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## Innovation: Thales continues to invest in 3D printing



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**Thales has given the official go-ahead for the creation of a new industrial competence centre specialising in metal additive manufacturing (3D printing) in Casablanca. The initiative is part of Thales's broader cooperation with Morocco.**

This project is fully in line with the 2014-2020 Industrial Acceleration Plan launched by the Moroccan authorities, which supports the development of an innovative ecosystem involving Thales and its local suppliers. The creation of a high-tech industrial competence centre is one of three main areas of cooperation between Thales and Morocco.

With additive manufacturing, components can be produced with more complex internal structures than is possible with conventional processes, and time to market is also shorter. The 3D printing technology adopted by Thales involves melting successive layers of metal alloy powders using a high-intensity laser beam.

3D printing will reduce the time it takes to develop and manufacture high-value parts in complex metal alloys for aerospace and space applications. Thales's expertise in the materials, processes and requirements specific to the aerospace and space sectors will enable the technology to reach maturity more quickly. With its proven industrial processes and manufacturing capabilities, the new competence centre is a further step in Thales's ongoing pre-product investment programme designed to promote the use of this innovative technology in France and other countries of operation.

### Key points

- New industrial competence centre in Morocco, with capabilities spanning all aspects of 3D metal printing.
- Additive manufacturing is a real technological revolution for the design and production of mechanical parts.
- The project is part of Thales's broader cooperation with Morocco.

The project will begin in 2016, and the 3D printing facility will be fully operational as of 2018.

### Additive manufacturing\*

Additive manufacturing is the process of turning a 3D computer model into a physical object by depositing successive layers of a material. It encompasses computer-aided design, engineering and manufacturing technologies as well as material science.

### Thales in Morocco

Thales has a long-standing partnership with Morocco. The company opened its local office in Rabat in 2006 and is active in Morocco in defence, aerospace, transportation and security. Key references include:

- In security, Thales is supplying the country's biometric national identity card, based on contactless smartcard technology.
- In transportation, Thales is deploying a global system for mobile communications (GSM-R) on five lines of Morocco's national rail network as well as signalling solutions on the Taourirt-Beni Ansar line.
- In aerospace, Thales has supplied air navigation aids for the Moroccan airports authority (ONDA).
- In defence, Thales is providing combat systems for Morocco's SIGMA-class corvettes and communication systems and a sonar suite for the FREMM frigate Mohammed VI.

In April 2013, Thales and Rabat International University signed a partnership agreement in aerospace, space and cybersecurity to support technological innovation through training and research.

### About Thales

Thales is a global technology leader in the Aerospace, Transportation, Defence and Security markets. In 2014, the company generated revenues of €13 billion with 61,000 employees in 56 countries. With over 20,000 engineers and researchers, Thales has a unique capability to design and deploy equipment, systems and services to meet the most complex security requirements. Its unique international footprint allows it to work closely with its customers all over the world.

*"This competence centre will give us access to a highly capable ecosystem of industrial suppliers specialising in mechanical parts; helping us meet all our requirements in terms of material, performance and reproducibility for the aerospace and space markets."*

**Pierre Prigent**, Thales Country Director in Morocco.

*"This project consolidates Morocco's position as a key industrial platform, expanding our aerospace ecosystem to include a new technology that will undoubtedly shape the future of the aerospace industry."*

**Moulay Hafid Elalamy**, Minister of Industry, Trade, Investment and the Digital Economy

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