potential. Its testing infrastructure can be used in the presence of an independent authority – representatives of VTÚ. The result is not only time savings but

also stronger integration within the Czech defence industry.

Know-How Under State Control

The cooperation between two state enterprises also has a strategic dimension. “We consider it essential that key know-how behind products supplied to the Armed Forces of the Czech Republic remains in the hands of state-owned companies. It is a matter of security as well as long-term stability,” says Kašpárek. Looking ahead, VTÚ plans to continue investing in the modernization of its testing infrastructure and strengthening its role in the development of ammunition systems – either independently or in cooperation with other defence industry partners. Explosia, as the main domestic producer of energetic materials used in ammunition systems, is therefore a logical partner throughout the entire process – from development through testing to certification. “For us as well, the memorandum is not a one-off administrative act. It is another step in the systematic development of the Czech defence ecosystem,” concludes Tomáš Rubáček. In this cooperation, the Military Technical Institute acts as the national authority and guarantor of the professional standard of key military capabilities, while Explosia serves as a key partner in ensuring the material and technological self-sufficiency of the Czech Republic.





Digital Twin into the Real World of Aviation

Akkodis is developing various types of digital twins for use in the aerospace and defence industries, and today we would like to introduce a digital platform that can be used for the digital representation of an entire aircraft, for predicting its maintenance needs, as well as for training and simulation. This platform was developed by our colleagues in France and is used, for example, by a leading European aircraft manufacturer and the French armed forces. Akkodis CZ is prepared to adapt this solution to the needs of Czech companies and to manage the entire implementation process, including long-term operational support.

The 3DJuump platform started with a research project involving very large digital mockups of an aircraft used to help build 3D training simulators, explains Sylvain Bonneau, head of the Akkodis 3DJuump division. *“We discovered that most of the 3D material already existed in CAD files,”* Bonneau says. *“But even though the data was available, we had to recreate it from scratch with infographics. It was frustrating to know the data was there, we just couldn’t use it.”* The tools that would have allowed the team to transfer the data simply did not exist.

“CAD files are mainly mathematical descriptions of the surface of an object. On the other hand, mass-market 3D graphics for real-time display are based on meshes, consisting of triangles. These are two different languages,” Bonneau says. *“We wanted to bridge this gap to avoid recreating everything.”*

From Concept to Commercial Success: The Journey of 3DJuump

They set themselves an ambitious goal: displaying the huge, data-rich digital mockup of

an aircraft and its parts on a standard computer. And amazingly, as far back as 2008, they got close to achieving it. The team members therefore decided to develop their work into a commercial product.

Fast forward to 2023 and 3DJuump is now a considerable success and in use as the main digital collaboration platform for design and product engineering teams across several parts of a global aircraft manufacturer, including its space and helicopter divisions.

Bonneau and his team wondered if the 3DJuump digital mock-up could now be used to interpret real-life data from in-use aircraft. Could a digital twin help manufacturers keep better track of their aircraft after delivery to operators?

Collaboration in sharing data about the aircraft

Information about aircraft once they have been delivered can be useful to manufacturers in many ways. Over the lifetime of an aircraft, it will be subject to several modifications,

cabin upgrades, or redesigns to make it fit for new purposes.

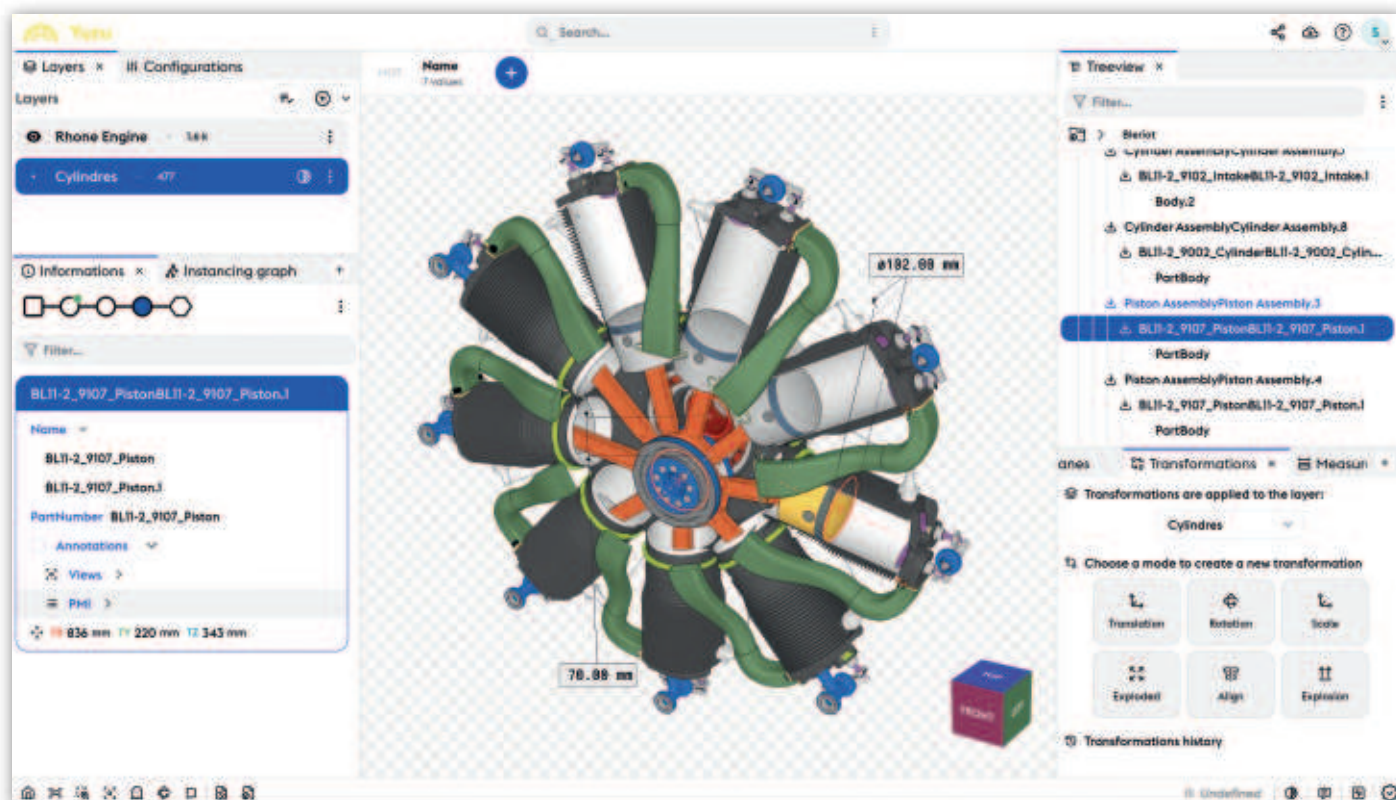
Aircraft owners often go back to the manufacturer for redesign and modification. But to be able to make a tailor-made and precisely priced proposal for a specific aircraft, manufacturers need data, everything from documentation showing modifications to flight time of each device.

Specific aircraft data would make it much easier and cheaper for manufacturers to design modifications.

“Manufacturers have no real idea of their aircraft ‘in the wild’, what modifications have been carried out, and so on,” Bonneau says.

Operators whose transport aircraft are regularly modified or upgraded to fulfill new roles are interested in sharing aircraft data with manufacturers.

The Akkodis team works with clients and operators to integrate real-life data into the 3DJuump digital twin platform.



Screenshot of the software displaying famous Rhône Engine

Overcoming Data Integration Challenges in Aircraft Parts

How to attach data to individual aircraft parts? While aircraft parts are identifiable by serial number, manufacturers do not have access to the information, for example, whether a part has been replaced by an identical one and how long it has been in operation.

The team needed to find a way to distinguish between a part number, which identifies a type of component, and a serial number, which identifies one specific piece of equipment. *“The platform was not initially ready to bear this kind of information, and we had to develop it further,”* Bonneau says. *“That was the main difficulty, but we solved the problem, and I think that makes 3DJuump maybe the only platform able to support this kind of use case.”*

Innovative Solutions for Secure, Portable Aircraft Data Management

The team modified 3DJuump for private communication networks, particularly for maintaining classified transport aircraft. They encountered security challenges with deploying the client/server platform on clients' private networks. The resolution was implementing a portable server.



Testing the VR version of 3DJuump, 2025

The standalone setup, comprising a server-equipped suitcase, ad-hoc Wi-Fi, and connected tablets, makes the 3DJuump digital twin accessible on board via a small tablet. This allows personnel to inspect and record changes in the aircraft before and after each flight. During cabin upgrades, which can ground planes for extended periods, technicians use the 3DJuump tablet and portable server to daily document their progress, ensuring alignment with the design office and facilitating shared insights into the work.

The 3DJuump platform, thanks to many years of development and adaptation to various use cases, is now ready to significantly simplify the design of aircraft repairs and modifications. If implemented early enough, it can also be used to predict maintenance needs for specific aircraft.

If you would like to learn more, please contact us at salescz@akkodis.com



PBS AEROSPACE – production launch ceremony

PBS GROUP Strengthens Its Global Position: New Investments in the Czech Republic and Expansion into the U.S. Market

PBS GROUP is entering a new phase of its development. The group, long built on precision engineering and aerospace technologies, is demonstrating that its growth extends beyond the Czech Republic. Alongside major investments in Velka Bites, the company is also significantly strengthening its presence in the United States. Strategic steps in both markets are closely interconnected and create a foundation for further long-term expansion.

PBS develops and manufactures small turbine aircraft engines used primarily in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs/drones), light aircraft, helicopters, and other specialized aviation applications. In recent years, the production of engines for unmanned systems has become the main driver of growth for the entire group. Since 2023, PBS Velka Bites has increased engine production nearly sixfold, reaching approximately 1,700 units in 2025. This dynamic development is also reflected in financial results: revenue grew from roughly CZK 2 billion in 2024 to an expected CZK 2.7 billion in 2025, with the 2026 plan targeting around CZK 3.7 billion. Exports account for the vast majority of production, confirming the company's strong position in international markets.

To respond to growing demand, PBS Velka Bites is implementing a major investment pro-

gram worth approximately CZK 1 billion. A key element is the construction of a new production hall for the Aerospace Division and the expansion of capacity for turbine engine manufacturing. The modernization also includes the acquisition of advanced CNC technologies, new vacuum and annealing furnaces, and the introduction of advanced manufacturing processes that raise the technological level of production.

The growth in production is also accompanied by a significant expansion of the workforce. The number of employees in Velka Bites has increased from around 600 in 2023 to approximately 800 in 2025, and recruitment continues. The company aims to reach a workforce of around 1,060 employees. In this way, PBS confirms that its development has not only a technological dimension but also a regional

and social one, bringing new job opportunities and stability to the region.

At the same time, the American chapter of the PBS GROUP story is becoming increasingly significant. PBS Aerospace, a subsidiary of the group, opened its U.S. headquarters in Roswell, Georgia, in 2025, supported by a USD 20 million investment. The goal is to expand production capacity directly in the U.S. market and move closer to key customers in the defence sector. The company is prepared to invest approximately USD 90 million in further expansion of its manufacturing capabilities.

Another important milestone was the signing of a major subcontract with Zone Five Technologies. The contract, valued at several tens of millions of dollars, confirms that PBS Aerospace can serve as a long-term industrial



PBS Velka Bites – installation of the Quintus HIP furnace in the new hall DLT2 II.

partner for U.S. defence needs. Production in the United States is gradually ramping up and expanding capacity, with a strong focus on highly reliable jet engines designed for modern defence systems.

“Our strategy is clear: growth in Velka Bites and expansion into the United States are not two separate paths but complementary parts of a single

global plan. The Czech manufacturing base remains a key pillar of our technological development and know-how, while our U.S. operations allow us to respond more quickly to customer needs and strengthen our competitiveness in one of the world’s most important markets. We openly state that our goal is to gradually transition toward producing engines from components manufactured directly in the United States. This step

will bring greater flexibility, more efficient production, and increased resilience of the entire supply chain,” said Petr Kadner, CEO of PBS GROUP.

From the perspective of the entire holding, it is important that both domestic and international activities are developing simultaneously. Velka Bites remains the technological heart of production, while the United States is increasingly becoming a strategic base for global expansion. PBS GROUP is therefore sending a clear message: it is no longer just a Czech company with export ambitions, but an international industrial group building its future across two continents.

“The result is a company that is growing steadily, systematically, and with a clear vision. Investments in Velka Bites demonstrate our long-term commitment to domestic production and employment. Our expansion in the United States, on the other hand, shows our ambition and ability to compete in the global market. The combination of these two directions gives us a unique competitive advantage and confirms that PBS GROUP’s growth today extends far beyond the borders of the Czech Republic,” added CEO Petr Kadner.

TOSHULIN Brings Czech Engineering Back to the World Stage

With over 80 years of experience this Czech engineering company is one of the leading representatives of domestic industry. Its long tradition, innovation, and expertise are reflected in the record interest in the company’s technologies nowadays. Stable growth in orders over recent years is clear confirmation of its strong position in the global market and clear proof that Czech engineering still has a lot to offer to the world. Thanks to its emphasis on quality, modern production processes, and continuous technological improvement, the company has built trust among customers from all over the world.

For many years, TOSHULIN has been a key partner to global leaders in the energy and aviation industries, sectors that place extremely high demands on precision, reliability, and technological standards of production. With ever-increasing market demands, the company itself is growing and developing, continuously investing in the modernization of production, the development of new solutions, and the expansion of its production capacities.



The merger with TOS Kuřim was a major milestone in the long-term strategy of both companies. The merger has created a unique technological entity which, thanks to process optimization and the sharing of know-how, is able to offer even greater flexibility and pro-

duction efficiency, as well as the widest product portfolio in the history of both companies. This step strengthens their competitiveness on global markets and confirms that traditional Czech engineering still has an important place in global industry today.

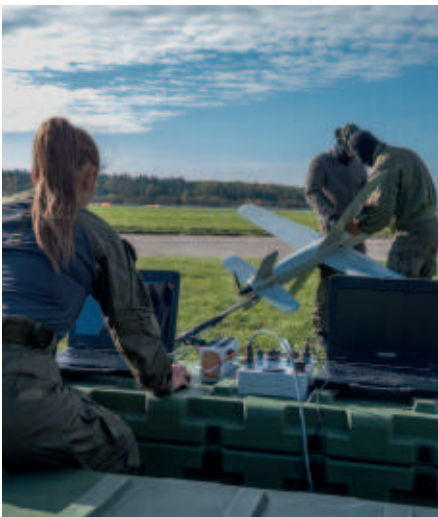
European Manufacturer of Unmanned Aerial Systems



U&C UAS is a European manufacturer of unmanned aerial systems whose solutions are shaped by practical combat experience gained during the war in Ukraine. The combination of production within the European Union, full ownership of intellectual property rights, and a deep understanding of the modern battlefield enables the company to develop systems adapted to real operational conditions.

The team consists of specialists with hands-on experience in the design, integration, and operation of unmanned aerial systems in combat environments. This experience defines the technical requirements for every platform, every software update, and every modification. All solutions are developed with real operational scenarios in mind.

U&C UAS holds full intellectual property rights to its developments and manufactures within the European Union. The company continuously expands its production capacity and engineering base, ensuring supply stability and controlled quality. The quality management system complies with ISO 9001 standards. Products and documentation are adapted to the requirements of EU member states and



are compatible with NATO standards in procedures, safety, maintenance, and personnel training. The company holds NCAGE code 8400G and is registered within the NATO codification system.

Holding the Sky represents a systematic approach to the application of unmanned solutions in modern warfare. Platforms are not viewed as standalone products, but as elements of a unified ecosystem of unmanned capabilities operating within a complete combat cycle.

The operational logic follows the principle:

DETECT → DESTROY → DENY

DETECT — Stork LR (ISR UAV)

Stork LR ensures timely threat detection and provides reliable intelligence for decision-making. Its extended endurance and advanced sensor suite enable deep reconnaissance missions, detection of force concentrations, logistical hubs, and artillery positions before the adversary transitions into an active phase.

Integration with artillery units enables real-time fire correction, increasing strike accuracy while reducing ammunition expenditure.

DESTROY — MACE (Middle-Strike Loitering Munition UAV)

The MACE system delivers rapid and precise engagement of priority targets.

The solution is built on the **RECON AND STRIKE** principle, integrating reconnaissance and strike capabilities within a single secure command network. A single crew conducts the full operational cycle — from target detection and guidance to engagement and battle damage assessment. This approach shortens response time, enhances operational efficiency, and minimizes decision-making delays.

DENY — Chaser (C-UAS) Interceptor System

Chaser is designed to counter aerial threats. The system synchronizes with radar assets and transitions into autonomous target engagement mode. In modern operational environments, reaction speed determines control of the airspace.

A Unified Ecosystem of Unmanned Capabilities

The combination of Stork LR, MACE, and Chaser forms a single integrated system that unifies reconnaissance, strike capability, and airspace control within one operational cycle. The integration of combat experience, EU-based manufacturing, and NATO compatibility enables the development of solutions ready for integration into the defence structures of European countries and partner nations. In today's security environment, holding the sky means acting ahead of the threat.



TELINK

Drones and Security Under Control



The modern security landscape is evolving dynamically, and the airspace is becoming a new domain of potential risk. Today, drones represent not only an effective tool for monitoring and reconnaissance, but also a genuine security challenge. TELINK, a Czech company headquartered in Prague, has long been active in the field of professional unmanned technologies and security solutions, with a systematic focus on protecting state institutions and critical infrastructure against the unauthorized use of drones.

TELINK delivers **comprehensive Counter-UAS (C-UAS) systems** designed primarily for early detection, identification, and threat assessment. Advanced sensors enable real-time airspace monitoring and the analysis of suspicious activities while minimizing false alarms. A key element of these solutions is their **integration into existing command and control centers** – such as those of the Czech Police, municipal police forces, and other security agencies – where data is shared and situations are evaluated immediately.

The primary objective is to ensure full situational awareness of airspace activity and to provide a reliable tool for rapid, well-informed decision-making. Each project begins with a detailed risk assessment and the design of a system architecture tailored to the specific site and its operational conditions. Where legislation permits, the solution may also include technologies enabling active intervention, deployed strictly in accordance with applicable legal frameworks.

The **protection of critical infrastructure** – including power plants, substations, water management facilities, data centers, transport hubs, and government buildings – requires the highest level of security. An unauthorized drone flight can result in a security incident, operational disruption, and reputational damage. TELINK therefore implements projects **focused on securing protective zones** around such

facilities, **integrating detection technologies** with physical security, CCTV systems, and other protective measures.

Unmanned aircraft systems, however, are not solely a potential threat – they are also becoming a powerful tool for automated protection. **Professional enterprise-grade** drones enable rapid inspection of extensive sites, thermal imaging monitoring, infrastructure condition assessments, documentation of extraordinary events, and operational support for emergency response units. The deployment of drones **significantly enhances situational awareness** and shortens response times in crisis situations.

TELINK's solutions also include **expert operator training** and methodological support to ensure that technologies are used effectively, safely, and in full compliance with both European and national legislation. By combining protection

against unauthorized drones with the professional deployment of unmanned systems, TELINK creates **a comprehensive security ecosystem** safeguarding key assets both from the air and on the ground.

At a time when security threats are expanding into the airspace, modern unmanned technologies have become a fundamental pillar of state protection. **TELINK** provides Czech institutions with technological and operational solutions designed to meet today's security demands as well as the challenges of the future.



From Requirement to Test without Losing Control Easy8

How to Manage Defence Programmes in the Age of AI

The year 2026 will be a turning point for defence programme management. Increasing regulatory pressure, a growing emphasis on data sovereignty, and the complexity of international supply chains are forcing military and aerospace organisations to rethink how they manage their programmes. Digitalisation alone is no longer enough. The key lies in control, auditability, and the ability to demonstrate compliance at every stage of the project lifecycle.

According to current trends in project management, organisations are increasingly shifting towards hybrid models. These combine structured planning and clearly defined milestones with the flexibility of agile principles. In the defence sector, this approach is particularly relevant: development phases are subject to strict documentation and approval processes, while research and technological innovation require adaptability.

Artificial intelligence is another critical topic. Its main benefits include risk prediction, capacity planning, administrative automation, and decision support at the programme management level. However, in a defence environment, AI cannot operate as an uncontrolled cloud service. It must be deployed in a model that guarantees full data control — typically on-premises or within a sovereign cloud. The development of defence systems requires 100% traceability of every step — from the initial requirement to the final test. How can this be achieved in compliance with standards such as DO-178C for safety-critical software in aviation or AQAP 2110 for NATO defence quality management systems? The answer lies in systematic requirements management, configuration management, change control, and clear links between specification, implementation, and verification.

Organisations must be able to demonstrate at any time where a requirement originated, who approved it, how it was implemented, and how it was validated. This requires a centralised system that connects requirements, tasks, test scenarios, and change management, while enabling the generation of audit outputs without manual data consolidation.

In this context, the V-model remains a fundamental management framework. It links individual development phases with corresponding validation steps and ensures that every specification has its testing counterpart. Full traceability is essential — clear continuity of requirements, tasks, changes, and tests across the entire system lifecycle. This traceability forms the foundation for meaningful use of artificial intelligence. AI can analyse relationships between requirements and their implementation, verify adherence to defined processes, and identify deviations that may introduce potential risks. Within the defence industry, AI is becoming a tool for quality control and risk management. Thanks to clearly defined processes and interconnected project entities, AI can verify compliance between execution and approved specifications and provide early warnings of inconsistencies.

At the same time, the growing complexity of aerospace and defence programmes increases the demand for centralised governance. Separate tools for planning, documentation, quality management, and reporting create information silos that slow organisational responsiveness and complicate certification audits. The trend is therefore towards consolidation into a unified platform that integrates project management, resource management, workflows, and compliance processes within a single controlled environment.

Modern solutions such as Easy8 reflect these requirements by integrating project management, V-model support, full requirements traceability, and secure AI capabilities within one environment. For defence organisations, the option of on-premises deployment and



the ability to adapt the system to specific security policies are essential.

By 2026, the strategic advantage will not lie in deploying AI alone, but in the ability to govern it — in compliance with standards, security requirements, and audit processes. In the defence sector, where every project represents not only financial investment but also strategic responsibility, project management becomes a matter of national security. Hybrid models, full traceability, and data control are no longer trends — they are essential standards.

About Easy8

Easy8 (formerly Easy Redmine and Easy Project) is Europe's No. 1 Private WorkOps Platform. It unifies teams, projects, and technology into one actionable work delivery ecosystem. Built on 20 years of expertise and trusted by over 1,000 companies worldwide, Easy8 redefines traditional project & work management. Through the WorkOps framework, it consolidates fragmented tools to ensure a single source of truth. Unlike cloud-only platforms, Easy8 guarantees full data sovereignty through flexible deployment options: local cloud infrastructure in your region, private cloud, or strictly on-premises. This makes Easy8 a preferred choice for regulated sectors such as government and defence, as well as for IT and manufacturing organisations. It is also well suited for organisations migrating from Jira that refuse to compromise on security. By combining native AI, n8n automations, and hybrid Agile/Waterfall methodologies, Easy8 eliminates the trade-off between speed and compliance. Headquartered in Prague, Easy8 empowers global enterprises to simplify collaboration and scale with total data control.

The Future of C-UAS:

Cyber Takeover as the Standard of the Modern Military



The war in Ukraine and other contemporary conflicts clearly demonstrate that unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) have become a dominant element on today's battlefield. For the **Armed Forces of the Czech Republic**, a fundamental question arises: how can hostile drones be neutralized effectively without disrupting friendly communication systems or causing unintended collateral damage?

The answer lies in **RF-Cyber technology**, represented on the Czech market by **FORSOLUTION** and **developed by D-Fend Solutions through its EnforceAir2 system**.

Traditional counter-drone methods—such as kinetic interception or broad-spectrum jamming—are reaching their operational limits. Kinetic elimination in urban environments carries the risk of falling debris, while radio-frequency jamming often disables friendly systems along with the target.

EnforceAir2 takes a fundamentally different approach. Instead of brute force, it employs a **cyber takeover capability**. The system detects the drone's signal, analyzes and accesses its communication protocol, and assumes control. The operator can then safely navigate the drone along a predefined route and land it in a secure zone—**without disrupting the surrounding electromagnetic spectrum**.

For the Czech Armed Forces, versatility is essential. EnforceAir2 is designed to perform in the most demanding operational scenarios. The solution is suitable for **protecting military bases, mobile convoys, and critical infrastructure, and it can be deployed in stationary, vehicle-mounted, or portable configurations**.

As modern drones continue to evolve—incorporating autonomous navigation and frequency agility—D-Fend Solutions responds with continuous updates to its threat libraries to address emerging challenges.

EnforceAir2 is not merely a detection system; it is a **comprehensive solution** that provides battlefield commanders with what matters most: control over UAS within the designated perimeter.

The cyber-based solution developed by D-Fend Solutions represents a technological cutting edge capable of delivering a decisive advantage to Czech Armed Forces units.

Security professionals and representatives of defence and law enforcement agencies will have the opportunity to experience the RF-Cyber approach in practice at the professional exhibition **LEA-DER (www.lea-der.org)**, where live demonstrations and operational deployment scenarios will be presented. FORSOLUTION will showcase how this solution can be implemented within the Czech Armed Forces and other security institutions.

More information: www.forsolution.cz

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Interview

with the Director of the Population Protection Institute

The Population Protection Institute (PPI) plays a key role within the system of emergency preparedness and response. What is the significance of the Institute, and what tasks and responsibilities does it fulfil as a special-purpose facility of the Ministry of the Interior – the General Directorate of the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic? We asked Colonel František Paulus, Director of the PPI based in Lázně Bohdaneč.

In 1956, the Civil Defence Research Institute was established within the Ministry of the Interior, with a mandate focused on scientific research activities. As of 1 January 1976, civil defence was systemically transferred under the authority of the Ministry of National Defence. The research focus concentrated on enhancing the resilience of the national economy and ensuring population protection. In 1991, the Civil Defence Institute was founded in Lázně Bohdaneč, with nationwide competence for the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic. Following the dissolution of the federation, the Civil Protection Institute was established as of 1 January 1993, with competence for the Czech Republic. As of 1 January 2001, the Institute was transferred to the authority of the Ministry of the Interior – the General Directorate of the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic, under its new name, the Population Protection Institute.

Mr Director, could you introduce the Population Protection Institute to our readers? What is its core mission and which activities does it primarily focus on?

The Population Protection Institute (PPI) is a specialized part of the Ministry of the Interior – General Directorate of the Fire Rescue Service of

the Czech Republic. Its tradition dates back to the middle of the last century. Since then, it has undergone a number of changes. The most significant systemic change with a substantial impact on our organization was the transfer of competences in matters of civil protection, or rather population protection, from the Ministry of Defense to the Ministry of the Interior in 2001. The Czech Republic thus moved closer to the common European standard, where it seems optimal not to divide competences in the area of civil protection and to ensure that this agenda is dealt with by an organization/department that also deals with it in peacetime and therefore has practical experience.

Today, the PPI provides direct and indirect support to the Fire and Rescue Service of the Czech Republic in fulfilling its tasks of civil protection, integrated rescue system, fire protection, civil emergency planning, and crisis management. In practical terms, this means that we operate in three main areas: emergency response, education, and research and development. On the one hand, our teams respond directly to emergencies (we have a mobile chemical, biological, and radiation laboratory, a fire investigation team, and a special audiovisual services team), on the other hand, we are

involved in scientific research, testing, and standardization, thereby indirectly supporting the entire Fire and Rescue Service of the Czech Republic—we develop new methods, test technology, and establish procedures for protecting the population. What makes us unique is the combination of practical service with theoretical background and the ability to directly pass on this knowledge through the education and training of members of the Fire and Rescue Service of the Czech Republic and other parts of the integrated rescue system. Thanks to this breadth of scope and our results, we also stand up well in international comparison.

Our team helps ensure that the system and society are prepared for current threats – from terrorism and industrial accidents to natural disasters. We develop and test early warning systems and study how best to inform and protect the population in case of danger. Our CBRN laboratory performs operational and organizational management tasks to ensure chemical and radiation reconnaissance, biological safety, dosimetric and laboratory control, monitoring of affected areas, and other specialized activities for the needs of firefighting and rescue units within the integrated rescue system. We propose functional parameters for new protective equipment. In addition, we



also serve as a central data warehouse for GIS data, have specific capabilities in the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (scanning of affected areas, automated data processing, creation of 3D objects), and perform tasks in the area of fire cause investigation, with regard to expert activities (identification of accelerants, identification of unknown substances, determination of the material nature of substances, physical and technical examination of samples, determination of fire-technical characteristics). The results of our work are reflected in practice – whether in the form of methodologies, standard operating procedures, amendments to internal regulations of the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic, the creation of functional samples, etc. Last but not least, we also participate in the creation of conceptual materials at the national level, in this case mainly the Concept of Civil Protection.

In 2022, you received the prestigious “OPCW–The Hague Award” in recognition of your long-term contribution to training foreign specialists in protection against hazardous substances. Could you elaborate on this achievement and also outline other areas of international cooperation?

We greatly appreciate the OPCW–The Hague Award 2022, which recognizes our long-term activity in the international arena. Since the late 1990s, the IOO has been working closely with the OPCW to train experts in chemical protection.

Every year, we organize international courses and exercises under the auspices of the OPCW right here in Lázně Bohdaneč. We train foreign specialists from around the world, often from

developing countries, on how to respond appropriately to chemical accidents or attacks. For example, last year’s course (May 2025) was attended by experts from 12 countries (including a number of African and Asian countries) and focused on practical responses to hazardous chemical spills. Our lecturers—top chemists from the PPI CBRN laboratory—taught them how to correctly identify the type of chemical incident, take samples, perform analysis, and effectively decontaminate the affected areas. It is precisely for this long-standing expert assistance in building global capacity for protection against chemical weapons that we have received the OPCW award.

In addition, our specialists participate in international exercises in this field – for example, in 2023, we sent a team to the CHEMEX Africa exercise, the first pan-African chemical safety training under the auspices of the OPCW, where we helped train local response units. We also cooperate directly in the field: as part of a project for the East African Community, our instructors travel to Uganda and other countries to train local rescue workers in responding to chemical accidents.

However, PPI’s international cooperation is by no means limited to the OPCW. We are also actively involved in NATO and European Union programs in the field of CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear) threats. In relation to NATO, this mainly involves very intensive cooperation with the alliance center located in Vyškov (JCBRN Defense COE). In relation to cooperation with the EU, this mainly involves participation in projects supported by the Union Civil Protection Mechanism pro-

grams. Here, we are developing capabilities so that in the future we can act as an EU module for international assistance in chemical and biological incidents, and we are also involved in research activities supported by the EC.

A key cross-cutting activity is the exchange of experience – our experts serve on advisory bodies (such as the Advisory Board on Education and Outreach at the OPCW) and colleagues from abroad come to us for internships. Overall, it can be said that the IOO has a very good reputation worldwide and actively contributes to international security – whether through training foreign experts, participating in the joint development of new procedures, or sharing know-how across continents.

In terms of domestic achievements, the Institute was also awarded the title “Winner of the Czech National Quality Award” in the public sector category “Science, Research and Education.” How would you characterise cooperation with Czech industry in the field of security, and what are the prospects for its further involvement?

We are also very pleased with the aforementioned domestic award – the National Quality Award (which we won in 2022 in the science, research, and education category) confirms that our pursuit of excellence is bearing fruit. One of the reasons for our success is our close cooperation with the research and industrial spheres. IOO is also a research organization, and we implement a number of projects in collaboration with Czech companies, universities, and other partners. For example, in the field of new technologies for firefighters, we have jointly developed a unique AI FOK GURU



trainer – a virtual training system that simulates training in a fire trainer. The development of this solution was supported by funds from the Ministry of the Interior's security research program. This is a great example of combining the know-how of the public sector with the innovations of the private sector – the result is a technology that can significantly improve and streamline firefighter training.

In general, we can involve Czech industry more in the civil protection system, and the new emphasis on modernizing civil protection systems



across Europe opens up opportunities for this. We are already working with industry to test and implement new technologies (e.g., in the areas of warning systems and CBRN protection). I would therefore describe our cooperation with the Czech security industry as mutually beneficial and very promising: we bring expertise and experience from the field, while industry brings new ideas, technologies, and production capacity. We want to further strengthen these ties in the future – our common goal is for the integrated rescue system to have access to state-of-the-art equipment and procedures, which were often developed or manufactured in cooperation with Czech companies.

For several years, the PPI has been systematically developing and testing specialised VR applications and training simulators. These technologies make it possible to simulate emergency situations that would pose a high risk to participants under real-life conditions. Could you provide more detail on these modern methods of training and prevention?

Virtual reality and simulation technology are bringing about a huge shift in rescue worker training. A few years ago, we began developing our own VR trainers so that we could safely model extreme situations that cannot be easily practiced in real life and, in addition, to create „firefighting“ know-how in this area, i.e., the

Czech Fire and Rescue Service's own capabilities. This allows us, for example, to simulate a fire in the flashover phase—the critical moment when flammable gases ignite in an enclosed space and the temperature rises sharply. This phenomenon is extremely dangerous for firefighters and is difficult to reproduce repeatedly in normal training. Thanks to a virtual trainer (such as the aforementioned AI FOK GURU), however, we can simulate flashover visually and physically accurately – a firefighter with a VR headset and an interactive nozzle finds themselves in a virtual environment where they see flames, feel radiant heat, and must respond correctly to the situation as it develops. The system also uses elements of artificial intelligence (machine learning): it can analyze the trainee's behavior, point out mistakes, and dynamically adjust the scenario as needed.

These modern training methods have several major advantages. First and foremost, they are completely safe – we can expose firefighters to simulated extreme events (chemical explosions, toxic substance leaks, radiation contamination, etc.) without the risk of injury or damage to equipment. The training can be repeated and scaled: scenarios can be replayed, difficulty levels can be adjusted, and individuals and groups can be trained.

In addition to this solution, we have also developed our own VR trainer for fire investiga-



tors, as well as a solution for elementary school children – a virtual risk house – and we are continuing these activities.

In the area of operational deployment, safety is ensured by a mobile chemical laboratory. Could you briefly describe its function and applications?

The mobile part of the PPI chemical laboratory is a special response team designed for interventions involving hazardous substances. Its task is to quickly identify unknown chemicals directly at the scene of the incident and provide expert support to the incident commander. In practice, this means that our mobile laboratory – a vehicle equipped with modern instruments and operated by highly trained personnel – is dispatched to the scene of an

emergency (e.g., chemical spill, discovery of a suspicious package containing powder, industrial accident). We take samples on site, which we either analyze immediately in the field or transport safely for more detailed analysis, if necessary. At the same time, we take urgent measures to neutralize or limit the spread of the substance. Our mobile laboratory therefore ensures that the substance is identified as quickly as possible, along with its level of danger and the appropriate course of action. This significantly increases the safety of firefighters and residents in the vicinity, as decisions can be based on immediately available analytical facts.

It is worth mentioning that the PPI is the coordinating center for fire department chemical laboratories throughout the Czech Republic,

and our laboratory is one of five operating in the country. Each laboratory has its own territorial jurisdiction. However, this principle of territorial jurisdiction is not insurmountable, and if necessary, laboratories can substitute for each other or be deployed in a complementary manner. In addition to chemical accidents, we are also prepared for radiation or biological threats. In practice, we also respond to suspicious „white powders,“ for example. Analysis of samples will then quickly show whether it is a common substance or a real chemical or biological threat.

The PPI mobile laboratory is, in short, a specialized unit that takes a back seat to regular firefighting operations, but is absolutely crucial for the safe management of chemical and similar emergencies. Its activities significantly expand the capabilities of the Czech Fire Department – it not only provides real-time laboratory analysis results, but also expert advice directly at the scene of the incident, thus contributing to the protection of the population and the responding units in the most dangerous situations.

Mr Director, thank you for the interview, and we wish you continued success.

Šárka Cook

Photo: PPI



Pyrotechnic Service

of the Police of the Czech Republic



Pyrotechnic activities within the Ministry of the Interior date back to 1939, when a pyrotechnic unit was established at the Police Directorate in Prague. In 2001, the Pyrotechnic Department of the Police Presidium of the Czech Republic was created and became the central authority for police pyrotechnics, not only in the area of improvised explosive devices but also in the field of ammunition. Among other responsibilities, the Department assumed oversight of pyrotechnic operations in the former military training areas of Ralsko and Mladá.

As part of the reorganisation of the Police of the Czech Republic, the overall concept of pyrotechnic operations was revised. In 2009, based on the Concept of Pyrotechnic Activities within the Police of the Czech Republic, the Pyrotechnic Service of the Police of the Czech Republic was established as a nationwide unit to provide a new systemic framework for the performance of pyrotechnic duties.

Within its mandate, the Pyrotechnic Service also participates in extensive security preparations related to state visits. In 2025, it received the “Minister of the Interior’s Award” for the disposal of a 500-pound aerial bomb with a chemical fuse discovered in August 2024 at the Litvínov chemical plant. In the same year, the President of the Republic awarded the Service the “Golden Rescuer’s Cross.”

We spoke about its tasks, competencies, equipment, and the use of modern technologies with the Director of the Pyrotechnic Service of the Police of the Czech Republic, Brigadier General Ing. Karel Čadil, who was named “Commander of the Year” in the 2024 Police Officer of the Year awards.



Director, what are the main tasks and competencies of the Pyrotechnic Service in the current security environment?

The Pyrotechnic Service of the Police of the Czech Republic is a nationwide unit specialised in conducting pyrotechnic operations within the Police. It provides expert and methodological guidance to other police units and organisational components in the performance of pyrotechnic activities.

Pursuant to Act No. 273/2008 Coll., on the Police of the Czech Republic, the mission of the Service is primarily service to the public, consisting of protecting life, health, property, and the environment where there is reasonable suspicion of an imminent and serious threat.

In the case of the Pyrotechnic Service, the word “service” in its title is fully justified. Its activities can be characterised as specialised police work carried out for the benefit of the public, aimed at protecting persons, property, and public order from the dangers posed by ammunition and explosives.

A key task of the Service is the prevention of criminal activity and the fulfilment of other security-related duties, including responses to extraordinary incidents involving the discovery of ammunition or explosives. Specifically, the Service conducts specialised pyrotechnic operations in the inspection of suspicious objects, the detection and neutralisation of improvised explosive devices (IEDs), the elimination of threats posed by ammunition and explosives, forensic activities, and the implementation of security pyrotechnic measures during



Presentation of the Golden Rescue Cross award from the hands of the President of the Czech Republic and the Minister of the Interior

major national and international events to ensure the protection of persons, property, and protected premises.

By maintaining adequate preparedness and continuously modernising specialised technical equipment and protective gear, the Service is capable of responding appropriately to terrorism and extremism threats, particularly in connection with declared terrorism threat levels. In such situations, enhanced security measures apply, especially for the protection of so-called soft targets.

The Service places strong emphasis on high-quality performance, professionalism, motivation, personal responsibility, reliability, and initiative. Lifelong professional development through specialised education and active participation in international cooperation, including expert seminars and practical training abroad, is essential.

International cooperation and the exchange of up-to-date professional information in the field of ammunition and explosives, particularly in relation to terrorist attacks and threats, form an integral part of our work. The highest priority in all operations is the safety of persons and property, minimising the impact of extraordinary events and ensuring safe and professional interventions.

What is the organisational structure of your Service and what specialisations operate within it?

The Pyrotechnic Service is organised into three departments: the Ammunition Department, the Improvised Explosive Devices Department, and the Specialised Activities Department. It also includes a Logistics Unit, the Director's Office, and the Forensic Activities Department.

The Ammunition Department handles the detection, identification, handling, and disposal of found ammunition and explosives, ranging from historical ordnance (including the Austro-Prussian War of 1866), through the First and Second World Wars (particularly aerial bombs), to modern military ammunition and explosives.

The IED Department focuses on the examination of suspicious objects, detection and neutralisation of improvised explosive devices, and CBRN-related issues, including threats involving radiological dispersal devices.

The Specialised Activities Department ensures comprehensive security pyrotechnic measures, prevention activities, training organisation, and practical exercises. It also coordinates international cooperation and

information exchange with foreign police units and organises expert seminars and demonstrations. The Service operates a permanent demolition pit used for mass disposal of ammunition and explosives, forensic functional testing, practical training, and police pyrotechnic education.

The Logistics Unit ensures all economic, material, organisational, and operational needs. The Director's Office manages professional, service-related, legislative, organisational, methodological, security, and oversight activities.

The Service is also a registered forensic institute listed by the Ministry of Justice in the field of criminalistics, specialising in forensic pyrotechnics, ammunition, and explosives. The Forensic Activities Department prepares expert opinions and reports and contributes to the development of new forensic methods, including on-site work following explosions.

How have threat typologies evolved in recent years?

While most deployments still relate to historical ammunition discoveries, there has been a significant increase in perpetrators using improvised devices incorporating modern electronics and miniaturised triggering mecha-



Controlled detonation of a discovered aerial bomb – Litvínov, 2024

nisms. Training therefore includes not only classical explosives handling but also advanced electronics, robotics, and tactical procedures in various operational environments.

Equipment and procedures are continuously modernised, from protective suits and detection or X-ray systems to modern remotely operated robotic systems for reconnaissance and safe neutralisation of hazardous objects.

How does cooperation with other security forces work?

Most interventions take place in civilian environments, requiring close cooperation with other Police units and the Integrated Rescue System, particularly the Fire Rescue Service and Emergency Medical Services. Cooperation with the Fire Rescue Service is especially intensive, including joint training and operations such as the six-year intervention in Vrbětice.

We also cooperate with Army of the Czech Republic and Military Police pyrotechnicians. Although our operational environments differ, we exchange experience through joint exercises and conferences.

Has the war in Ukraine changed your work?

The war in Ukraine has reaffirmed the continuing importance of explosive and improvised devices in modern conflicts. It underscores the need for preparedness in the Czech Republic. We closely monitor global developments, including drones, mine threats, miniaturised electronic sensors, remote detonations, and 3D-printed weapons.

Our response lies in prevention, preparedness, and ongoing modernisation of training and equipment, with realistic scenarios incorporating unmanned systems and electromagnetic spectrum operations.



Brig. Gen. Ing. Karel Čadil – intervention in Vrbětice



Training in metro premises with the tEODor robot



Vrbětice – carrying unexploded 152 mm artillery ammunition

Does the Czech Police have enough specialists?

Pyrotechnician is one of the most demanding police specialisations. Strict health, psychological, physical, and professional requirements apply. Recruitment is challenging, and training lasts three to five years. We do not lower standards; recruitment is based on strict internal criteria.



Transport of EOD equipment: remotely controlled Huddig 1260C tractor backhoe and Tatra 815-7 8x8 with an armoured container for ammunition transport

Candidates usually have prior police experience (minimum five years), although some former soldiers or firefighters have joined after completing full police training and specialised pyrotechnic courses.

Training includes a three-month basic course, a six-month pyrotechnic service course, and additional specialised courses.

Are you satisfied with equipment and technology?

Compared to other European units, our equipment is at a very good level. However, budget limitations restrict further improvements. Internal security receives significantly less funding than external defence.

We cooperate with Czech companies in developing technical solutions, including a mobile unscrewing device for artillery fuses and ballistic partition projects with the Czech Technical University. We also contribute to research on minimising CBRN substance dispersion during IED disposal.

How does international cooperation function?

Although we are not currently deployed abroad, we cooperate extensively with European and global partners, including through Europol and Interpol structures. Cooperation includes sharing best practices and operational collaboration, such as with German colleagues during the Litvínov bomb disposal or

with Bosnia and Herzegovina in clearing former ammunition depots.

How do you address psychological and physical strain?

Psychological resilience and physical fitness are required from the outset. We emphasise teamwork, regular reassessments, stress-management training, and access to psychological support. Service and rest regimes are structured to allow proper regeneration and family life.

How do you assess the legislative framework?

As an EU Member State, the Czech Republic harmonises its legislation with EU requirements, including Regulation (EU) 2019/1148 on explosives precursors. Ongoing expert discussions aim to ensure flexibility, reduced administrative burden, and responsiveness to new threats, including amendments to pyrotechnics, weapons, and ammunition legislation.

What are the main challenges ahead?

A major challenge will be the uncontrolled movement of weapons and ammunition following the end of the conflict in Ukraine. Europol has already recorded significant smuggling back into Europe.

Technological development in sensors, electronics, drones, autonomous platforms, and



Training with the tEODor robot – disposal of UXO

new explosives will continue. Modern pyrotechnics will increasingly rely on robotics, artificial intelligence, advanced data analysis, and remote interventions. However, the human factor remains irreplaceable.

Our goal is to develop synergy between human expertise and technology, strengthening professionalism, resilience, and decision-making skills while introducing modern equipment that enhances safety and efficiency.

General, thank you for the interview.

Jaroslav Jonák

**CBRN – Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear defence.*



Training in eliminating fragmentation effects during aerial bomb disposal



EOD divers training in water



World-Class Finnish Protection with a Strong Czech Footprint

The Finnish company CPE ranks among the most respected European manufacturers of ballistic protection and tactical equipment for armed forces and security agencies. It has been steadily increasing its market share not only in the Nordic countries but also in the Baltics and Central Europe. The success of Finnish CPE carries a distinct Czech signature, as a significant portion of its product portfolio is manufactured in the Czech Republic through its subsidiary CPE OPUS. This entity is gradually becoming an important pillar of the domestic defence industry. On the Czech market, the brand is represented by MKG Defence, which – among other achievements – has successfully delivered ballistic panels to the Czech Police and played a key role in the Slovak Armed Forces’ rearmament programme with modern individual ballistic protection systems.

From Finnish Tradition to International Player

Founded at the turn of the 1990s, CPE emerged in an environment where personal protection forms a natural part of the broader concept of national defence. From the outset, the company has specialised in high-end ballistic protection for the military, police, and other security forces, emphasising a combination of superior ballistic resistance, simple yet highly functional ergonomics, and low weight – all tailored to the demanding Nordic conditions. Finland’s well-developed doctrine of comprehensive national defence has created a fertile ground for the development of top-tier protective equipment that remains both effective and realistically affordable. Over time, CPE established a solid position on the domestic market – particularly through supplies to the Finnish Defence Forces – before expanding internationally. The company’s philosophy is defined by continuous technological development, uncompromising quality standards, rigorous testing according to the strictest norms, and the

ability to customise products to meet the precise requirements of professional users. Rather than a story of rapid startup growth, CPE’s history is one of steady, expertise-driven evolution: long-term product development shaped directly by feedback from armies, police units, and special operations forces. It is precisely this focus on straightforward functionality, proven ballistic performance, and long service life that has enabled CPE to expand beyond Finland and become a respected supplier across a wider European region.

Czech Manufacturing at CPE OPUS – A Strategic Element of Expansion

A pivotal milestone in CPE’s development came in 2017, when the company decided to expand its production capacity by acquiring the OPUS manufacturing cooperative in Neratovice, Czech Republic. CPE OPUS thus builds on a strong legacy of producing sports – especially ice-hockey – equipment. Although that once-famous tradition had gradually declined due to competition from Asian sup-

pliers, the Neratovice facility had retained world-class sewing capabilities and, crucially, deep expertise in the precise processing of heavy textile materials. Thanks to this foundation, the Finnish owner was able to rapidly transform the site into a full-scale manufacturing, development, and technology hub focused on tactical gear and ballistic protection components. From a technological standpoint, the Czech plant now contributes to the production of state-of-the-art ballistic panels that meet even the most stringent standards, plate carriers, and other equipment. The Czech footprint in CPE products is therefore far more than a marketing label – it represents genuine added value. Today, a broad portfolio of items flows from Neratovice to customers across virtually the entire continent, positioning the facility among the most technologically advanced producers of tactical and protective gear in Europe.

Localised production in the Czech Republic also creates significant opportunities for Czech security and armed forces. In-house de-

velopment and manufacturing capacity deliver greater flexibility in product adaptation and delivery timelines, shorter response times, and the possibility of direct cooperation on product evolution with domestic end-users. At a time when the European defence industry faces surging demand and increasing emphasis on strategic autonomy, having production localised on national territory constitutes both a competitive and a security advantage. CPE OPUS is thus not merely a foreign subsidiary – it forms an integral part of Europe’s defence industrial base.

MKG Defence: The Bridge Between Manufacturer and Customer

MKG Defence plays a crucial role in establishing and strengthening the CPE brand on the Czech market. Far more than a mere commercial representative, it acts as a true partner that understands the specifics of the local security environment and can adapt products to exact customer needs. This creates a seamless link between user-driven development (including national specifications), secure and transparent manufacturing with a supply chain localised outside Asia, and comprehensive delivery and lifecycle support.

Among MKG Defence’s most visible successes are the deliveries of more than 5000 TBO5CZ ballistic panels to the Czech Police, completed in a remarkably short timeframe at the end of 2025. The project serves as a major reference – not only in terms of volume, but above all as proof of the trust placed by the Czech Police in the quality and reliability of the supplied solution, which officers rely on daily in the line of duty. Ballistic protection in a policing context demands an exceptional



CPE Production OY will once again be exhibiting at the Future Forces Forum trade fair in October 2026.

balance between protection level, ergonomics, and weight – and it is precisely in achieving this balance that both MKG and CPE hold a clear competitive edge.

In December 2025, Slovak Defence Minister Robert Kaliňák announced a project for the re-equipment and re-armament of the Armed Forces of the Slovak Republic. It is an ambitious plan for the delivery of new types of ballistic protection equipment or small arms. And it is precisely the ballistic vests supplied by the Slovak company VEP – which boasts more than thirty years of tradition in the production and delivery of ballistic vests to Slovak armed forces – that once again carry a Finnish-Czech footprint. The company CPE, with project support from its regional partner MKG Defence, will act as the lead subcontractor for the modern ballistic solution. The first deliveries are expected to take place – once again in a historically very short timeframe from contract signature – already four months later, during March 2026. Localisation of production on our territory and cooperation among companies in the region once more demon-

strate what an enormous advantage a strong domestic industrial base offers to the customer.

MKG Defence’s activities are not limited to personal ballistic protection. Most recently, the company has become involved in projects protecting military hardware – for example, dynamic camouflage systems for the SPYDER air-defence platform. This ability to operate across segments – from individual protection to safeguarding critical weapon systems – confirms both the technological breadth of the portfolio and the company’s competence to deliver complex solutions.

Local Development and Manufacturing as a Model for European Security

The combination of Finnish know-how, Czech production capacity, and dedicated customer support creates a model that aligns closely with current trends in the European defence industry. For the Czech Republic, the localisation of CPE’s manufacturing means not only technology transfer and the advancement of traditional textile expertise, but also its elevation into the high-end field of ballistic protection and development. Integration into international supply chains further enhances the country’s strategic relevance. In the context of today’s security challenges, this type of partnership directly strengthens both industrial and national resilience. Together, CPE, CPE OPUS, and MKG Defence are writing a story that goes far beyond ordinary commercial cooperation. It is a story of connecting Nordic tradition with outstanding Czech manufacturing and development capabilities – and a compelling real-world example of how effective, technologically advanced international defence-industry partnerships can function, with a clear and tangible Czech contribution.



CPE Production OY, main supplier of ballistic equipment for the Finnish Armed Forces

European Defence Funding and the National STEP Applications Programme as a Game Changer:

Competitiveness, Sovereignty, and the Strategic Position of Czech Industry

European defence funding is gradually transforming from support for individual projects into a comprehensive industrial strategy aimed at strengthening Europe's technological sovereignty, supply chain resilience, and the competitiveness of the European – and therefore also Czech – defence and security technology industry.



From the perspective of Czech companies and research organisations, this is not merely about access to funding. It is about the opportunity to become part of the European technological and industrial base that will shape defence systems and strategic technologies for decades to come.

On 17 February, Prague hosted a comprehensive programme of three consecutive events – National EDF Info Day 2026, EDF On-site Matchmaking, and Czech Industry Day – the latter organised in cooperation with our company. *“These events prove that European defence cooperation is not created solely at the level of political declarations, but above all through long-term partnerships.”* says David Kotris, CEO and founder of enovation company.

A key role is played by the Defence and Security Industry Association of the Czech Republic (AOBP), which conceptually prepared the programmes, serves as the national focal point for the European Defence Fund (EDF), and supports Czech entities in navigating work programmes, calls, and the consortium environment. The joint efforts of AOBP and the Ministry of Defence thus create a bridge between European defence policy and the concrete needs and capabilities of Czech industry.

EDF 2026: Technological Sovereignty as the Main Driver

The EDF 2026 Work Programme confirms the shift in European policy towards technological autonomy and strategic resilience. The emphasis is clearly on strengthening the European defence technological and industrial base, developing key capabilities within the EU, building robust and diversified supply

chains, and, importantly, supporting innovation and the involvement of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Therefore, EDF is not only a research programme, but also an instrument of industrial and security policy. Technologies developed under its framework are intended to become the foundation of future joint European procurements and standards.

At the national level, the key programme is PRODEF, coordinated by the Ministry of Defence, which supports applied defence research and the development of emerging and disruptive technologies.

A Strategic Source of Defence Funding Also from the Ministry of Industry and Trade

Key instruments from the Ministry of Industry and Trade for strategic technologies will also include the forthcoming non-investment and investment STEP programmes, which follow the European Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) initiative. The aim of STEP is to support projects in high value-added strategic technologies.

The programme aspires to support projects that:

- Strengthen European technological sovereignty
- Reduce the EU's dependence on critical supplies from third countries
- Develop strategic sectors such as biotech, cleantech, AI, defence, and dual-use
- Deliver significant security and economic impact

Unlike the EDF, which finances international consortia, the STEP Applications programme

is a tool for developing capacities at the national level – including in the defence and dual-use sectors. Nevertheless, the potential for cross-border cooperation, export, and scaling will play a crucial role.

Funding levels are significantly higher than in standard research and development projects, reaching into the lower hundreds of millions of CZK. Although forming a consortium is not mandatory, a collaborative element will positively influence evaluation, as will a thorough patent search, evidence demonstrating innovativeness and breakthrough character of the solution, and its commercial – and especially strategic – potential.


“In terms of complexity and ambition, these projects closely resemble those from directly managed European Commission programmes.” adds David Kotris.

A Strategic Opportunity for the Czech Republic

A unique window of opportunity is emerging for the Czech defence and technology sector:

- Moving from the role of supplier to that of strategic partner
- Strengthening Czech technological sovereignty
- Building a stronger export position

European defence and technology policy is shifting from supporting individual projects to systematically building an industrial and technological base. Active participation today does not merely mean taking part in projects – it means having the opportunity to co-shape European technological sovereignty and long-term competitiveness.



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esc Defence

esc Defence s.r.o. is one of the leading Czech technology companies with extensive expertise and many years of practical experience in developing of hardware and software solutions for Ground, Air, and Space missions. ESC develops tailor-made technologies for customers in both defence and civil sectors.

ESC is currently working on the development of a unique **modular multispectral camera system** designed for ground and air applications for the purpose of recognizing and tracking targets, which may include both static and moving objects. Through a special composition of evaluated spectral bands, the system will be able to recognize even camouflaged objects and track them during the day, night, and under adverse conditions. ESC is also developing a computing unit for image processing. The main advantages of this system will be its **wide operating temperature range, compactness** with a small form factor and weight, a low latency and its installation suitability on aircraft, UAS, or ground vehicles. The system will be expandable with data storage capabilities for data archiving and additional



analysis, or training and updating of the employed AI modules. The system also has applications in the field of environmental monitoring, such as tracking changes in vegetation, water resources, animal migration, etc. ESC manages the entire development cycle from design and prototyping stage to testing and production and thus contributing to the high reliability of the resulting systems.

The main areas of ESC expertise include **embedded electronic systems, integrated mo-**

dular avionics, computing units and RTOS systems, multi- and hyperspectral camera systems. ESC also offers robust **GNC solutions** resistant to jamming, suitable for demanding operational environments, and specializes in intelligence and surveillance systems using AI algorithms for detection, recognition, and tracking of targets. The company has long-term experience in international projects (EDF) and actively contributes to the development of a modern, innovative, and sustainable European defence industry.

Training at the Pace of Modern Operations: a New Approach from Dogfight Boss

Modern military training no longer follows long-term, stable planning cycles. Weapons systems are becoming increasingly complex, operational environments change rapidly, and feedback from combat returns almost immediately. At the same time, access to real-world platforms is limited and financially demanding. Relying solely on traditional forms of training is no longer sufficient.

Large, highly sophisticated simulators remain an important part of military preparation. However, their development and modernization are costly and slow. Fixed upgrade cycles make it difficult to respond quickly to evolving operational requirements, thereby negatively affecting force readiness.

Dogfight Boss introduces a more flexible approach. The company does not aim to replace large simulators but to complement them with high-fidelity systems focused on procedural and tactical training. These platforms serve pilots, helicopter crews, armoured vehicle

crews, JTAC specialists, and other operators who require regular, realistic training.

The primary focus lies in behavioural realism – accurate control response, correct reaction timing, ergonomic crew station layouts, and



effective instructor integration. As a result, skills developed in simulation transfer directly into real operational deployment.

In-house development and manufacturing of key hardware components enable rapid adaptation and reduce dependence on external suppliers. This allows the systems to respond flexibly to operational feedback and the current needs of armed forces.

Dogfight Boss therefore represents not just a simulator manufacturer, but a partner capable of aligning training with the pace of modern operations.

Delivered solutions for armed forces in Oceania, South America, Ukraine, the United States, and the Czech Republic clearly demonstrate the quality and reliability of this approach.



War on the Table

VR Group, which has been supplying training and simulation technologies to armed and security forces for over 27 years, entered a new sub-sector a year ago with the aim of introducing the field of wargaming to the Czech market. This term refers to simplified models of reality that allow users to try out a particular situation repeatedly, without the costs associated with real-life exercises or the demands typical of classic simulations, learn from their mistakes, and come up with the best possible solution. Now, after more than a year, it boasts several products in the final stages of development that have undergone multiple tests and



have already attracted the attention of many representatives of the Czech Armed Forces and other services.

Contact

This is a tactical, highly realistic war game designed for training squad and platoon commanders. Players operate on simplified maps of real areas, move with assigned units, and try to complete the assigned task. The main advantage of the game is its full modifiability. In case of specific requests, it is possible to add any additional units and game elements to the game, such as engineering structures or attack helicopters. Currently, contact offers operations with all basic squad weapons, drones, and light artillery.

Ogmia

This is an analytical war game at the strategic level for information operations. The game is intended for security forces and other entities involved in this issue. The game was developed in cooperation with the Cyber and

Information Operations Command with the aim of simulating as accurately as possible the behavior of the Czech Republic's information environment and interventions in it. Its main benefit is the visualization of mostly extremely abstract information issues and the butterfly effect, where every action, even if well-intentioned, can have unexpected consequences in the information environment.

TDGs

The name comes from the English term "tactical decision games" and refers to a pre-prepared narrative scenario for many situations and issues, from the tactical to the strategic level, from traditional warfare to modern challenges such as crisis management in municipalities. Each scenario outlines the situation in which the player finds themselves, what powers they have at their disposal, and gives them a time limit to prepare a solution, which is then discussed and evaluated as a group. TDGs are intended for anyone concerned with the issues addressed in the scenario, which can be extremely varied and flexible.

SOKOL™ 4 – Parachute Training System

SOKOL™ 4 is designed to support comprehensive parachute training across all phases of a jump – from mission preparation to landing and after-action review.

The system enables instructors to configure mission profiles according to unit requirements and training level, allowing repetitive and controlled rehearsal of standard procedures as well as emergency scenarios.

The current generation of SOKOL™ 4 provides advanced freefall simulation, canopy control, and landing training with accurate body movement response and flight dynamics.

SOKOL™ 4 includes operational terrain environments for mission planning and rehearsal. In addition to standard 3D terrain databases, geo-specific satellite data can be integrated to support preparation for designated operational areas.

The system increases training frequency, enhances safety, and improves decision-making prior to live airborne operations.



Where do we exhibit?

Meet us at Military Days 2026 (May 4–8) at Prostějov Airfield, where we will present the latest developments of the SOKOL™ 4 system.

Rubena – Elastomer Solutions for Defence Applications

Rubena, s.r.o. is a traditional Czech manufacturer of rubber and rubber-textile components with a continuous production history dating back to 1908. We specialise in the development, engineering and manufacturing of technically demanding elastomer systems designed for operation under extreme mechanical, climatic and chemical conditions. Our capabilities include in-house compound development, design of multi-layer rubber-textile structures, and a fully controlled manufacturing process supported by internal quality control.

Aviation and Ballistic Protection: We develop and manufacture **flexible fuel tanks** for L-159, L-39 and L-410 aircraft. We are a holder of EASA Part 21 approval. The tank design is optimised

for compatibility with aviation fuels, resistance to dynamic loads and long-term operational reliability. Our solutions may also incorporate **self-sealing ballistic protection** for integral fuel tanks in accordance with STANAG requirements.

Ground Vehicles and UAV Systems: For TATRA vehicles and other special platforms, we manufacture rubber-textile **pneumatic suspension systems** designed for high load capacity and demanding off-road operation. We also supply **rubberised fabric flexible fuel tanks** for UAVs and armoured combat vehicles of major European manufacturers, produced in compliance with MIL-DTL-6396F. These systems are designed with emphasis on mechanical

strength, chemical resistance to fuels, and spatial adaptability.

Logistics and Infrastructure: Our portfolio includes **large-capacity collapsible mobile tanks** for field storage and transportation of fuels, elastomer solutions for military equipment storage, **LP fenders**, flexible segment barriers, and other pneumatic elements for infrastructure protection. The standard product range is complemented by a complete line of **rubber V-belts** and more than 16,000 types of **rubber** and **rubber-to-metal moulded components** available from stock. Rubena is ready to implement new projects in close cooperation with defence equipment manufacturers and system integrators. www.rubena.eu



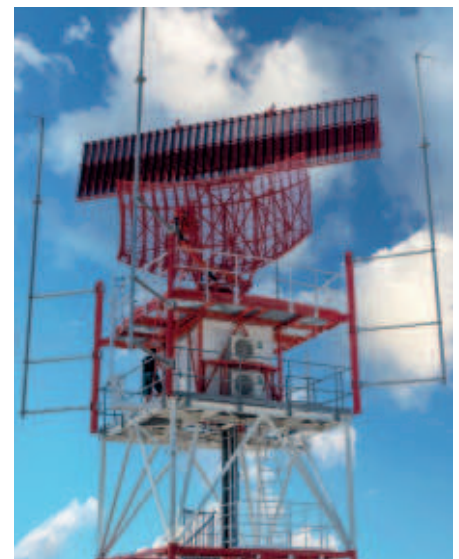
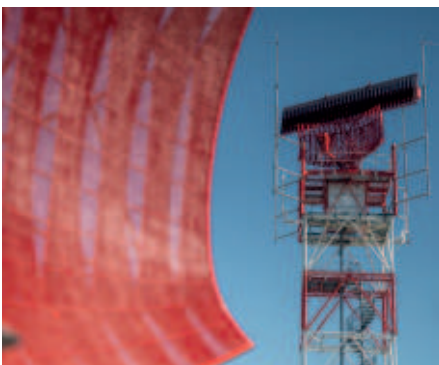
ELDIS – Site Acceptance Tests (SAT)

ELDIS Pardubice, a leading Czech manufacturer of radar systems and a member of the CSG group, has successfully completed a key phase of its project in Poland — the Site Acceptance Tests (SAT) of newly installed radar systems. Testing conducted directly at the operational site confirmed not only their functionality but also compliance with the latest European standard, the **EUROCONTROL Specification for European Mode S Station (EMS), Edition 4.0**. Meeting this stringent specification represents a major technological milestone as well as a strong reference for future European projects.

The EMS 4.0 standard is among the key benchmarks shaping the future of radar surveillance in Europe. Successfully passing SAT under these conditions confirms that ELDIS radars meet the highest requirements for accuracy, safety, interoperability, and cybersecurity resilience. The systems are designed to support the long-term modernization of air traffic management (ATM) infrastructure and to perform reliably even in environments with the most demanding regulatory requirements.

The Polish project further strengthens the company's position on the European market. ELDIS

radars are currently deployed in more than 30 countries worldwide in both civil and military applications. The success in Poland therefore represents not only the completion of a project phase, but also a clear signal that Czech radar technology ranks among the European market leaders and is ready to actively help shape the future of safe European skies.



3Dees Industries is a Czech Integrator of Industrial Additive Manufacturing Technologies

3Dees Industries is a Czech integrator of industrial additive manufacturing technologies with more than 20 years of experience. As a member of the Defence and Security Industry Association of the Czech Republic (AOBP ČR), we support the modernization of the defence and security sector through technology supply, contract manufacturing, reverse engineering, and technical consultancy. We operate in Prague, Brno, Ostrava, and Košice and run our own industrial additive manufacturing production center.

Additive Manufacturing for the Defence Sector

Modern defence and security forces require rapid production capabilities, flexibility, and reduced dependency on global supply chains. Additive manufacturing enables the production of functional components made from polymers, metals, and composites directly from digital data, without the need for tooling or molds.

This approach significantly shortens development cycles, enables on-demand spare part production, and allows the reproduction of hard-to-source components through 3D scanning and reverse engineering. At the same time, additive manufacturing supports structural optimization in terms of weight and strength, which is crucial for many defence and aerospace applications.

Technologies and Services

The 3Dees portfolio includes industrial polymer and metal 3D printing technologies, precision 3D scanning systems, and quality control solutions. We supply advanced additive manufacturing systems used for the production of functional polymer parts, engineering thermoplastics, and metal components for demanding engineering environments.

Beyond equipment supply, we provide comprehensive services — from application analysis and feasibility assessment to contract

additive manufacturing, part digitization, technology implementation, training, and long-term service support. With our in-house production facilities, we are capable of delivering both prototypes and small-batch production of functional end-use components.

www.3dees.cz



Entry Engineering s.r.o.

Entry Engineering is an engineering company with more than 10 years of experience in the automotive industry, which is expanding its know-how into the field of defence and security technologies. Thanks to a team of more than 300 specialists, it provides end-to-end development, testing, and integration services from concept to operational verification.

The company focuses on the development of electronic systems and comprehensive embedded software development, including architecture. Its strong competencies include testing and validation of critical systems, including automated testing with its own testing equipment and simulators.

Cyber security and functional safety are a natural part of development and testing, ensuring traceability between requirements, design, and test results. Entry Engineering is a certified partner (ISO 9001, ISO 14001, TISAX) and acts as a long-term technology partner for projects with high demands on quality, safety, and reliability.



DRONES



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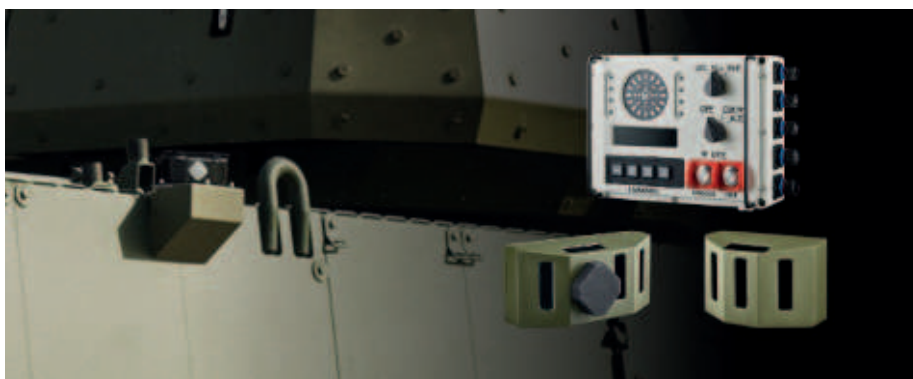
www.entry-cz.com

LAWAREC: A Reliable Electronic Warfare Support System

Modern military operations demand not only accomplishment of the mission objectives but also the protection of deployed personnel and equipment. Vehicles, vessels, and stationary assets in contemporary operational environments are frequently exposed to laser or radar irradiation used either for surveillance or weapon guidance. This underscores the critical role of warning systems capable of detecting such exposure within milliseconds and providing crews with information for threat assessment and immediate response.

The LAWAREC system was developed specifically to address these requirements. It delivers timely alerts to crews whenever a vehicle is irradiated by enemy laser or radar systems. This capability enables operators to rapidly assess threats and deploy appropriate countermeasures, significantly reducing the risk of engagement and enhancing the platform's ability to continue its mission.

The system architecture is built around a control unit, which can be connected to up to 16 detection modules. The exact placement of



these modules depends on the size and shape of the protected platform. LAWAREC's modular design ensures comprehensive coverage from all potential threat directions. The system can be integrated with a variety of countermeasures, such as smoke grenade launchers.

LAWAREC is designed to detect, classify, and localize a wide spectrum of threats, including laser rangefinders, designators, beam riders, illuminators, and radar systems. Advanced signal processing allows the system to analyze the characteristics of incoming irradiation. At the same time, it provides directional information

and recommends appropriate countermeasures, such as the selection and deployment of smoke grenades.

A key feature of LAWAREC is its low false alarm rate, maintained even in challenging electromagnetic environments. LAWAREC serves as a reliable part of multi-tiered defensive systems, aimed at enhancing platform survivability and operational efficiency. Its effectiveness and operational value are validated by deployments on a range of vehicles used by Central European members of NATO, including platforms such as the LYNX and CV90.

Tania by Holík International: a Next-Level Tactical Glove for the Digital Battlefield

As digital technologies rapidly transform military and law-enforcement operations, the need for gear that enables safe, immediate control of touch-screen devices – without the slowdown of removing gloves – has never been greater. Today's operators rely on navigation systems, mobile terminals, weapon-mounted displays, and communication devices directly in action. Responding to this growing demand, Czech manufacturer Holík

International introduces its latest short tactical glove: **Tania**.

Designed for daily field deployment, Tania features a specialized cut that stays clear of watches, compasses, and uniform sleeves. Its standout advantage is a conductive sheepskin palm engineered for full compatibility with touch-screen devices, allowing operators to interact with electronics without removing

their gloves. The glove delivers outstanding tactile sensitivity, agility, and confident handling of mission-critical equipment.

Crafted from highly breathable, water-repellent materials, Tania's backhand is made from flame-resistant FR viscose and meta-aramid knit. Key stress points are reinforced with sheepskin and impact-absorbing foam. Users can choose between two versions: one with knuckle protection for added safety and one without for maximum sensitivity.

Holík International offers Tania in three tactical colorways – **Black, Coyote, and Green** – ensuring seamless adaptation to various operational environments and the visual standards of security forces.

Tania represents the perfect fusion of advanced materials, ergonomic design, and complete digital readiness – delivering exactly what today's professionals need in the field.





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Modernisation of the Czech Customs Administration

The Customs Administration of the Czech Republic is a security authority that protects not only the financial interests of the state and the European Union, but also society as a whole. It is an organisation with a broad portfolio of competencies that have gradually expanded and evolved since the Czech Republic joined the European Union in 2004. Its activities continue to adapt to the needs of the state and Czech society in order to effectively carry out the tasks entrusted to it.

Last year, the Customs Administration completed the final phase of its transformation. The powers and organisational structure of several units of the General Directorate of Customs and the customs offices were changed. The original fifteen offices were reorganised into five new offices, mostly with jurisdiction over several regions. The exception is the Customs Office for the Central Bohemian Region, whose jurisdiction remains unchanged, and the Prague Customs Office, which was merged with the Ruzyně Customs Office.

At the same time as the transformation, the so-called **Customs Package** was also approved, allowing the Customs Administration to clarify and streamline the performance of its competencies.

The changes in the organisational structure, the reduction of redundant competencies and the strengthening of key ones have increased

operational capability, enabled greater focus on priority agendas, improved operational management and enhanced oversight of the use of entrusted resources.

It is clear that the Customs Administration must also respond to external influences and evolving trends in offences and criminal activities falling within its jurisdiction. For this reason, it continuously modernises not only the equipment directly used in operational work, but also maintains existing contacts and establishes new ones to support information exchange and professional development. Considerable support is provided by the European Union, whose funding co-finances many projects.

Supervision Units

Apart from traditional competencies such as customs and tax proceedings, the most common activity of the Czech Customs Adminis-

tration is the inspection work carried out by supervision units on the domestic market. The public encounters them mainly in transport during inspections of transported goods, but also in shops and gambling establishments.

To carry out their tasks effectively, these units require advanced analytical tools for the efficient identification of subjects of interest, as well as modern mobile equipment enabling inspections to be conducted quickly and, whenever possible, non-invasively.

Within the European project **CCEI Instrument**, aimed at customs controls of goods crossing borders, eight **Night Hawk BTX handheld X-ray scanners** and eight **Olympus IPLEX G Lite endoscopes** were acquired. These mobile devices allow officers to inspect the contents of shipments or the construction of containers without the need to open them, significantly reducing the time required for inspections and simplifying control procedures.

Handheld X-ray devices are also used inland. Mobile supervision patrols employ them during inspections of passenger and delivery vehicles, where their mobility and immediate readiness allow inspection procedures to be carried out directly on site and enable officers to respond to a wide range of situations.

Another element of modernisation is the acquisition of eight **Olympus IPLEX G Lite endoscopes**. This technology allows detailed inspection of hard-to-reach areas such as vehicle cavities or technical components, where other methods often fail.

In addition to the above equipment, luggage scanners and high-capacity X-ray systems capable of scanning entire trucks support the supervision units. A procurement procedure for the acquisition of a new high-capacity X-ray scanner is currently underway.

The Customs Administration's **service canine units** must also be mentioned. Training programmes and the categories of dogs trained to detect commodities of interest are constantly evolving. With the growing trend of fentanyl trafficking, the Customs Administration currently has ten service dogs trained specifically to detect this extremely dangerous synthetic opioid.

Customs Technical Laboratory

An important part of the analytical infrastructure of the Customs Administration is laboratory activity carried out by the **Customs Technical Laboratory**. It ensures the professional examination of collected samples and provides precise evidence for administrative



and criminal proceedings in the areas of customs and tax administration.

At present, this mainly involves analyses of selected products subject to excise duty, such as mineral oils, spirits and tobacco products, as well as a wide spectrum of non-fiscal samples.

Modern analytical approaches thus form an integral part of customs operations. They enable not only more efficient collection of fiscal revenues but, above all, targeted and risk-oriented control activities that strengthen the protection of society, the market and the environment in the context of rapidly changing global trade conditions. Data generated by laboratory activities are not used solely for individual cases. They are simultaneously integrated into a central data warehouse, where they are systematically stored, structured and archived for long-term use. This data warehouse represents a consolidated analytical environment enabling the linking of laboratory results with other relevant information – such as goods declarations, foreign trade entities, logistics routes or results of previous inspections.

A significant pillar of modern analytics is also the systematic use of **mobile diagnostic in-**

struments, i.e. portable analytical devices that allow the examination of material composition and the identification of substances directly in the field.

This approach represents a major qualitative shift from the traditional model in which samples had to be transported to laboratories for analysis, to a model enabling immediate, data-driven decision-making at the site of intervention. Mobile diagnostics allow rapid screening of a large number of samples during inspections and their immediate preliminary evaluation. Operational decisions are therefore based on objectively identified material characteristics rather than solely on declared information or visual assessment.

Only samples identified as risky or suspicious subsequently proceed to detailed laboratory analysis.

In practice, the Customs Administration uses advanced instruments based on the latest physical and chemical principles, including **Raman spectrometers, handheld X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analysers, and FTIR and NIR spectrometers**, which were also co-financed by the European **CCEI Instrument**.





These technologies rely on the interaction of electromagnetic radiation with matter and allow rapid, non-destructive and highly sensitive identification of substances. Their functionality is supported by advanced detectors, powerful chip platforms and sophisticated mathematical models, often using elements of cloud-based processing and spectral database comparison.

Investigation Units

The transformation of the Czech Customs Administration introduces a new approach to competencies, as well as the reorganisation and rationalisation of internal processes. Strategic documents emphasise in particular digitalisation, streamlining internal structures, centralisation of selected activities and the integration of support units within the **Section for Investigation and Supervision**.

Among the key changes is the incorporation of the **Supervision Service Department** into this section, which expands the portfolio of capabilities and requires corresponding modernisation of material and technological infrastructure.

A strong emphasis is placed on developing analytical capabilities, particularly within the **Cybercrime and Analytics Unit**, including the deployment of modern technologies and the exploration of the potential use of artificial intelligence. The section is already actively examining the possibilities of modern analytical and automation tools for investigative operations.

In this context, two key digitalisation projects must be highlighted.

The project **Strengthening Systemic and Technical Measures for Working with Elec-**

tronic Data, co-financed by the **Internal Security Fund**, responds to the rapid development of encryption technologies, the increasing number of risky shipments and the need to modernise tools for digital forensic work. Its aim is to significantly strengthen the ability of the Customs Administration to process electronic data, analyse mobile devices and monitor the digital environment.

The project supports the strengthening of the capacities of EU Member States in combating serious and organised cross-border crime, terrorism, cybercrime, the illegal transport of hazardous substances and other threats affecting the internal security of the European Union.

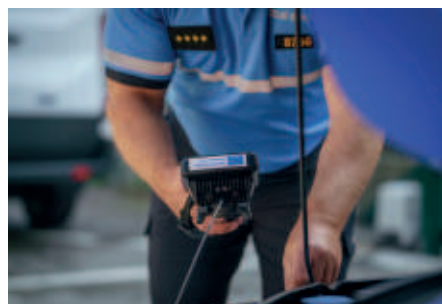
The second project is a comprehensive modernisation project of the Czech Customs Administration co-financed by **EUAF**, titled **Digital Forensic Analysis**. Its goal is to build and significantly strengthen capacities for the securing, transmission, analytical processing and forensic evaluation of digital data relevant to criminal proceedings.

The project focuses on the acquisition of specialised forensic hardware and software, the creation of a dedicated secure network for the transmission of digital data and the implementation of specialised training programmes. It represents a major support for

the activities of Customs Administration units in their role as a law-enforcement authority, particularly in the areas of cybercrime, digital evidence collection and forensic analysis.

To ensure that the Czech Customs Administration can operate effectively in the dynamically evolving environment of international trade and other areas related to its competencies, it is essential to continuously modernise equipment and tools while actively exchanging experience with partner organisations both domestically and internationally.

The measures described above represent only part of the development of the Customs Administration. Equally important are internships at **Europol**, cooperation with foreign customs administrations, the acquisition of tactical and operational equipment for investigation units, and many other initiatives.



FOCUSED ON SECURITY

26-29/5/2027

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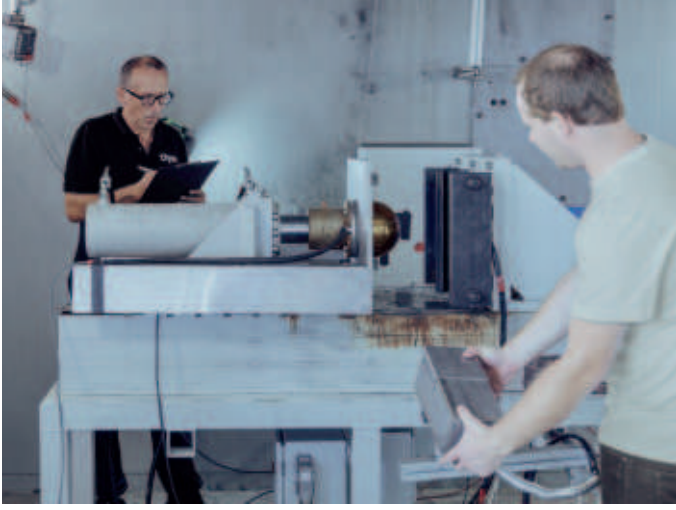
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Leader in Battery Testing

Tiyo, based in Hořice in the Jičín region, is consolidating its leading position in battery testing.

The company continues to invest heavily in battery testing. It currently has six specialized containers for advanced testing of battery cells and modules, with a seventh under construction and more planned. Tiyo has also expanded its current scope of accreditation to include new types of tests.

Tiyo is the only laboratory in the Czech Republic that focuses on battery testing to such an extent. Technicians analyze lithium batteries up to a capacity of 20 kWh. They perform environmental, electrical, and long-term stress tests, as well as comprehensive analyses of heat leakage from cells when ignited in a pressure-tight chamber.

A six-meter-long container with steel walls and a fire extinguishing system allows for the safe testing of uncontrolled battery reactions. It uses thermal and high-speed cameras and other measuring equipment for monitoring. This spring, the company will commission a second reaction container for risk testing. „The first container is no longer sufficient for our needs. The acquisition of another one will also allow us to shorten the time needed to prepare tests. Although the tests themselves take only a few minutes, the preparation can take up to several days. For example, when we want to switch from static to dynamic tests, it is very time-consuming,” explains Jaromír Kejval, co-owner and technical director of Tiyo.

The company began testing batteries in 2020 and has since invested several million crowns in infrastructure and state-of-the-art equipment. It has leveraged its many years of experience and knowledge from testing components for the automotive industry.

An important recent achievement was the expansion of accreditations to include a new type of testing. „We have obtained full UN 38.3 certification, which defines the requirements for the safe transport of battery cells and modules. We had four accredited methods, and now we have expanded them by two more,” says Václav Zmítko, head of the battery testing team. „We expect the scope of testing to increase. We want to be prepared for that,” adds the technical director.

According to them, the key issue in the development of this segment will remain the verification of battery cell safety. In addition to assessing batteries from the perspective of safety tests, Tiyo also performs a whole range

of functional, cyclic, and other tests necessary for the reliable operation of battery systems.

Tiyo has been operating in Hořice since 1993. The best-equipped testing laboratory in Central Europe has a production area of 8,000 square meters. It develops and manufactures testing equipment and components for the automotive, aerospace, and space industries. The company has more than 260 customers from 20 countries and employs 140 experts. In 2025, it achieved a turnover of more than CZK 300 million.

Author: Tomáš Plecháč

Photo: Tiyo

SEMINAR FOR INPIRATION FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPERS

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12/11/2026

BATTERY TESTING

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PragoBoard – From Běchovice to Jupiter



“Do you know how to get to us?” This is the question most visitors are asked when coming to PragoBoard, based in Prague’s Běchovice district since its founding in 1997. “We are finalizing preparations for a new production hall, scheduled for completion in 2027,” says Managing Director Martin Šimek. The new hall will expand production and create additional job opportunities. “We are an oversized family business – my father founded the company, and I grew up among the boards,” adds Šimek. Today, PragoBoard employs nearly 70 people and is one of Europe’s leading PCB manufacturers.

PCBs as Critical Components in Defence Systems

Electronics for the defence and security sectors must withstand extreme conditions – vibrations, temperature fluctuations, humidity, electromagnetic interference, and long-term stress. “Our customers demand top quality and fast delivery, so we push our limits every day,” says Martin Šimek. “There is no room for error in the defence industry. That’s why we are ex-

panding European production capacities to strengthen security autonomy and remain a reliable long-term partner,” adds founder and CEO Oldřich Šimek.

Partner for Demanding Applications

PragoBoard focuses on custom manufacturing tailored to the specific requirements of industrial and security projects. Precision technology, stable processes, and strict regulatory compliance create a solid foundation for projects where reliability is crucial.

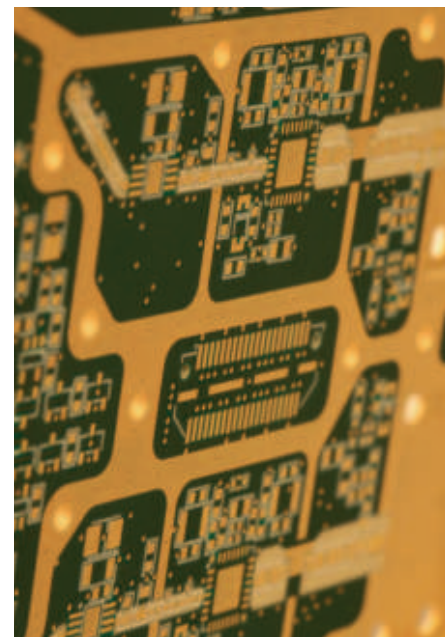
Collaboration and Knowledge Development

Success relies on skilled specialists designing electronics to the highest safety and quality standards. “We regularly attend career fairs, and this year we will be at Electronica 2026 in Munich, a great opportunity to meet partners and introduce our company to new clients,” says Oldřich Šimek.

Nearly three decades after starting in Běchovice, PragoBoard combines technical exper-

tise, a strong team, and strategic vision to tackle the toughest industrial and defence challenges.

www.pcb.cz



Automation and Advanced Testing as a Strategic Capability in European Defence Manufacturing

Across Europe, defence modernization programs are accelerating in response to evolving security requirements and long-term capability development plans. This shift does not only affect system integrators and platform manufacturers, but also the broader industrial ecosystem responsible for producing, validating and maintaining increasingly complex subsystems.

Modern defence technologies — including electronic control units, power electronics, sensor systems and safety-critical components — require high-precision measurement, functional validation and robust quality assurance processes. Manufacturing environments are typically characterized by high-mix / low-volume production, engineering changes during the lifecycle and strict documentation requirements.

In this context, flexibility of production and inspection systems becomes a strategic necessity. Test platforms must allow rapid re-

configuration, integration of new measurement methods and long-term serviceability without fundamental redesign. At the same time, increasing pressure on traceability, compliance and reliability drives the need for automation and structured data management.

Kentigen focuses on the design and integration of flexible inspection and testing systems with emphasis on modular architecture, scalability and measurement accuracy. Our solutions combine mechanical automation, electrical and functional testing, and data acquisition into a unified system designed for repeatability, full traceability and lifecycle sustainability.

Rather than delivering single-purpose equipment, the objective is to create a technological platform capable of adapting to evolving defence requirements, supporting long product lifecycles and maintaining consistent quality standards across changing production scenarios.



In the broader European defence landscape, advanced automation and testing are no longer secondary production tools. They represent a core industrial capability enabling reliable delivery, quality assurance and long-term competitiveness of defence suppliers.





AOBP Conference:

Current NATO Programmes and Opportunities for the Czech Defence Industry



On 27 January 2026, the Army Museum in Žižkov provided the setting for the conference Current NATO Programmes and Opportunities for the Czech Defence Industry, organised by the Association of the Defence and Security Industry of the Czech Republic (AOBP). The event brought together a strong representation of senior executives from across the Czech defence sector and created a platform for open dialogue between government institutions, industry representatives, and officials from NATO agencies.

How is NATO's defence ecosystem evolving today? What opportunities does this transformation create for Czech companies, and what new requirements does it impose? Which priorities remain unchanged, and where is it necessary to adopt new approaches? The conference sought to address these questions by offering practical insights from the perspectives of research, innovation, and procurement.

At a time of ongoing turbulence in the European security environment, the North Atlantic Alliance is fundamentally reassessing its approach to innovation, industry engagement, and acquisitions. The challenge today is no longer solely the development of new technologies, but above all the ability to integrate them rapidly into operational use within coordinated Allied structures. This transformation, and the concrete pathways through which it is being implemented, formed the central focus of the conference *Current NATO Programmes and Opportunities for the Czech Defence Industry*, organised by the Association of the Defence and Security Industry of the Czech Republic (AOBP).

NATO in Transition: New Demands on Industry

The full-day conference was opened by Ms. Kristýna Helm, Vice-President of the AOBP, who introduced the event with a quotation from Nelson Mandela: *"It always seems impossible until it is done."* The remark aptly captured the spirit of this year's meeting. Only a few years ago, it would have been difficult to imagine representatives of the Czech defence industry meeting in one place with senior officials from NATO structures. In her opening remarks, Ms. Helm presented the breadth, technological sophistication, and diversity of the Czech defence industry to representatives of NATO agencies, government institutions, and industry participants attending the conference.

Among the distinguished guests were the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Mr. Jaromír Zůna, and the Czech Ambassador to NATO, Mr. David Konecký. In his address, the Minister of Defence emphasised that NATO's real strength lies primarily in the specific capabilities of its individual

member states. These capabilities are closely linked to their industrial base and production capacity. Without a strong and functional defence industry, he noted, NATO cannot build or sustain its defence capabilities in the long term. Mr. Konecký, the Czech Republic's Ambassador to NATO, added that discussions within the Alliance today extend beyond the level of defence spending. Increasing attention is being paid to whether member states are able to develop sufficient production capacity, strengthen resilience, and ensure stable supply chains. According to him, this preparedness will be crucial if Europe is to assume greater responsibility for its own security.

Ms. Radka Konderlová, Director General of the Industrial Cooperation Section at the Ministry of Defence, presented a range of instruments designed to facilitate the involvement of Czech companies in the Alliance's industrial ecosystem. Her presentation focused on industrial cooperation mechanisms, support for research and development, and opportunities to participate in NATO initiatives such as the DIANA accelerator and the NATO Inno-



vation Fund. Navigating this system can be complex, but, as she emphasised, companies should actively make use of the available national and Alliance-level tools and seek opportunities for engagement. In the area of defence industry support, NATO and the European Union are now coordinating their efforts more closely than in the past. The primary objective is to accelerate responses to the current security environment while reducing unnecessary administrative barriers that can hinder companies seeking to participate in these programmes.

Research and Technology: From Innovation to Implementation

The first panel built on this framework by focusing on NATO's research and technology programmes and the role industry can play within them. The discussion brought together representatives from the NATO Science and Technology Organization (STO), Allied Command Transformation, and Czech industry. It highlighted a clear shift in emphasis: from technological development alone towards the practical application of new technologies.

Merely having an innovative solution is no longer enough. Increasingly, technologies must prove their viability within the Alliance environment, successfully pass testing procedures, and demonstrate that they can be integrated into existing operational structures. The ability to translate research outcomes into practical use is therefore becoming one of the key criteria for success in NATO programmes.

The panel addressed NATO's current priorities in science and technology, while also offering practical insights into how companies and research institutions can engage in Alliance programmes. Among the speakers, Mr. John-Mikal Størdal of the NATO Science and Tech-

nology Organization presented the Alliance's perspective on cooperation with industry, while Mr. Vojtěch Stejskal of ERA shared experience drawn from Czech industrial practice.

The discussion was moderated by Mr. Pavel Zůna, the Czech Republic's National Coordinator to NATO STO and the European Defence Agency (EDA) and former Director of the NATO STO Collaboration Support Office. Participants also addressed several challenges that continue to affect participation in NATO research programmes, particularly the differences between civilian and military research environments, lengthy validation processes, and demanding interoperability requirements.

Overall, the panel demonstrated that successful participation in NATO research activities requires not only technological excellence, but also the capacity for sustained cooperation and a clear understanding of Alliance procedures and processes.

Why is it harder to deploy innovation than to develop it?

The second panel addressed an issue that is gaining increasing attention across the defence sector: while innovation is abundant, the real challenge lies in transforming new technologies into capabilities that can be deployed in practice. The discussion focused on where this process tends to slow down in Europe and what instruments might help overcome these obstacles.

The panel brought together perspectives from across the NATO innovation ecosystem. Participants included Mr. Ron Nulkes, Chairman of the NATO Industrial Advisory Group; Ms. Erin Hallock, representing the NATO Innovation Fund; Mr. Leoš Mauer, Director of the Defence Hub at CzechInvest and Head of the DIANA accelerator

in the Czech Republic; and Ms. Diana Rádl Rogerová, General Partner at the investment fund Luminova Ventures. The discussion was moderated by Ms. Tatjana Jakšičová of the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Speakers agreed that NATO is increasingly reassessing the role of industry within the security environment. The industrial base is no longer viewed merely as a supporting element but as a fundamental pillar of security and resilience. This perspective is reflected in the growing tendency within the Alliance to refer to the defence industry as the "sixth domain", alongside the traditional operational domains, and in the emphasis placed on rapidly expanding production capacity and strengthening cross-border industrial cooperation.

In this context, the NATO Industrial Advisory Group plays an important role. Acting as the voice of industry within the Alliance, it serves as a pre-competitive, consensus-based platform that brings together industrial experts from Allied countries to provide long-term technical and strategic advice.

The discussion also highlighted that innovation rarely fails at the stage of initial experimentation. The most significant challenges arise when technologies move from pilot projects to practical deployment. Small and medium-sized enterprises form the backbone of defence supply chains, yet they are often underrepresented in the main innovation and investment instruments. Certification procedures, integration into Alliance structures, and the complexity of procurement processes can all pose significant barriers.

Although the early phases of technological development in Europe are relatively well supported, companies frequently lack access to capital for the next stages of growth. This is



particularly evident when scaling production, meeting certification requirements, or stabilising supply chains. The panellists therefore stressed that if European and Allied innovations are to translate into operational capabilities, these companies must be more fully integrated into the broader defence innovation ecosystem.

Initiatives such as the NATO Innovation Fund were highlighted as positive developments in this regard. Beyond supporting start-ups, the fund seeks to assist companies in adapting to common Alliance structures and requirements. A similar role is played by the DIANA accelerator, which connects start-ups, established companies, investors, and academic institutions, helping technologies progress from initial development through to operational deployment.

Transformation of acquisitions: NATO accelerates

The afternoon session of the conference focused on the transformation of NATO's acquisition ecosystem. The opening presentation by Mr. Moritz Zimmermann, Innovation Officer for Defence Industry and Innovation at NATO Headquarters, introduced the discussion by outlining how the Alliance currently acquires, delivers, and sustains its capabilities.

The panel brought together representatives from key NATO institutions as well as industry and finance. Participants included Mr. Bart Hollants, NATO Innovation Broker at Supreme Allied Command Transformation; Mr. Antonio Calderon, Chief Technology Officer at the NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA); Mr. Cheney Boutilier, Principal Officer for Industry Outreach at the NATO Support and

Procurement Agency (NSPA); Mr. Georgi Yordanov, Managing Director and Head of Public Sector MENA and Central Asia at Citi; and Mr. Radek Musil, Chief Executive Officer and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors at Colt CZ Group SE. The discussion was moderated by Ms. Kristýna Helm, Vice-President of AOBP.

One of the central themes of the discussion was the concept of "transformation at two speeds", which increasingly characterises NATO's approach to defence modernisation. The Alliance is rapidly advancing digital transformation, the integration of artificial intelligence, and the modernisation of command-and-control systems, while at the same time maintaining traditional defence capabilities and ensuring high levels of operational readiness. In practice, rapid innovation is therefore taking place alongside the strengthening of core military capabilities. The speed of adaptation is becoming as important as the technological sophistication of the solutions themselves.

Significant attention was devoted to the role of the NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA), which serves as NATO's central hub for technology and cyber capabilities. The agency's technology strategy for 2030 was presented as part of the Alliance's broader vision for digital transformation, with the goal of achieving full interoperability across operational domains.

Another key topic was the role of the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA), described as the Alliance's primary instrument for acquisition and operational support. Speakers emphasised that procurement does not end with the signing of a contract. The real challenge lies in ensuring long-term operation, maintenance, modernisation, and logistics.

For this reason, the NSPA is increasingly exploring new approaches, including the use of artificial intelligence to support predictive maintenance and lifecycle management.

From the perspective of industry, cooperation with NATO offers stable contracts and long-term opportunities, but it also entails demanding requirements. Companies must not only deliver high-quality products but also demonstrate the ability to scale production, comply with strict technical and security standards, and provide long-term support for delivered systems.

Mr. Radek Musil, Chief Executive Officer and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of Colt CZ Group, also highlighted the challenge of demand predictability. The future framework for orders from member states or NATO itself is not always sufficiently clear, which complicates strategic decisions regarding investments in production capacity and industrial expansion.

At the same time, companies face increasing pressure to accelerate delivery timelines, expand production capacity, and remain flexible in responding to evolving Alliance requirements. In such an environment, only those companies able to adapt quickly while strengthening their capabilities over the long term are likely to succeed.

More broadly, NATO is rethinking how capabilities are acquired and sustained. Technological sophistication alone is no longer sufficient. What increasingly matters is how rapidly a capability can be delivered, integrated into Alliance structures, and supported throughout its operational lifecycle. The ability to cooperate internationally, comply with rigorous technical standards, and maintain sufficient production and financial capacity is becoming equally important.

The conference therefore offered a realistic perspective on what participation in the Alliance ecosystem entails today. It is no longer solely about innovation or individual contracts, but about sustained readiness and the ability to keep pace with rapidly evolving requirements. The key question remains how quickly industry can adapt to these changes – and which companies will be able to turn this challenge into an opportunity.

*Author: Olexandra Stefanyšyn
Photo: AOBP*



Enforce Tac 2026

Sets New Standards for Networked Security in Europe

With more than 1,400 exhibitors from 45 countries (2025: 998) and around 26,500 trade visitors from 100 countries (2025: 18,576), Enforce Tac 2026 has completed the most important step of its development to date. Whereas dynamic growth was the most visible change in 2025, the crowning development in 2026 was the achievement of structural systemic relevance. Europe's leading trade fair for security and defence has established itself as the top European platform for strategic discussions, industrial scaling, and networked security architecture.

Enforce Tac was held under the patronage of Germany's Federal Chancellor Friedrich Merz for the first time in 2026. The honorary sponsor was the Federation of German Security and Defence Industries (Bundesverband der Deutschen Sicherheits- und Verteidigungsindustrie, BDSV). Furthermore, the content framework represented by the central theme of "Networked Security" sharpened the trade fair's positioning in the market.

The growth of Enforce Tac in 2026 was reflected not only in surface area and participant numbers, but more importantly by the trade fair's depth of content and systemic perspective. The first-ever Enforce Tac Conference

added a stand-alone conference dimension to the trade fair format. The strategic discussions held on the Main Stage and the innovation-driven presentations on the Inno Stage made it clear that Europe's ability to defend itself is increasingly dependent on speed of development and production, industrial scaling, and reliable partnerships.

Key lines of discussion revolved around the protection of critical infrastructures, issues involving digital resilience, and the meshing of cyber capabilities with conventional defence capabilities. Overarching themes included the essential importance of reliable international cooperation relationships, technological innovation, strategic goal-setting, and opera-

tional realism. "A key outcome of many discussions was the shared realization that European security will only be viable if industrial capacity, technological innovation, and political representatives are closely intertwined," explains Jasmin Rutka, Enforce Tac Event Director. She goes on to say that "Enforce Tac 2026 has made it clear that it provides the ideal setting for precisely this kind of structured dialogue."

Participation of the Czech Republic

The Czech Republic was represented at the trade fair with a record participation of more than 40 exhibitors. Some companies had their own individual stands, while others were part of the joint exhibition organised by the Czech-



Trade agency. Czech companies were spread across almost all seven exhibition halls. In terms of the number of exhibitors, the Czech Republic had the second-largest national presence after the United States.

Our publishing house personally presented the Security and Defence Technologies Catalogue 2025–2026 at the fair. Exhibitors had the opportunity to browse the printed edition on site, including its accompanying mobile application. The catalogue and the

app were distributed in the form of a representative business cards featuring QR codes linking to both the book and the application.

To our great pleasure – and somewhat to our surprise – both forms of presentation attracted admiration and strong interest from international exhibitors, who were keen to learn more about them.

Comprehensive defence in collaboration with the security and defence industry

This development will be institutionally supported in the future by the event’s honorary sponsor, the Federation of German Security and Defence Industries (BDSV). BDSV CEO Dr. Hans Christoph Atzpodien likewise affirms the key role played by this trade fair: *“Enforce Tac shows exactly how comprehensive defence works in practice: with technology independence, resilient supply chains, and close links between product development and real-world operations.”*

Armored Forces Area staged for the first time in 2026

Enforce Tac introduced a separate focal point for ground-based military capabilities in 2026: the Armored Forces Area. This special area, a carefully thought-out addition to the trade

fair’s programme, will be firmly integrated into the hall structure and developed further in 2027 and beyond. It is a clear example of the trade fair’s strategy of content enlargement.

Focus on networked security

Numerous companies used Enforce Tac 2026 to present new systems in the areas of unmanned platforms, sensors, cyber-technologies, and networked deployment solutions. There was a clear recognition that innovative solutions work best when they are deployed together on the basis of coordinated processes, interoperable systems, and reliable partnerships.

24 delegations from 16 countries travelled to Nuremberg

Twenty-four international delegations from 16 countries utilized Enforce Tac 2026 as a platform for professional exchanges, discussions of industrial policy, and extended bilateral cooperation arrangements. The active participation of so many players underscores the growing importance of Enforce Tac as the top European venue for decision-makers from military forces, government agencies, government ministries, and procurement organizations.





Enforce Tac 2027 is almost completely booked out

The fact that Enforce Tac 2027 is almost completely booked out is a clear sign of consistently strong demand. It also confirms the effectiveness of Enforce Tac’s strategic positioning as the leading European platform for

the security and defence industry. Nuremberg’s Mayor Markus König also stresses this point: *“Under the patronage of Germany’s Federal Chancellor, this year’s Enforce Tac has not only lived up to, but actually strengthened its role as the leading trade fair in Germany for internal and external security. As the top exhibition venue in Europe, NürnbergMesse has*

created the leading platform for dialogue on one of the most important topics of our time. Furthermore, the positive experience of the many domestic and foreign exhibitors and guests has confirmed Bavaria’s leading role in the security and defence industry.”

The changes made in 2026, including a clearly defined central theme, a considerably broader supporting programme, and new formats were very well received by the participating representatives of industry, government, and politics. This year’s event marks a milestone for Enforce Tac as it successfully positioned itself as the leading European platform for the security and defence industry, where debates are structured, fresh impetus is generated, and the full range of security-relevant systemic issues are addressed.

Important note: Only for members of military forces, government agencies, and organizations charged with law enforcement or military security duties.

Author and photo: Lauren Imari Cooková



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Annual Meeting of the Representative Editorial Board



At the beginning of this year, the traditional Annual Meeting of the Representative Editorial Board of Review for the Defence and Security Industry took place at the House of the Army in Prague. The main topics included an evaluation of the past year and the future direction of both the magazine and the book *Security and Defence Technologies Catalogue*. Significant attention was devoted to cooperation with state security forces and companies from the defence and security industry in both the previous and upcoming year. During the discussion, Editorial Board members seated at the head table contributed their perspectives on the future development of the defence and security industry, as well as the challenges and opportunities it faces this year.

The meeting was opened by Kristýna Helm, Vice President of the Defence and Security Industry Association of the Czech Republic (AOBP) for International Relations, representing the Chairman of the Editorial Board and President of AOBP, Jiří Hynek.

The Managing Director of MS Line publishing house and Editor-in-Chief of *Review*, Miloš Soukup, expressed his gratitude to all partners for their long-term and significant cooperation on the occasion of the publishing house's 30th anniversary, and introduced his successor, Šárka Cook.

Kristýna Helm also thanked Jiří Štefl, CEO of OPTOKON, who served in 2025 as the annually rotating Vice-Chairman of the Editorial Board. She introduced the newly elected Vice-Chairman for the 2026 term, Jiří Protiva, President

of ALKP and Director of the state enterprise LOM PRAHA.

New Members of the Editorial Board

As every year, new representatives from the defence and security sector were nominated to the Editorial Board and accepted the proposal. The Board, which now comprises more than 60 members, welcomed the following new representative members:

- René Schreier, Deputy Minister of Defence
- Martin Macháček, Chairman of the Union of Municipal and City Police of the Czech Republic
- Ludvík Klema, Director of the Prague Municipal Police
- Pavel Balihar, Director of the Licensing Administration, Ministry of Industry and Trade

- David Havlíček, CEO of EGAP
- Tomáš Rubáček, Chairman of the Board and CEO of EXPLOSIA
- Petra Suchá, Vice President of Akkodis CZ
- David Hác, Director of Technological Development, STV GROUP
- David Horák, Associate Professor, Department of Applied Mathematics, VSB – Technical University of Ostrava, Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science

The current composition of the *Review* Editorial Board 2026 can be found in the opening pages of the magazine.

First Panel

Speakers included:

- René Schreier, Deputy Minister of Defence



- Radka Konderlová, Director General of the Industrial Cooperation Section, Ministry of Defence
- Lt. Gen. Martin Vondrášek, Police President of the Czech Republic
- Lt. Gen. Vladimír Vlček, Director General of the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic
- Miloš Soukup, Founder of MS Line

Second Panel

The second panel was opened by Šárka Cook, Managing Director of MS Line. She focused on plans for 2026, preparations for the next edition of the exclusive book *Security and Defence Technologies Catalogue (SDTC) 2027/2028*, introduced the second volume of *SDTC 2025/2026* (published exceptionally due to high demand), and presented the SDTC application, including new representative business cards with QR codes linking to both the book and the app.

Speakers of the second panel included:

- Jiří Protiva, Vice-Chairman of the Editorial Board, President of ALKP and Director of LOM PRAHA
- Brig. Gen. Petr Červený, Deputy Director General of the Prison Service of the Czech

Republic (representing the Director General)

- Maj. Gen. Petr Ošlejšek, Deputy Director General of the Fire Rescue Service for Integrated Rescue System and Operational Management
- Pavel Balihar, Director of the Licensing Administration
- Tomáš Kopečný, former Government Commissioner for the Reconstruction of Ukraine

From the introduction of all participants and other Editorial Board members, it was clear that an extraordinary and unique group had gathered once again. All publicly agreed that such a composition is highly exceptional; no similar platform exists in the Czech Republic. This confirms the perceived importance and necessity of prosperity and competitiveness for the Czech defence and security industry, particularly in the current period.

The Annual Meeting of the Editorial Board has been organised by MS Line publishing house since its inception.

The General Partner, AGADOS, publicly presented for the first time its new mobile

kitchen type AGADOS PK-M, positioned at the entrance to the venue. This model represents the smallest field kitchen in the company's portfolio and is designed as a compact, fully mobile and economically accessible solution. It is capable of catering for approximately 100–150 people and is equipped with two removable cooking modules enabling efficient preparation of hot meals and beverages even in demanding operational conditions. During the informal presentation, the kitchen was put into operation and visitors were offered hot drinks, providing a practical demonstration of its functionality.

The Special Partner of the event, the Ukrainian-Czech company U&C UAS, enabled guests to view a model of the MACE strike drone in the foyer. The drone is designed to carry out precision strikes at distances of tens of kilometres, even under intensive enemy electronic warfare conditions and without satellite navigation. In the final phase of flight, in the event of signal loss, it automatically guides itself to the target.

The Main Partner was AOBP, to whom – along with all other partners of the event – we extend our sincere thanks.

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Speeches



Miloš Soukup, Founder of MS Line

In his opening address, Miloš Soukup welcomed the guests and at the same time bid them farewell after 30 years at the helm of MS Line publishing house. He expressed his gratitude to AOBP, recalling the shared idea and launch of the first edition of the *Security and Defence Technologies Catalogue* in 1999 and its 25th anniversary.

He also thanked the management of BVV Trade Fairs Brno for 30 years of cooperation, noting that in partnership with the former management (Karel Torn and his team), the first issue of *IDET NEWS* was created. He further recalled the 25th anniversary of *Review for the Defence and Security Industry* (formerly the Czech-English CDAI and CDIS *Review*, published to present the Czech defence and security industry at international trade fairs).

He emphasized his appreciation for the long-standing composition of the Representative Editorial Board, comprising representatives of public and state administration, security forces

and their operational units, universities and academic institutions, as well as leading figures of the defence and security industry, banks and insurance companies. He also recalled the very first Editorial Board meeting held in 1999 at the Police Museum of the Czech Republic.

In 2025, four quarterly issues of *Review* were published, bringing a range of valuable information and interviews from state administration representatives as well as numerous articles highlighting innovations and activities of defence and security companies. Increasingly, smaller and medium-sized enterprises are showing strong interest in the magazine. In 2025 alone, more than 100 member companies of AOBP were presented.

Review for the Defence and Security Industry is published in printed Czech edition and in electronic Czech and English versions. Its key mission is to facilitate more effective communication between public and state administration and the domestic defence and security industry.

This year, the magazine will be published on the occasion of major events including

FUTURE FORCES FORUM (where MS Line serves as the main media partner for the Czech Republic), NATO Days & Czech Air Force Days, and the June General Assembly of AOBP, which currently has more than 250 members.

Radka Konderlová, Director General of the Industrial Cooperation Section, Ministry of Defence

Radka Konderlová recalled the seventh year of existence of the Industrial Cooperation Section (SPSp) of the Ministry of Defence and acknowledged Tomáš Kopečný, who initiated substantial work in supporting the defence industry at the Ministry and whose efforts she has continued.

She positively evaluated cooperation with MS Line and highlighted the importance of the *Security and Defence Technologies Catalogue*, which accompanies the Ministry's efforts to promote the Czech defence industry on foreign markets. The increasing number of pages itself reflects the strength and tradition of the

Czech defence and security industry and confirms the significance of the Industrial Cooperation Section.

Last year, one of the most demanding tasks was negotiating industrial cooperation within the acquisition project of the LEOPARD 2A8 main battle tank. An industrial cooperation agreement worth nearly CZK 2 billion was signed, involving at least 12 Czech companies. The Section continues working with the German supplier to further strengthen cooperation, ensuring Czech industry participation not only in tanks delivered to the Czech Republic, but also in tanks supplied to other countries.

Significant progress was also made in negotiations with Lockheed Martin and Pratt & Whitney regarding industrial cooperation within the F-35 supersonic aircraft acquisition project. Lockheed Martin deserves particular recognition for actively seeking new Czech partners. Monitoring and strengthening industrial cooperation across acquisition projects will remain a key focus this year.

Another major area of activity has been the organization of Industrial Days, providing companies with the opportunity to present their capabilities and products to Ministry and Armed Forces representatives. These meetings enable defence structures to gain up-to-date insight into industry direction, potential and R&D trends, while companies receive invaluable feedback to better align products with tactical and operational requirements. A total of 80 Industrial Days were held last year.

In response to the growing trend of joint EU and NATO procurement, the Section, in cooperation with AOBP and ALKP, organizes large-scale Industrial Days with major prime contractors. The goal is to help especially SMEs integrate into large supply chains. The first such event was held with THALES, followed by AIRBUS at the end of the year. In 2026, three major Industrial Days are planned with BOEING, BAE Systems and its divisions, and the Spanish company INDRA. Further large companies have expressed interest.

The Section continues negotiations on major EU and NATO initiatives such as EDIP and the European Defence Fund (EDF), advocating priorities for Czech industry, predominantly composed of SMEs. Negotiations on the EDIP work programme are currently beginning in Brussels.

Significant work is also underway on so-called “omnibus” legislative simplifications aimed at streamlining European regulations to accelerate defence production capacity expansion.

The DefenceHub project, launched in cooperation with CzechInvest, continues to support startups from both the Czech Republic and abroad in dual-use technologies.

In cooperation with EGAP, the Ministry of Industry and Trade, and the Ministry of Finance, a programme supporting financing of Czech defence production capacity expansion was approved. The Section is also in dialogue with the European Investment Bank and other institutions to broaden financing opportunities for defence industry.

Export promotion and trade fair participation remain key priorities. Last year this included IDET; this year support will extend to FUTURE FORCES FORUM. In 2025, 43 projects were supported under the PROPED economic diplomacy programme. Institutional support remains essential for industry success.

René Schreier,

Deputy Minister of Defence

Deputy Minister Schreier paid tribute to Miloš Soukup and his wife for building MS Line over three decades, maintaining the information platform even during periods when defence was perceived merely as an unavoidable expense of the past.

“Today, we all see that security is a fundamental prerequisite for our future,” he stated.

He emphasized that the defence industry no longer needs to apologise for its existence. It is one of the pillars of national sovereignty, as reflected in the Defence Strategy of the Czech Republic. However, sufficient and stable financial backing is an essential precondition for defence capability.

The Czech defence industry has a strong foundation and significant export potential, but without strategic, long-term and systemic domestic support, its impact remains limited. The Ministry must not only secure funding but also ensure capacity to effectively and timely utilise it, including European financial instruments.

“The state and defence industry must not be competitors, but a functional ecosystem.”

He stressed that defence today is not only about steel and ammunition, but also about chips, AI, cybersecurity and drones. The defence and security industry should be a strategic partner of the state, not merely a supplier.

He concluded by expressing confidence that under new leadership, MS Line will continue bridging industry and state, communicating defence in a modern and confident manner.

General Martin Vondrášek,

Police President of the Police of the Czech Republic

“I am pleased to be again in such distinguished company and cannot begin otherwise than by offering my sincere congratulations on the 30th anniversary of the publishing house and the 25th anniversary of the magazine. I would like to pay tribute not only to the Soukup family and their team, but to everyone who has contributed to this achievement over the years. I value the fact that we are part of this family, because in the past the focus was more on the defence industry than on the security sector, with the Police somewhat standing aside.

I had an overview prepared of the contributions published in *Review* over the past three years. In 2023, the Regional Police Directorate in Hradec Králové was presented, as well as an intervention unit. My Deputy for Economics discussed the interaction between the Czech Police and companies from the defence and security industry in the Czech Republic. I also commented on the reach of our social media channels in informing the public about security issues.

In 2024, we had the opportunity to share with readers information about the modernization of training and special equipment, including cooperation with Czech companies. The Police Aviation Service and modern training methods were also presented, and finally the Rapid Deployment Unit (URNA), which operates not only within the Czech Republic but also abroad.

Last year, the Police Presidium introduced a truly unique operational command system of the Police of the Czech Republic, presented the work of police divers, and thanked companies for their assistance in building new facilities at the Brno Reservoir. The Police also introduced the Motorized Emergency Unit, presenting rapid-response motorcycle patrols in Prague.

I would like to assure the editorial team that the Police of the Czech Republic will remain active, will continue contributing articles and will provide space to ensure that Czech companies can succeed in the procurement procedures we announce. We are planning to present at the spring security conference ‘Our Security Is Not a Given,’ in the autumn at NATO Days, as well as at the Future Forces Forum and at the ISET 2027 trade fair.

I look forward to meeting you and wish *Review* many readers and a successful future.”

General Vladimír Vlček,
Director General of the Fire Rescue
Service of the Czech Republic

“I would like to thank you for your long-term and systematic work devoted to developing this important professional platform. At this milestone, however, I must particularly highlight Mr. Miloš Soukup and his wife, without whom we would not be sitting here today and the magazine would not exist.

I am convinced that *Review for the Defence and Security Industry* has, over the course of its existence, built a firm and respected position in the field and has become a genuine bridge between industry, state administration, security forces, academia and foreign partners. This ability to create space for open professional dialogue, the sharing of experience and the presentation of modern technologies is exceptionally valuable in today’s world.

As the security situation in Europe and globally continues to evolve dynamically, it is increasingly clear that we cannot separate external and internal security. These dimensions are becoming ever more intertwined, both in terms of threats and in the technologies, procedures and capabilities employed. The Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic is closely linked to the field of defence and security technologies. Modern equipment, innovation and close cooperation with industrial partners are absolutely crucial for our activities, particularly given the breadth of our responsibilities — from managing large-scale emergencies within the Czech Republic to international deployments under the EU Civil Protection Mechanism.

We are also witnessing how originally military technologies are increasingly applied in the civilian sector, particularly by rescue services operating in extreme and high-risk conditions. We have concrete examples of equipment that is nearly identical in nature — whether bridging systems used by our rescue units, hardened water tankers with ballistic protection, or special vehicles built on unique Tatra chassis.

These examples clearly demonstrate that it makes sense to join forces, share know-how and develop technologies jointly across the defence and security sectors. Cooperation should not be limited only to traditional hardware such as vehicles or material equipment; communication and information systems, data processing, digitalization and rapid, reliable information exchange are equally essential. These areas often determine the effectiveness of operations and ultimately the

safety of both responders and those being rescued.

In this respect, *Review* plays an irreplaceable role. It helps orient readers within the market, track technological trends and provides manufacturers with valuable feedback regarding the real needs and requirements of security forces.

In conclusion, I wish *Review* every success in its next chapter, which I am convinced will be no less significant than the first. I wish the entire Editorial Board many more successful years, inspiring topics and a strong position among the key media outlets of the defence and security sector. May the work carried out through *Review* continue to connect the worlds of security, industry and innovation — to the benefit of us all.”

Dr. Kristýna Helm,
Vice President of AOBP
for International Relations

“At present, AOBP brings together more than 250 members. The world is changing, the structure of the defence and security industry is evolving, and naturally so is our membership base. Our members — the core of the Czech defence and security industry — are growing. Annual reports, new contracts and stock exchange listings confirm that the tradition of the Czech defence industry, reaching back more than a century and heavily damaged in the 1990s, has been successfully rebuilt over the past 25–30 years.

Our mission today is not only to associate companies that manufacture products or have potential in the defence and security sector, but also to create an ecosystem that ensures suitable operating conditions for them. Our membership includes representatives of the banking sector, which not long ago was reluctant to engage with defence industry companies, whereas today banks compete to tailor products to their needs.

At the European and NATO levels, discussions increasingly focus on capacities and maximizing domestic production capabilities. Wherever strategically meaningful, we strive for the Czech Armed Forces to procure from Czech manufacturers, and for manufacturers to source from Czech subcontractors.

In my ten years in this sector, much has changed — company structures, sizes and economic results. One thing, however, has remained constant: trust. We repeatedly meet the same people across platforms, in new projects and within EU and NATO frameworks. For

new companies, entering the defence and security industry without recommendation is difficult.

That is precisely why I mention trust. Our cooperation with MS Line, a family business, reflects this principle. While some may perceive a family enterprise as a disadvantage, the opposite is true. The Czech defence industry includes several highly successful family companies that contribute significantly to the sector. From my perspective, cooperation between AOBP and MS Line has been, is and will continue to be of high quality. We thank you for 25 years of the magazine and 30 years of the publishing house — longer than AOBP itself has existed.”

Šárka Cook,
Managing Director of MS Line

“I would like to thank all new as well as existing members of the Editorial Board for their cooperation and trust, and of course all the companies that work with our publishing house.

To summarize this year’s activities: we continue to publish the printed edition of *Review* quarterly in Czech, while also preparing online versions in both Czech and English. Newly, we have added QR codes to the cover page enabling online download.

In 2017, when the current Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the United States and member of the *Review* Editorial Board, Miloslav Stašek, served as State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he assisted us with distributing the magazine to Czech embassies abroad. This support continues to this day, for which I am sincerely grateful. It significantly contributes to promoting the Czech defence and security industry internationally.

This year, two extraordinary meetings of the Editorial Board were held, both highly beneficial for our publishing house and for the industry as a whole. The meetings took place at the General Directorate of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic and at OPTOKON. I would like to thank the former Director General of the Prison Service, Lieutenant General Simon Michailidis, as well as the Director General of OPTOKON, Jiří Štefl, for giving us the opportunity to gain insight into the functioning of their organizations and to further develop cooperation with industry partners. I believe that similar extraordinary meetings will take place again this year at other institutions and companies.

I would also like to mention the *Security and Defence Technologies Catalogue*, first pub-



lished in 1999 in Czech and English. It is now published exclusively in English for a two-year period. I am pleased that the catalogue is well received by both the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic. Representatives of both ministries use it to present Czech defence and security companies during meetings at home and abroad. This year, our publishing house will distribute the catalogue and promote Czech industry at international exhibitions with official Czech participation — ENFORCETAC, DSA and EUROSATORY in the first half of the year, followed by NATO Days and, in October, the FUTURE FORCES FORUM.

We are currently beginning preparations for the next edition of the *Defence and Security Technologies Catalogue 2027–2028*, with planned distribution and official launch at the Annual Meeting of the *Review* Editorial Board in mid-January 2027.”

Brigadier General Petr Červený,

Deputy Director General of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic for Security, Control and Legal Affairs

“On behalf of the Director General of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic, Major General Tomáš Hůlka, I would like to thank the

publishing house for the space it provides to us. The Prison Service has been featured in *Review* several times in the past, and we truly appreciate it, as we are not a uniformed service as visible as the Police or the Fire Rescue Service. Nevertheless, we are no less important and are indispensable to society.

The Prison Service is no longer the ‘Cinderella’ waiting for what remains. Recently, we have been defining the parameters of the equipment and technologies we intend to procure and use. I am looking forward to the replacement of service short firearms. We currently have an approved development concept through 2035, in which the implementation and acquisition of new technologies represent a key pillar.

We are primarily focusing on technologies such as drones, detection systems, systems for detecting unauthorized movement of inmates, weapons, drugs and communication devices. Communication technology is also a priority, as we plan to modernize internal communication systems within prisons by purchasing new radio equipment.

Drones are a phenomenon of today’s world, and we are fully aware of that. Drone technology makes it possible to deliver virtually anything into prison facilities, which is a serious concern. Therefore, we are concentrating on both drone and counter-drone protection sys-

tems. Several of our organizational units have already tested such systems.

Given the shortage of personnel — we currently have approximately 12,000 officers and civilian employees — we would like to delegate routine activities such as perimeter monitoring to modern detection technologies capable of performing these tasks for us.

We are also interested in information technologies, particularly in the field of communications. Across all organizational units, we are introducing information kiosks aimed at responding effectively and promptly to the needs of both staff and inmates.

I would like to thank everyone willing and able to cooperate with us in this regard. Please continue to support us — we will need it.”

Major General Petr Ošlejšek,

Deputy Director General of the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic for Integrated Rescue System and Operations

“I will add only a few brief remarks, as the Director General has already said everything essential. I would, however, like to express my appreciation for the existence of a magazine such as *Review*. We also strive to present our activities in it.



I perceive the magazine as a platform for a non-confrontational exchange of information about what individual security forces and components involved in safeguarding the Czech Republic are planning, what their expectations are, and how industry can respond to them. It allows both sides to learn about market developments and about potential requirements and expectations related to acquisitions. Such communication is crucial. Security is one; the territory of the Czech Republic is one; the population is one; and the infrastructure is one. The events unfolding in Ukraine remind us that defence cannot be separated from the population, infrastructure or territory. Modern conflicts are no longer fought in the same way as during the First or Second World War. They involve battles for infrastructure, information dominance and also disinformation. This dimension runs through the entire security sector — gaining the trust of the population and ensuring the functioning of infrastructure. A non-military security service inevitably intersects with armed components, and information exchange is essential. The Fire Rescue Service can draw inspiration from defence technologies, whether in terms of hardware or operational procedures. Combat and rescue missions often take place under similar conditions, albeit with different influencing

factors. Unfortunately, we are witnessing that rescue missions may also occur in combat environments, which represents a new reality. Recent events, including those two years ago and even as recently as yesterday (19 January), have shown that firefighters themselves may become targets. In this context, we can learn from the defence sector and adopt certain technologies — for example ballistic protection — which were previously unimaginable for us. Our system is highly developed, but if we are to use drones effectively, we must also learn how to defend against them. These are precisely the areas where we can exchange experience. We would like to introduce so-called 'industry days,' inspired by the Ministry of Defence's established system of communication with industry that respects public procurement rules. We are planning similar initiatives in the future, including joint procurements. Two years ago, for the first time in history, a joint procurement of fire tankers for civilian and military firefighters was conducted. It proved highly successful, and I believe this cooperation will continue. I wish the new Managing Director of this long-standing publishing house every success in further advancing the magazine and promoting Czech companies, just as successfully as its founders have done."

Mgr. Jiří Protiva,

President of ALKP, Director of LOM PRAHA and Vice Chairman of the Review Editorial Board

"I join in congratulating the publishing house and the magazine on their 30th and 25th anniversaries. I would also like to emphasize that this platform — and the way you have built it as a family business — shapes not only business relationships but also personal friendships. I am very pleased to be part of this community, as it allows open discussion not only with representatives of industry but also with state and public administration. My role as Vice Chairman of the Editorial Board, from the perspective of President of ALKP and Director of a state-owned enterprise, carries two positive messages. First, state enterprises must also be regarded as part of the business environment, and I am pleased that they are an integral component of the defence and security community. Second, it reflects our ability to communicate within and across associations. I would therefore like to thank AOBP for our mutual cooperation and for the fact that we are able to work together, even though AOBP represents a broader industrial base, while ALKP is more specialized, focusing on the aerospace sector.

The Czech aerospace industry was once perceived as somewhat marginal. Today, however, it is clear that this is far from the case. On the contrary, it is a sector employing highly qualified professionals with significant export potential. Czech companies are integrated into major European and Allied supply chains. I often repeat the motto, 'What we have at home counts,' because supporting domestic industry should not be merely a matter of principle — that national automatically means good — but a practical, secure, sustainable and ultimately cost-effective approach. This is a point that must be consistently emphasized.

The Czech aerospace industry is also specific in that 85–90 % of its production is exported. Domestic demand alone cannot sustain it. We therefore need strong support at home as well as in export markets. State support for the aerospace industry is extremely important. This is evident at major international trade fairs organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or the Ministry of Transport. When accompanied by a representative of the state — ideally, in the case of defence technologies, someone 'with a general's star' — it significantly strengthens business opportunities abroad.

On behalf of LOM PRAHA, I would like to stress one important point. My aim is to position the enterprise as a bridge between the state and business, ensuring that state-owned companies are not primarily competitors, but rather integrators of Czech solutions in the interest of the state — preserving know-how and, in many cases, handling business activities that the state requires but which the private sector may not undertake alone.

In conclusion, as the Deputy Minister of Defence mentioned earlier, industry should not be seen merely as a supplier, but as a partner. We should build capabilities together and not remain just an item in a procurement procedure."

Mgr. Pavel Balihar,

Director of the Licensing Administration, Ministry of Industry and Trade

"I have worked at the Licensing Administration since 2011, and as a recipient of this magazine I regularly read it. I can confirm its quality and am honored to become a new member of the Editorial Board.

In terms of assessment, although we do not yet have precise figures for last year's exports,

I would venture to say that 2025 was as successful as the year before — if not more so. This success was partly supported by the state administration, which assisted industry in certain transactions.

The Licensing Administration is sometimes perceived negatively, as are other institutions involved in authorization processes. Nevertheless, our role is to help protect your reputation and prevent inclusion on sanctions lists, thereby ensuring that business can continue. When I suggest that last year was equally or even more successful, I base this on the fact that we issued significantly more permits and licenses than in the previous year."

PhDr. Tomáš Kopečný,

Former Government Commissioner for the Reconstruction of Ukraine and Deputy Minister of Defence

"I can also confirm that this gathering truly provides a space where, for decades, people have met, formed friendships and developed very important and strategic partnerships.

General Ošlejšek highlighted an aspect that we see very vividly in Ukraine and, indeed, in all conflicts. Armies win battles, but societies win wars. Security concerns society as a whole. Only when the entire society — the private sector, the broader public and the individual security services — comes together does the system function effectively.

I am pleased to see increasing activity, whether in the form of industry days organized by the Fire Rescue Service, cooperation with domestic firms by the Police, or exercises and communication with industry regarding expectations in the security domain. Rescue missions conducted in combat conditions naturally alter capability development plans. The security situation is deteriorating year by year, and the crisis is moving closer to us.

As a citizen and as a defence industry expert now outside state service, I am glad that this reality is reflected within our security forces and companies. That is the only way we can protect ourselves if the state faces a major crisis. It is entirely natural that the Fire Rescue Service addresses ballistic protection and drones. We are approaching a moment when the preparedness of all uniformed services will determine whether Czech society lives more securely or not.

Let me mention three areas: ammunition, heavy combat equipment, radar systems, engines and electronic warfare systems. For the past 10–20 years, we have rightly been proud

of these capabilities. But only in recent years have Czech companies become European leaders in these fields. We now deliver the largest volumes in several of these systems. Half of the artillery ammunition used by Ukraine — where global consumption is currently highest — passes through a Czech system. Production capacities for jet engines represent technological world-class standards and are growing in importance for European allies.

Two points on preparing for crises:

First, operational preparedness. Companies and state components — the armed forces, firefighters and police — must train together. They must prepare for scenarios such as cyber or kinetic attacks, or drone swarms targeting companies that manufacture critical defence products. It is essential to clarify what can be expected from the police, firefighters and armed forces, and what companies must handle independently.

Second, industrial preparedness in terms of production capacity. The three security services alone will not generate sufficient demand for companies to scale up to wartime production. Export is therefore crucial. The most significant opportunity lies in a rearming Europe. How the Czech Armed Forces manage this will depend heavily on domestic political dialogue, government decisions and future plans. Across Europe, we observe countries allocating multiples of their previous defence budgets compared to the Czech Republic — including Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, Norway, the Baltic states and Finland. These markets will again require the production capacities of Czech manufacturers. This is preparation for their crisis — and ours.

With this optimistic outlook for Czech companies, I would like to thank you for the invitation and wish the publishing house every success."

Conclusion

Several speakers emphasized the role of *Review* as a publication that significantly contributes to linking virtually all security and rescue components. It was also highlighted that there is no comparable publication offering such a comprehensive overview within a single magazine, enabling interested readers to gain insight across technological development, company portfolios, foreign policy, security issues, critical infrastructure and crisis management.

Prepared by Šárka Cook

Photo: Jan Schejbal, MO CR, Lauren Imari Cooková



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