



NATO Focuses on Special Forces: Thales and Leonardo to Develop New Mobile Command Posts for SOFCOM

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NATO takes a new step in strengthening its **Special Forces** by entrusting the consortium formed by **Thales** and **Leonardo** with the creation of a new generation of mobile command, control, and communication systems for the **Allied Special Operations Forces Command (SOFCOM)**. The program, awarded by the **NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA)**, represents the first piece of a broader plan aimed at modernizing the operational capabilities of the Alliance's special units.

The new contract awarded to **Thales and Leonardo** is not an isolated initiative. It is part of a broader strategy with which NATO is renewing its digital architecture, both at the strategic and operational levels.

In recent days, we reported how the Alliance entrusted **Accenture and Leonardo** with the **Protected Business Network (PBN) program**, the future classified cloud infrastructure of NATO intended for about 29,000 users. That project will constitute the Alliance's digital backbone, introducing a secure, resilient multi-cloud environment based on the **Zero Trust** model, gradually replacing legacy infrastructures.

Six Deployable Command Posts for Special Operations

The contract does not concern new weapons or combat vehicles, but an often invisible and decisive element in special operations: **the ability to communicate, share information, and command a mission anywhere in the world, securely and resiliently.**

The program provides for the supply of **six Deployable Points of Presence for Special Operations Component Commands (DPOP SOCC)**, true **mobile headquarters** designed to accompany Special Forces in operations.

These systems will be able to be rapidly deployed and will offer:

- deployable IT infrastructures;
- classified communication networks;
- command and control (C2) systems;
- high-performance processing capabilities;
- secure exchange of operational data between different domains;
- continuous support throughout the system's lifecycle.

Why They Are Essential for Special Forces

Modern special operations are increasingly dependent on the speed with which information is collected, processed, and distributed.

A team of raiders may find themselves operating hundreds of kilometers behind enemy lines, coordinating drones, air assets, electronic warfare, and intelligence from satellites and ground sensors. In this context, advanced command becomes the node that connects all these elements, allowing decisions to be made in seconds.

NATO's goal is to ensure that such capabilities can be rapidly deployed wherever needed, maintaining secure communications even in environments characterized by strong electronic jamming or cyber threats.

Real-Time Video Directly from the Field

One of the most innovative aspects of the program is the ability to share, in real-time, **Full Motion Video (FMV)** between deployed units.

For Special Forces, this means being able to immediately receive images from:

- tactical drones;
- manned aircraft;
- advanced sensors;
- other operational elements on the ground.

The availability of a shared video stream increases situational awareness and allows commanders to quickly adapt the operational plan to the evolving mission.

The War in Ukraine Has Accelerated This Transformation

The conflict in Ukraine has shown how the information domain is now as decisive as the land, naval, or air domains.

Special Forces now operate in a scenario characterized by:

- continuous surveillance;
- massive use of drones;
- electronic warfare;
- cyber attacks;
- the need to share real-time data with assets belonging to different nations.

For this reason, NATO is investing not only in the individual equipment of operators but especially in the digital infrastructures that allow special units to operate as a single integrated force.

A Strategic Investment for the Future of SOF

The program entrusted to Thales and Leonardo represents the first step of a broader NATO initiative aimed at renewing the entire communication architecture of SOFCOM.

The ultimate goal is to provide the Alliance's Special Forces with a modern, scalable, and interoperable command network capable of supporting high-intensity operations in any operational theater.

In an increasingly unstable international context, the advantage of Special Forces will not only depend on the quality of the operators but also on the ability to connect men, sensors, and weapon systems into a single secure and resilient network. This is precisely the direction NATO is taking with the new program intended for SOFCOM.

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