

Press release

## Telefónica launches first 5G operational deployment within a Standing NATO Maritime Group

- Private 5G network boosts secure, wideband, low latency connectivity between NATO ships and unmanned systems, reinforcing mission critical communications.

**Madrid, 2 October 2025.** – Telefónica has initiated a groundbreaking Operational Experimentation (OPEX) focused on the use of 5G networks aboard a vessel from NATO's Standing Naval Maritime Group, under the command of NATO Maritime Command (MARCOM), headquartered in Northwood (United Kingdom). This marks the first operational deployment of 5G within a permanent NATO naval group.

Starting on 14 September, Telefónica, in collaboration with a network of Spanish partners committed to national technological sovereignty -including Atika Technologies, provider of the 5G core, and Ravenloop, a leader in cyber intelligence- along with Nokia, began deploying a 5G node aboard the NATO vessel. This initiative integrates a highly secure network architecture, remote operation capabilities, continuous technical support, and a specialized training program for the crew, establishing a cutting-edge technological environment in the maritime defence domain.

This system allows the vessel to maintain secure, ultra-fast, and low-latency communications with the rest of ships within the naval group, including unmanned systems such as aerial drones, surface vehicles, and autonomous submarines. Thanks to the deployment of a private 5G network, the fleet can access high-quality communication services without relying on public networks or satellite connectivity, ensuring operational autonomy and resilience.

This pilot project, which runs until December, evaluates the operational feasibility and strategic benefits of deploying a private 5G network aboard a NATO Naval Force over several months. It also enhances the operational resilience of allied naval forces and serves as a catalyst for the integration of other emerging technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), edge computing, autonomous drone management and predictive platform maintenance.

**Telefónica, S.A.**  
Corporate Communications  
email: [prensatelefonica@telefonica.com](mailto:prensatelefonica@telefonica.com)  
[telefonica.com/es/sala-comunicacion/](https://telefonica.com/es/sala-comunicacion/)

NATO has already incorporated Telefónica's 5G bubble<sup>1</sup> into allied missions to provide tactical communications to both the joint cyberspace command and deployed forces, reflecting the Alliance's recognition of 5G as a cross-cutting technology capable of digitally transforming its Armed Forces across land, cyberspace, aerospace and now maritime domains. The extension of 5G into the maritime environment, until now operationally unexplored, represents a major leap forward in terms of enhanced connectivity, command and control and enables more effective multi-domain operations.

Finally, this initiative represents a significant technological advancement in NATO's current defence capabilities and a relevant milestone for Telefónica and its partners, who are recognised for their position at the forefront of the implementation of 5G for military use in the Armed Forces, the European Union and NATO.

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<sup>1</sup> Telefonica's Tactical Bubble is a 5G-based intelligent network that connects systems, sensors and platforms and can be deployed in any environment (air, space, sea and land).