



## **Sofradir and Onera sign new partnership agreement to create disruptive technology advantages in infrared detection**

**The partners' combined strengths in aerospace and defense research and industrial know-how will facilitate the paradigm shift necessary for innovation uptake in thermal imaging**

**Chatenay-Malabry and Palaiseau, near Paris – October 07, 2013** – Sofradir, a leading developer of key classes of advanced infrared detectors for military, space and industrial applications, and Onera, the French Aerospace Lab, today announce a new research and innovation partnership.

The partners have committed to a five-year project aimed at developing disruptive technologies in infrared detection in order to provide OEMs with more highly advanced capabilities in thermal imaging. The innovations will also enable equipment makers to address future expectations in the performance of optonics systems, where infrared detection is key. In addition, the project aims to accelerate the transfer of Onera's research to Sofradir, thereby increasing the global market competitiveness of Sofradir and its customers.

IR detectors are advanced technology components at the center of multiple military, space, commercial and scientific applications: thermal imagers, missile seekers, surveillance systems, targeting systems or observation satellites. Their performance and price are critical to the competitiveness of optonics systems.

"Sofradir and Onera are collaborating once again to break down the technological barriers in infrared by exploring new possibilities in optical integration and other techniques," said Philippe Bensussan, chairman and CEO of Sofradir. "Onera is known for its vision, vast knowledge and expertise in aerospace and defense system design. We are excited about leading future developments in IR detection. We have high expectations about what these advantages will bring to our customers who design optonics systems for defense, space and commercial applications."

The project involves transferring emerging technologies and know-how from Onera, making them ready for industrial processing. The team will carry out research on and develop new techniques for infrared detectors, such as integrated optics, greater compactness, improved functionality and performance of thermal imaging equipment.

"This Partner Research Innovation agreement is further evidence of industry's strong interest in Onera's advanced research," said Thierry Michal, acting managing technical director at Onera. "The long-term commitment Sofradir and Onera are giving this project will pave the way for major technological advances."

Sofradir and Onera have previously successfully collaborated on other research projects involving infrared detection. This Partner Research Innovation (PRI) agreement, a new type of French public-private contract enabling the transfer of technology and know-how from Onera to industry, is the first the two organizations have signed together.

## About Sofradir

Sofradir is the leading developer and manufacturer of highly advanced infrared (IR) detectors for military, space and industrial applications. Its vast IR product portfolio covers the entire infrared spectrum from the visible and near infrared to very far infrared. Sofradir pioneers developments in cooled IR detectors based on a sophisticated high performance technology, Mercury Cadmium Telluride (MCT) to which Indium Antimonide (InSb), Indium Gallium Arsenide (InGaAs) and Quantum Well Infrared Photodetector (QWIP) technologies are now added. Many of the world's missile seekers, targeting pods, armored vehicle cameras, handheld goggles and other airborne, naval and ground vehicle applications use Sofradir's military-grade, battlefield proven IR equipment. Sofradir holds the unique position as the only maker of IR detectors in Europe to be space-qualified.

Founded in 1986, Sofradir's headquarters are located in Chatenay-Malabry, near Paris, France. It carries out high volume manufacturing in plants at Veurey-Voroize, near Grenoble, France, Argenteuil and Palaiseau, near Paris. Sofradir owns two subsidiaries: ULIS, a manufacturer of mass volume microbolometers based in Veurey-Voroize and US-based Sofradir EC, a provider of IR imaging cores and engines, located in Fairfield, NJ. Together Sofradir, ULIS and Sofradir EC employ 700 people with 2012 sales of more than US\$ 200.

## About Onera

Onera is the leading aerospace and defense research and technology organization in France. A public establishment created in 1946, it reports to the French Ministry of Defense. Onera has 2,100 employees with 263 doctoral candidates. Onera is the only organization in France to unite the knowledge and expertise needed for all aerospace disciplines. Offering a fleet of experimental facilities unrivaled in Europe, Onera works for both government and industry, spanning major corporations and small businesses. In 2012, Onera generated a business volume of EUR 243 million. Onera is a recognized source of innovative solutions, technical expertise and long-term design vision. It has contributed to some of today's most successful aerospace and defense programs, including the Ariane 5 launcher, Airbus jetliners, Eurocopter helicopters, the Rafale fighter, the Falcon 7X business jet, the Graves space surveillance radar, the Very Large Telescope and much more.

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