

François Gayet



François Gayet was born in 1945 and is a former pupil of the Ecole Polytechnique and a graduate of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de l'Aéronautique. He received a Master of Science degree from Stanford University, California, holds a commission as *Ingénieur en Chef de l'Armement* in the French defense procurement agency (DGA) and is a Knight of the Order of the Legion of Honor.

He began his career as a research engineer at the Aeronautics and Telecommunications Department (STTA) of the DGA before joining THALES in 1975, where he was in charge of international radar and laser fire control systems programs for the Avionics Division (AVS). In 1982, he joined the Electronic Systems Division (DSE) as Export Sales Director and was appointed Deputy Sales Director in 1984. In late 1986, he was appointed Director of Projects and Systems, then Head of the Radiocommunications Department at the Thales Telecommunications Division (DTC). Later, he took part in the creation of the Radiocommunications, Electronic Warfare and Security Division (RGS) and became director of that division in 1990. In 1994, he was appointed Director of the Missile Systems Division (DSM). At the end of 1995, François Gayet became Managing Director of Thales Airsys. From March 1997, François Gayet was Vice-President in charge of Strategy and Business Development for the Detection and Missile Systems operating group. From 1997, François Gayet was appointed Chairman of Thales North America (TNA), the holding company for all of Thales interests in the United States, and Chairman and CEO of Thales, Inc. In June 2001, François Gayet became Senior Vice President France Defence.

In September 2002, he was appointed Senior Vice President, Managing, Naval Systems Business Group. In May 2004, he became Senior Vice President Marketing & Sales.

In October 2005, he retired from Thales and was elected Secretary General of the AeroSpace and Defence Industries Association of Europe – ASD, based in Brussels. ASD has 30 member associations in 20 countries across Europe and represents over 2000 companies with a further 80 000 suppliers, many of which are SMEs. The industry sectors employ around 638.000 people, with a turnover of around €120billion.