



PRESS RELEASE

7 February 2017

UK technology supports descent to the Moon

A UK space company has won a contract to design and to prototype a landing sensor for an unmanned mission to the south polar region of the Moon, the first in a series of launches that could see the first human habitat on the Moon.

Neptec UK has been awarded the contract by Airbus Defence and Space (based in Bremen) for the design of a “radar laser” or LIDAR known as LEIA (LiDAR Extra-terrestrial Imaging Applications) that forms a critical part of the autonomous landing navigation system called PILOT.

Scheduled to launch in 2021, the “Luna Resource-1 Lander” mission is being undertaken by the Russian Federal Space Agency (Roscosmos), in cooperation with the European Space Agency (ESA). ESA provides the PILOT system for precision and safe landing and the PROSPECT surface package for searching for water that could eventually be used to make fuel and oxygen to support future manned lunar missions.

Neptec UK’s sensor is being developed by a team of engineers at its offices and laboratory at Harwell Campus in Oxfordshire. It is intended that the

LIDAR will map the surface of the moon during the lander's descent in order to find a suitable safe landing area for the vehicle.

Sue Horne, Head of Space Exploration, UK Space Agency, says: "It is great to see such exciting projects coming out of the UK's investment in exploration."

Mike Kearns, Managing Director, Neptec UK, says: "We are extremely proud to be part of this exciting mission that will help establish the Moon as a launch site for human exploration into deeper space. The LIDAR technology that is being developed for this mission also has significant potential for terrestrial use in helping to guide autonomous mobile platforms. Vehicle autonomy is an exciting growth industry around the world and LIDAR technology plays a key role in its development."

Kerry Sanz, Programme Manager, Neptec UK, continues: "Ninety per cent of the LIDAR design and prototyping work on this phase of the project will be done by UK based companies and everyone involved is very enthusiastic to be part of this historic mission."

A subsidiary of Neptec Design Group, Neptec UK was incorporated in 2013 and established its base of operations in Harwell, Oxfordshire. The company's primary customers are ESA and the UK Space Agency.

For further information about Neptec UK, visit: neptecuk.com

Ends

For further information, interviews or photos, contact: Kelly Lea, PR Consultant, M: 07988 195 262; E: Kelly@kellyleapr.com

[About Neptec UK Ltd](#)

Neptec UK Ltd. (NUK) is an experienced spaceflight engineering company. Incorporated in 2013 and opened in Harwell, Oxfordshire in October 2014, Neptec UK is a wholly owned

subsidiary of Neptec Design Group of Ottawa, Canada. Neptec UK provides support to European based customers as well as specialising in the UK development of space qualified metrology instruments, IR cameras and other intelligent sensors.