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A sharper focus: Rheinmetall Electro-Optics premieres at DSEi 2011

Rheinmetall Defence has welded its electro-optical activities into a new division. Known as Rheinmetall Electro-Optics, the division has now made its international debut at this year's DSEi fair in London.

Along with the electro-optical and fire control solutions supplied by the Group's Defence Electronics division, Rheinmetall customers can now build on the new division's innovative array of state-of-the-art electro-optical components and expert technical support too. Moreover, with a whole host of powerful technologies at its disposal, Rheinmetall Electro-Optics is already a market leader in important product categories.

Rheinmetall Electro-Optics consists of previously separate units of the Rheinmetall Group active in this segment, which have now been amalgamated to form a self-contained division. Specifically, it comprises:

- Rheinmetall Nordic, the former Simrad Optronics ASA, which has been a member of the Rheinmetall Group since June 2010. Headquartered in Nøtterøy, Norway, together with Vinghøg, the biggest subsidiary, it is an internationally operating supplier of components for remote control weapon stations, electro-optical devices and fire control modules for crew-served weapons.
- Vingtech Corporation in Biddeford, Maine, USA, a leading mechanical and electro-optical company which produces components for, among other things, remote weapon stations.
- Rheinmetall Soldier Electronics GmbH of Stockach, Germany, the Group's specialist for infantry equipment, especially laser aiming devices.
- Units of Rheinmetall Defence Electronics based in Bremen and Ismaning engaged in the development and fabrication of thermal image devices, daylight cameras and laser rangefinders.
- Industrial Laser Electronics and Engineering AG (I.L.E.E.) of Urdorf, Switzerland, which specializes in industrial and military laser applications.

Bringing together the expertise of these companies has resulted in a comprehensive portfolio of products, creating a supplier that is already on the cutting edge of the global market.

Besides end customers in the armed forces and security services, the division primarily serves manufacturers of small arms and makers of military vehicles. By adopting a systematic component strategy for all important products, Rheinmetall Electro-Optics is counting on better market access as well as being able to offer customers a comprehensive range of products from a single source.

Rheinmetall Electro-Optics products fall into three categories:

- **Dismounted soldier products:** These are products specifically designed for infantry and dismounted operations in general, including tactical lamps, laser light modules like the Vario Ray as well as identification friend/foe technology, night sights, night vision goggles and the FeLVis fire control unit.
- **Sensor products:** These include thermal imaging devices such as the Saphir 2.0 or Saphir 9.6, panoramic vision sensors and daylight cameras such as VIM or HVK4/5, and laser range finders (e.g. Vingrange).
- **Observation and fire control units:** Fire control technology for 40mm grenade launchers, light antitank weapons and other crew-served weapons as well as long-range observation, monitoring and reconnaissance systems. Prominent examples are the Vingmate fire control unit, the observation, surveillance and target acquisition system Vingtaqs II, and the target laser designator TYR.

Well positioned to respond to market trends

As a complete, 360° supplier of electro-optical systems and components, Rheinmetall Electro-Optics is already able to respond flexibly to emerging market trends, taking full advantage of current and future opportunities.

Today, military customers increasingly insist on sensors and fire control units with more powerful performance parameters. These enable them to operate at a greater standoff and thus play a critical role in force protection. This goes hand in hand with the requirement for enhanced precision as well as improved day- and night-time vision capabilities.

In future, heightened demand for electro-optical products is likely to come from non-military quarters as well, such as agencies tasked with border security or special law enforcement units.

Moreover, the new division will enable Rheinmetall to respond more readily than before to growing demand for larger-volume low-cost solutions, too. The Group is also particularly well prepared to meet market demand for laser aiming devices with expanded functions as well as for improved digital image processing capabilities.

In the medium-calibre segment, Rheinmetall is already benefiting from the trend toward high-tech fire control unit solutions, e.g. for 40mm grenade launchers.

At the same time, Rheinmetall will continue to focus on upgrading the operational effectiveness of legacy components as well, modifying them at reasonable cost to meet the challenges of contemporary asymmetric warfare.

Rheinmetall Defence: totally oriented to today's military

With its Electro-Optics, Defence Electronics, Simulation and Training, Vehicle Systems, Air Defence, Weapons and Munitions, and Propellants divisions, Rheinmetall Defence supplies the world's armed forces with systems and equipment systematically designed to assure successful outcomes in complex modern military operations.

With some 9,000 employees working around the globe, Rheinmetall's defence technology arm generated sales in 2010 of around €2 billion.

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