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HGH sells SPYNEL-X for drone detection on unmanned surface vehicles, helping keep ships safe in high-risk waters

November 3rd 2026, Paris, France - As key maritime routes around the world face a growing threat from drones, HGH is putting more than twenty years of infrared surveillance experience to work on one of naval security's toughest problems: spotting, tracking, and identifying drones from unmanned surface vehicles (USVs).

Recent events have shown how exposed ships can be when passing through narrow, busy waterways. Vessels sailing through strategic straits increasingly face the risk of USVs and low-flying UAVs that are small, fast, and hard to detect with standard equipment.

"*Drones navigating or flying low over water are genuinely hard to detect,*" said Edouard Campana, Head of Wide Area Surveillance at HGH. *"They are small, quick, and often barely show up on radar. If you add rough seas, moving ships, and poor visibility, you get a situation where normal sensors are not sufficient. That's exactly the kind of problem our SPYNEL technology was designed to solve*."

At the heart of HGH's approach is the SPYNEL panoramic IR camera, a passive solution that watches all around a vessel, with no blind spots and emitting no signal that could reveal its position. Installed on a USV, SPYNEL can provide persistent 360° surveillance around an escorted ship, extending its situational awareness and helping detect potential threats at a safe distance. SPYNEL-X offers full 360° coverage and the highest image resolution in the range, useful when threats need to be spotted as early as possible, well before they get close.

HGH has sold a SPYNEL-X system to a customer planning to integrate it into an unmanned surface vehicle (USV) for drone detection and maritime protection applications.

SPYNEL cameras work with HGH's CYCLOPE video analytics software and its GAIA Artificial Intelligence, which automatically spot, track, and sort multiple targets in real time, telling real threats apart from background clutter, day or night, whatever the weather.

The system can also interface with maritime standards and systems such as AIS, ECDIS and ONVIF. This allows detection and tracking data to be shared with a USV's onboard systems in real time and used by other applications involved in surveillance and threat response.

This step-by-step approach, from sensor to decision, reflects a wider change in naval thinking: as threats to shipping multiply, vessels tasked with protecting maritime traffic need continuous 24/7 awareness, whatever the weather.

"*What matters most is constant awareness*," added Cyril Marchebout, Sales Director at HGH. "*A USV patrolling a strait or escorting commercial ships can't afford gaps in coverage because it's too dark or the sea is rough. That's the standard our technology is built to meet.*"

HGH is exhibiting SPYNEL counter-drone technology at Euronaval this week, booth C87, Hall 6.

About HGH

Founded in France in 1982, HGH has become a world leader in infrared technology, specializing in the design, manufacture, and marketing of advanced electro-optical systems and sensors for industrial, defense, and security applications. Driven by continuous innovation, HGH combines expertise in infrared technologies and proprietary artificial intelligence to deliver high-performance surveillance.

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