Yusuf Sabadia, Director of Business Development, Sabtech Europe

Sabtech has been meeting the needs of military forces around the globe with innovative, highly reliable products including specialized interface boards, rugged computer systems, test equipment, and other critical components for major combat and C4ISR systems.

Q: What makes Tactical Data Links as used in C2/C4ISR platforms by Naval Forces different from even the most advanced equipment used by civilians, industry, or even other branches of the military?
A: The main aspects of Tactical Data Links (TDLs) is that the protocol is able to support all critical data communication needs for C2, C4ISR and C5ISR specific applications, and that the channel of communication is structured to be highly reliable, real-time, secure (encrypted) and ruggedized for extreme environmental conditions.

Q: What are the particular challenges of integrating new systems with legacy systems and how is Sabtech overcoming these challenges?
A: As technological leaps are now driven more and more by commercial market needs, military systems are now working at two very different speeds of technology adaptation. In the data communication field, the common backbone system used onboard ships are distinguished by the fact that they are more stable, reliable and longer-lived, as is the case with legacy systems such as Link 11 and backplane NTDS/ATDS TDL. However, where high performance front end and embedded systems are needed, the latest cutting-edge technology must be integrated. The problem is that the change-cycle for these systems is relatively fast. The challenge of course is the ability to integrate these two different generational technologies and therefore be able to translate protocols from one communication network system to the other.
Q: Within what you are at liberty to disclose of course, what types of equipment does Sabtech provide and what programs do you support?
A: Sabtech has been providing advanced technology solutions for C5ISR (command, control, communications, combat, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) applications for 30 years. Sabtech designs Custom Chip Sets, FPGA’s, ASIC’s, Board Level Products, Custom Software, and Systems. Sabtech technology is deployed by U.S. and Allied forces worldwide in Surface Ships, Submarines, Mobile Ground Forces, Satellites, UAV’s, and Airborne Systems. Sabtech provides payload and data I/O solutions for NTDS, Ethernet, 1553, and other protocols. Sabtech also provides solutions for the replacement of legacy systems that can no longer be maintained or procured, ensuring these systems can be cost-effectively supported well into the future.

Sabtech’s solutions are being integrated in Combat and C4ISR systems in 30 countries around the world. Here are some of the programs supported by Sabtech’s solutions, you can find a more extensive declassified list of on our website.

Surface Weapon Systems
- Aegis DDG/CG Modernization & Open Architecture (United States, Australia, Japan, S. Korea, Spain & Norway)
- Gun Fire Control System (MK-160)
- TACTICOS Combat Management System Upgrade (Royal Malaysian Navy)
- Guardian Combat Management System (MOD Netherlands)
- Australian Frigate Upgrade
- Brazilian Inhaima Class Corvettes
- F-100 Class FFG (Spain)

C4ISR Systems
- Global Command & Control System – Maritime (GCCS-M)
- Maritime Command & Control Information System (MCCIS)
- Navigation Sensor System Interface (NAVSSI)
- Computer Aided Dead Reckoning Tracer
- Advanced Network
- Electronic Warfare SLQ-32 (Including Omnisys Thales Brazil)
- Vigilair Biological Defense System (Australia)

Submarine Weapon Systems
- Combat Control System (CCS MK2) Including Australia’s Collins Class Submarines with Thales Advanced Sonar
- Weapons Control System (BYG-1/2)
- Tactical Tomahawk Weapons Control System
- HMS Astute Class SSN (United Kingdom)

Q: Is that made to Spec under contract, or Commercial-Off-The-Shelf, or both?
A: Most of the solutions that we develop are usually referred to as “Commercial-Off-The-Shelf,” these solutions are developed around customers’ specific needs and we often bundle these requirements into cost-effective standard products that are then available off-the-shelf, so in our case, you could also define COTS to mean “Customised-Off-The-Shelf.”

Beyond our line of COTS products, we also provide engineering services and support for many ship onboard and laboratory based modernisation projects and programs.

Q: Briefly, what is it that is unique about your Systems? What is it that you feel that Sabtech does differently than your competition?
A: Sabtech is very customer centric and this reflects in everything that we do. We provide very high quality and reliable products based on dependable legacy and cutting-edge technologies. Furthermore, we provide very prompt and consistent technical and after-sales support. We always keep in mind that the men and women of the armed forces need to rely on their mission-critical systems, especially when exposed to extreme situations.

Q: What kind of feedback have you received from fleet or unit commanders, or from individual operators who have used your systems?
A: We have received numerous letters of gratitude and commendations from our customers, especially from commanders and prime contractors. For example in 2010, we received the Star Supplier Award from Lockheed Martin for our product quality, delivery time, support and service. In another example, the US Department of the Navy expressed its gratitude in the following terms: “The rapid and outstanding support provided by your team was key to correcting the problem and ensuring that USS Dwight D. Eisenhower could get underway with a functional combat system.” Although we have high customer satisfaction, we are all too aware that there is always room for improvement, especially when dealing with critical C2/C4ISR systems.

Q: Without revealing anything that may be proprietary, what is next for Sabtech in terms of upgrading C4ISR technologies for today’s warfighters?
A: Sabtech continuously provides more value for its current line of products such as for its NTDS, ATDS and MIL-STD-1553 boards. We are also expanding our range of legacy to open architecture gateway products, such as the PowerNet™ line of NTDS, ATDS, MIL-STD-1553 to Ethernet converters. We are also expanding our range of specialized Naval legacy system replacement products as the world’s navies continue to modernise their fleet. And more importantly, Sabtech will be introducing a whole range of new and exciting products, some of which are at an advanced stage of development and others are further down our roadmap. So stay tuned to Sabtech’s forthcoming releases.

For more information visit: www.sabtech.com