

## Global defence firms keen to take part in Bridex 2009

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THE Bridex 2009 is attracting major global defence players keen to participate in Brunei's second defence exhibition.

Among major companies which have shown interest are ST Engineering, Harris Corporation, Raytheon, Northrop Grumman and Thales.

Raymond B Corrigan, Raytheon country manager for Singapore and Brunei, said the US company was impressed with the well-attended Bridex 2007, Brunei's first defence exhibition, in which Raytheon participated.

"It was well attended by both the defence industry and the public of Brunei. What we were very appreciative of was His Majesty coming by to visit every single exhibitor ... It showed the level of commitment from the highest position," he said.

Raytheon hopes to be able to have a bigger presence in Bridex 2009.

"We hope to grow our presence there, maybe have a larger booth to showcase Raytheon's capabilities as we look at what Brunei has put out in the defence white paper," he told The Brunei Times.

Alvin E H Tan, business development manager at Northrop Grumman, said although Bridex 2007 was Brunei's first defence show, it was efficiently organised and hopes Bridex 2009 will be a greater show.

"It was very good, very professionally done, although it was your first defence show, it was well-organised, (there was) very good turn out, very good support from your Ministry of Defence ... I think Bridex 2009 would be much better ... It would be a great show," he said.

An exhibitor during the Bridex 2007, ST Engineering is also supporting Bridex 2009.

Patrick Choy, executive vice president of international marketing, said the company would like to see the expo's requirements, theme and priorities to enable ST Engineering to structure accordingly.

"We want to see what are the priorities, what are the things that are facing the Brunei Ministry of Defence. For example, what has been outlined in their defence white paper, and we will structure accordingly. It will be a much bigger show. ST Engineering will continue to support the show."

Harris Corporation said Brunei impressed international exhibitors last year and hopes to see more international visitors this year. "It was not just Harris's that was impressed with Bridex 2007, but other companies. It was a great show ... The only thing that a lot of people would want to see more of is more international people to come, such as regional forces," said Alan P Callaghan, managing director, Asia Pacific of Harris Corporation.

Thales group's participation in Bridex 2007 was well supported by the British government and the armed forces are anticipating opportunities to contribute to Bridex 2009.

"Bridex 2007 was very well planned (and was) very well attended by some major international players. We will be very happy to see what Thales can contribute to Bridex 2009," said Tommy Ayuoty, a business development manager with Thales.

The second Brunei Darussalam International Defence Exhibition (Bridex) is set at the Empire Hotel & Country Club, with about 15,000sq m of exhibition area, both indoors as well as outdoors, according to the Royal Brunei Technical Services.

Bridex 2009 is jointly organised by the Royal Brunei Technical Services and World Aerospace with the support of the Ministry of Defence.

To be held on August 11-16, 2009, Bridex targets to gather 250 exhibitors from 30 countries.

The defence exhibition will be the first of its kind regionally, with focus on air, land and marine defence and home land security.

Source: The Brunei Times