

Feature Story

Second major phase of Currawong project completed

April 09, 2020

The second of three releases of Boeing Defence Australia's Project Currawong battlespace communications system was completed this month with the Commonwealth signing off on the System Acceptance Audit for Release 2.

Comprising significant software and hardware components, Release 2 includes the deployment of the External Network Access Point (ENAP) which, for the first time, allows the Australian Defence Force (ADF) to securely communicate using untrusted, public networks, such as the internet.

The release also includes the Troposcatter Communication System which uses particles in the earth's atmosphere to reflect communications signals to enable them to travel beyond line-of-sight.

"Completion of Release 2 provides significant battlefield communication capability not previously available to the ADF," said Project Currawong program director, Ian Vett.

"Innovations such as the ENAP are ground-breaking. It eliminates the traditional restriction of needing to use specific Australian bearers, giving deployed forces the ability to securely communicate in remote and hostile environments."

Testament to Project Currawong's agile development methodology, which enables components to be continually evolved and adapted throughout the development process, the ENAP uses modern standards which were not yet available when the system requirements were written.

"One of our core objectives when developing the Currawong system was to reduce the size, weight and power requirements of communications devices which keep troops in the field connected to headquarters and to each other," said Vett.

"Release 1 provided the core black network within man-portable units. Release 2 increases capability by introducing more powerful transmission bearers which seamlessly interconnect to ensure that should one connection fail, the system will instantly and automatically link to another, without interruption to the flow of communication – whether that be a voice conversation, data or video.

"Both the Mission System Manager user interface and routing software developed in Release 1 were also significantly upgraded in Release 2 to improve capability and utility."

Boeing Defence Australia's Project Currawong is delivering a next generation battlespace communication system to the ADF. It is designed and developed in Australia by Australians and provides

fast, reliable and secure wideband voice, data and video services over wireless and wired infrastructure between headquarters and land-based Australian Defence Forces deployed around the world.