

# AURA across continents, via Abu Dhabi back to Brno

Interview with the head of the Sales and Marketing Department at AURA, s.r.o., Mr. Libor Gajdoš, about the company's business strategy since 2010, when it started to fully focus on expanding its export portfolio. Currently, AURA is considered the largest Czech exporter of logistics information systems for the defence sector. Its information system for the support of codification, MC CATALOGUE, is currently the most widespread in the world, used by 21 countries on 5 continents.



**Mr. Gajdoš, AURA successfully exhibited at the recent IDEX 2023 defence trade fair in the United Arab Emirates. The company's stand was also visited by the Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala. Are you satisfied with your participation at the exhibition in Abu Dhabi?**

This year's IDEX, like all the previous ones we have attended, was prepared very carefully, both within our company and with our domestic and foreign partners. This was not only because we had the honour of representing the Czech defence industry at this significant global defence technologies and equipment trade fair, but also because our company is one of the few Czech companies that have been actively involved

in the development of the defence industry in the Emirates. I would like to point out that our MC CATALOGUE codification information system, which forms the backbone of the Emirati army's logistics DNA, was put into operation in the UAE Armed Forces already at the beginning of 2017. Our delegation at the fair was led by the owner and its CEO Mr. Filip Engelsmann, who in an interview with the Prime Minister of the Czech Government Petr Fiala directly at our stand presented the company's export vision in this region of the Arab world, including the expansion of the export portfolio. Our participation at IDEX 2023 was assessed to be very successful in all aspects and we are looking forward to building on that success at the IDET trade fair in BRNO in the last week of May.

**So can we say, with a little exaggeration, that AURA's current business domain is the Arab world?**

AURA started to focus its business strategy on exports sometime in 2010. We introduced the aforementioned information system for the support of codification, MC CATALOGUE, in Slovakia, followed by Scandinavian and Baltic countries, Morocco, South Africa, until gradually its codification system became the most widespread in the world, used by 21 countries on 5 continents. And you are absolutely right, after the United Arab Emirates we are currently paying maximum attention to the implementation of a large-scale project in Qatar. For several months now, our

special team has been working directly in Doha with the Qatari armed forces, which are an extremely powerful phenomenon in the country as evidenced by the fact that Qatar is currently the third largest importer of weapons and combat equipment in the world. AURA not only implements MC CATALOGUE, but is directly involved in building the National Codification Bureau in Qatar. Our specific task is the so-called cleansing of codification data of weapons and military equipment of the Qatari army. For the sake of completeness, I would like to mention that we are expanding our business activities in Africa through cooperation with Algeria and we are maintaining ongoing business cooperation with our important partners in Australia, Japan and Brazil.

**At the end of March, a delegation of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) visited the Brno company AURA. Does this mean that the company is preparing cooperation on an official level in addition to informal assistance to this country?**

Since the beginning of the invasion of the territory of Ukraine by the troops of the Russian Federation last year, our company has been actively supporting Ukrainian civilians and soldiers. We provide concrete accommodation for Ukrainian families, employ workers from Ukraine and organise material and financial assistance. However, our humanitarian aid is also taking on the contours of formalised cooperation



with the SESU. The subject of our common interest is the Logistics Information System developed by our company in a configuration to support logistics in a crisis situation, which can also help with processes related to the distribution of humanitarian aid. Another important aspect is that the SESU can also provide selected information on the use of donations to donor countries. We are ready to discuss further assistance to Ukraine with other Czech defence industry companies at IDET.

**And how is AURA doing on the home front, I am primarily referring to cooperation with the Ministry of Defence or other entities within the security community?**

We are very glad that the so-called "COVID period", which at certain moments disrupted, sometimes even delayed our optimal cooperation, is over. With the Ministry of Defence, we can once again fully engage not only in the technical support and maintenance of the Logistics Information System, but also in supporting the new codification project within the Ministry of Defence. Our new contracts with the ministry, planned for

a longer period than in the past, also take into account the current and future economic development in Czechia. In the future, we will also focus on cooperation with domestic and foreign partners within the European Defence Fund 2021 - 2027 projects, which offer some very interesting opportunities, though highly difficult to process.

**AURA is a company that has never missed the IDET trade fair in Brno. What interesting and new things have you prepared for visitors this year?**

As a traditional family company based in Brno, 30 years of participation at the Brno IDET trade fairs is very binding for us. Presenting ourselves always in a new, attractive and interesting light is not easy at all. This year, we will follow up on last year's Future Forces Forum in Letnany and present our main standard products for military logistics and material codification support to visitors. Experts and the general public can look forward to the new generation of the Logistics Information System, configured to support logistics in a crisis situation. We will present comprehensive services for the NATO Codification

System. IDET is also an opportunity for us to approach Czech companies that supply weapons and military equipment to armies around the world. We will present to them the services of our AURA Codification Agency operating in Czechia and AURA LOGIS operating in Slovakia. Correctly prepared codification data according to the NATO Codification System standards is now an essential part of every delivery to the armed forces. AURA codification agency is the most requested Czech agency, in its 20 years of existence it has provided services to almost four hundred companies supplying products to the armed forces. We also do not forget the innovations in the area of controlled document distribution and technical translations. This time we will have at our stand also our partner for CBRN from the Danish company BruhnNewTech, which we exclusively represent for Czechia and Slovakia.

We look forward to seeing you at the IDET trade fair in Brno, Hall P, ground floor, stand No. 016!

*Thank you for the interview, Antonín Svěrák*