

Sofradir acquires infrared technologies from Safran and Thales

By acquiring the technologies of Safran, Thales and the GIE III-V Lab (Thales, Alcatel-Lucent, CEA), Sofradir consolidates French infrared (IR) technologies under one roof, bolstering its capabilities in the imaging sector

Sofradir will own the complete portfolio of infrared technologies: HgCdTe, InSb, QWIP and InGaAs

Paris and Châtenay-Malabry, 30 November, 2012

Sofradir and its two shareholders Safran and Thales announce today the reinforcement of Sofradir's technological portfolio through the acquisition of three infrared technologies from Safran and the GIE III-V Lab, an economic interest group with partners Alcatel Lucent, Thales and research institute CEA (the French nuclear energy and alternate energies commission). The transfer aims to strengthen Europe's technology base for IR detectors, for which price and performance are key to the competitiveness of optronics systems.

Under the agreement, Sagem Défense Sécurité, a Safran company, will transfer to Sofradir the Indium Antimonide (InSb) technology and from the III-V Lab the Quantum Well-Infrared Photodetector (QWIP) and Indium Gallium Arsenide (InGaAs) technologies. The acquisition will reinforce Sofradir's position in the open international market due to the expansion of its spectrum of applications. In addition, it will provide Sofradir sustainable growth as a result of its complementary and holistic product offer.

IR detectors are key components in thermal imagers, missile seekers, space sensors, and increasingly used in surveillance applications. Sofradir is ranked number one in the IR imaging market for volume deliveries of a key class of IR detector based on a compound semiconductor technology, Mercury Cadmium Telluride, (MCT or HgCdTe). Sofradir joins a very small circle of IR detector manufacturers that owns the entire range of IR technologies.

Luc Vigneron, Thales Chairman and CEO, praised the agreement that underscores Thales' efforts to create value around its key technological industries and to see the results of years of research initially carried out by Thales, then by the III-V Lab, further enhanced. "Sofradir is an excellent technology company that will know how to take these IR activities to the next level," he said. "It will be able to draw the full benefits of the technical synergies to create different IR technology sectors."

Safran Chairman and CEO Jean-Paul Herteman

"Safran and III-V Lab's transfer of its infrared technologies to Sofradir will enable us to develop new best-in-class IR products using the technology best-adapted to each customer's need," said Philippe Bensussan, chairman and CEO of Sofradir.

“The market can look forward to imaging products offering more innovation, performance, and compactness across the entire range of IR technologies. Between Sofradir and our subsidiary ULIS, we will offer all the IR technologies and products the market needs.”

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***Safran** is a leading international high-technology group with three core businesses: Aerospace (propulsion and equipment), Defence and Security. Operating worldwide, the Safran group has more than 60,000 employees and generated sales of 11.7 billion euros in 2011. Working alone or in partnership, Safran holds world or European leadership positions in its core markets. The Group invests heavily in Research & Development to meet the requirements of changing markets, including expenditures of 1.3 billion euros in 2011. Safran is listed on NYSE Euronext Paris and its share is part of the CAC 40 index.*

For more information, www.safran-group.com / Follow @SAFRAN on Twitter

***Thales** is a global technology leader for the Defence & Security and the Aerospace & Transport markets. In 2011, the company generated revenues of €13 billion with 67,000 employees in 56 countries. With its 22,500 engineers and researchers, Thales has a unique capability to design, develop and deploy equipment, systems and services that meet the most complex security requirements. Thales has an exceptional international footprint, with operations around the world working with customers as local partners.*

For more information, www.thalesgroup.com

***Sofradir** is the number one developer and manufacturer of a key class of infrared (IR) detectors for military, space and industrial applications. It specializes in cooled IR detectors based on a sophisticated high performance technology, Mercury Cadmium Telluride (MCT) to which the InSb, InGaAs and QWIP technologies are now added. Its vast product portfolio of scanning and staring arrays covers the entire infrared spectrum.*

Sofradir's headquarters are located in Châtenay-Malabry, near Paris, France. Its manufacturing facilities and those of ULIS, its subsidiary that manufactures mass volume uncooled IR detectors, are located in Veurey-Voroize, near Grenoble, France. Sofradir EC, the company's US subsidiary, operates in Fairfield, NJ. In 2011, annual sales for the Sofradir Group, which includes subsidiaries ULIS and Sofradir EC, reached EUR 150M, two-thirds in exports around the world. Sofradir, ULIS and Sofradir EC employ more than 650 people.

For more information, www.sofradir.com

Safran press contacts:

Press

Catherine Malek

+33 (0)1 40 60 80 28

catherine.malek@safran.fr

Analyst & investor

Pascal Bantegnie +33 (0)1 40 60 80 45 pascal.bantegnie@safran.fr
Antoine-Pierre de Grammont +33 (0)1 40 60 80 47 antoine-pierre.degrammont@safran.fr

Sofradir press contact:

Press

Andrew Lloyd & Associates
Carol Leslie +44 1273 67 51 00 carol@ala.com

Thales press contacts:

Press

Alexandre Perra +33 (0)1 57 77 87 27 alexandre.perra@thalesgroup.com

Analyst & investor

Jean-Claude Climeau +33 (0)1 57 77 89 02 ir@thalesgroup.com