



## Media Backgrounder: Elbit Systems and Canada

April 20, 2026



Photos: Transport Canada, via Noah Gairn on X <https://x.com/NoahGairn/status/2041982968177054141>

### *Canada's \$36M contract for an Elbit Hermes 900 StarLiner*

In December 2020, Transport Canada signed a \$36m [contract](#) with Elbit Systems, Israel's largest weapons company. The contract is for the Hermes 900 StarLiner, a “civilian” version of Elbit’s lethal military drone the Hermes 900. The contract also includes services such as communication links, ground control stations, sensor packages, and more. The purpose of the drone is for surveillance in the Arctic. The drone was expected to be delivered by December 2022, but it was not delivered until September 2025.

Despite the supposedly "civilian" nature of the purchased drone, the Hermes 900 StarLiner is reportedly “[suitable for military and commercial applications](#)” and can carry “electronic warfare payloads to provide airborne [electronic attack capability](#).” Some of the optional Elbit payloads that can be added to the drone boast of being “[battle-proven](#).”

Although the drone was originally purchased by Transport Canada, as of April 1, 2026 its Aircraft Services Directorate (ASD) was [transferred](#) to the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG), which itself has been absorbed by the Department of National Defence (DND). The CCG remains a civilian agency, despite being under DND, and CBC [reports](#) that the federal officials claim to have “no plans to militarize the coast guard or assign it an enforcement role” and that the coast guard will “remain outside of the military chain of command.” There are no guarantees that this will remain the case, however, and C-2 (the [Strong Borders Act](#)) would “expand the [CCG]’s services to include security activities” including “security patrols.”

### *Elbit Drones and Israel's Genocide in Gaza*

Elbit Systems proudly claims that the drone Canada has purchased draws on the “[legacy](#)” of its military drones. In fact, Elbit is the main supplier of drones used by the Israeli military to monitor and attack Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. The Hermes 900 was first [tested](#)



during Israel's assault on Gaza in 2014, when Israeli drone strikes alone killed [840](#) Palestinians, including [164](#) children. Infamously, it was a [missile](#) launched by a Hermes 450 drone which murdered four children playing soccer on a beach that year. During the bombing, Elbit's profits [skyrocketed](#).

In May 2021, during Israel's attack on Gaza ("Operation Guardian of the Walls") which killed at least 253 people including 66 children, Elbit technology played a major role in the violence. Elbit's command and control technology system was used by the Israeli military to "[accelerate the targeting process](#)" that Israel used to coordinate its attacks on Gaza. Elbit's armed Hermes 450 and 900 drones were also used by the Israeli military to [bombard](#) Gaza with missiles. During this assault, [22 Palestinian civilians](#) were killed by Israeli drone strikes.

During Israel's 3-day assault on Gaza in August 2022 ("Operation Breaking Dawn") which killed at least 49 people including 17 children, Israeli commanders [boasted](#) of hitting "dozens" of targets, "mainly using the Elbit Hermes 450," in addition to the role of the drones in performing extensive surveillance for the purpose of military targeting: "The whole of Gaza is 'covered' with UAVs that collect intelligence 24 hours a day."

Elbit drones have been critical to Israel's genocidal campaign in Gaza from 2023 to present, which has killed a minimum of 70,373 people including 20,179 children. In April 2024, Israel used a Hermes 450 drone as part of a series of [airstrikes on a World Central Kitchen aid convoy](#), killing Canadian aid worker Jacob Flickinger alongside 6 international and Palestinian volunteers.

In addition to drones, Elbit Systems [produces](#) white phosphorus munitions (a chemical weapon), cluster bombs (illegal under international law), sniper bullets, and components of tanks and fighter jets.

### *Beyond Drones: Canadian Procurement from Elbit Systems*

The Canadian government lists [47 contracts above \\$10,000](#) with Elbit Systems and its subsidiaries since 2004, with most of them signed with National Defence.

In December 2021, Canada also awarded an \$8.6m [contract](#) to Elbit Systems for its Torch X "[battle management](#)" technology, which is marketed as "field-proven" and had been used in Gaza in 2021. This will be used to support Canada's "air missions" and "joint-task force operations."

In 2023, Elbit was awarded a [contract](#) (undisclosed amount) with Airbus Defense and Space to supply missile warning systems and countermeasures on Canada's military refueling aircraft.