

Radar deal paves way for new wireless system in Italy

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An advertisement for WiMAX. Italian defence firm Finmeccanica said Tuesday it had won a 260-million-euro (375-million-dollar) radar contract from the air force that will allow for cutting-edge WiMAX Internet technology in Italy.

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Selex Sistemi Integrati, a Finmeccanica company, will deliver a dozen long-range surveillance radars to the [air](#) force by 2014, replacing those installed during the late 1980s and early '90s, the company said in a statement.

With an operating range of roughly 500 kilometres (310 miles), the [radar](#) systems are also poised to become a key component of NATO's air

defence, the statement said.

The new radars will use band D [radio frequency](#) -- freeing up frequencies used by the defence ministry on the S band for WiMAX's debut in Italy, it said.

Compared to traditional wireless [mobile Internet technology](#), [WiMax](#) -- Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access -- has a higher capacity, operates across greater distances and allows for voice, video, Internet and other [mobile services](#).

The Italian government awarded WiMAX licences to operators last year, but the technology could not be launched until the defence ministry freed up the frequencies.

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