



Meteor integration on F-35 takes significant step forward

The United Kingdom (MOD) has today awarded MBDA a contract to pave the way for the integration of the Meteor Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile (BVRAAM) on its new F-35 stealth fighters.

Today's contract helps de-risk the integration effort and includes the mixture of test assets, productionisation and engineering work needed to support Meteor's compatibility and use from F-35. This is excellent news for the UK's F-35 Lightning II force, which is planned to be armed with the game-changing Meteor missile in the 2020s.

The test assets being contracted today encompass the usual suite of test missiles required for an aircraft integration programme. Contract scope also includes the role change kits for the UK's common Meteor stockpile for both Typhoon and Lightning.

Today's contract follows-on from the successful firing trials of MBDA's Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile (ASRAAM) from the F-35 earlier this year. ASRAAM is being integrated onto the F-35 as part of the aircraft's Block 3 SDD programme.

Also set for future integration onto the F-35 is MBDA's SPEAR precision surface attack missile. Meteor and SPEAR are advanced weapons that complement the '5th gen' F-35, bringing networked capability with stand-off – both weapons are key elements of the UK's carrier strike capability in the future.

Notes to editors:

Meteor is a next generation, Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile (BVRAAM) system that will revolutionise air-to-air combat in the 21st Century. The weapon's development which is now complete has brought together six nations with a common need to defeat the threats of today as well as those of the foreseeable future.

Meteor's stunning performance is achieved through its unique ramjet propulsion system - solid fuel, variable flow, ducted rocket. This throttleable ramjet motor ensures that the missile has maximum thrust when it is most required, namely at the end game leading up to target intercept. As a result, Meteor features the largest No-Escape Zone of any current or planned air-to-air missile system. Guided by an advanced active radar seeker, Meteor provides all weather capability to engage a wide variety of targets from agile fast jets to small unmanned aerial vehicles and cruise missiles. It is designed to meet the most stringent of requirements and is capable of operating in the most severe of clutter and countermeasure environments.

With a significant presence in five European countries and within the USA, in 2016 MBDA achieved a turnover of 3.0 billion euros with an order book of 15.9 billion euros. With more than 90 armed forces customers in the world, MBDA is a world leader in missiles and missile systems. MBDA is the only European group capable of designing and producing missiles and missile systems that correspond to the full range of current and future operational needs of the three armed forces (land, sea and air). In total, the group offers a range of 45 missile systems and countermeasures products already in operational service and more than 15 others currently in development.

MBDA is jointly owned by Airbus (37.5%), BAE Systems (37.5%), and Leonardo (25%).

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