



Successful first guided firing of Meteor from Rafale

On 28th April 2015, teams from the French Ministry of Defence, Dassault Aviation and MBDA carried out the first guided firing of the long-range Meteor missile against an air target from a Rafale combat aircraft. The firing, from a Rafale prepared at the DGA's Cazaux Flight Test Centre (near Bordeaux, S.W. France), proceeded successfully within the secured zone of the DGA Essais de Missiles (previously Centre d'Essais des Landes) in Biscarosse (also near Bordeaux). Following on from earlier missile separation trials carried out in 2013 and 2014, this firing represents an important milestone in the integration of Meteor onto the Rafale in line with the development of the aircraft in its next F3-R standard.

With a throttleable ramjet motor and 'fire and forget' firing mode, Meteor is intended for very long BVR (Beyond Visual Range) air defence operations. Thanks to the performance of the RBE2 AESA (Active Electronically Scanned Array) radar which equips the Rafale (the only European combat aircraft currently equipped operationally with this kind of sensor), it is able to intercept targets at very long range thereby complementing the currently deployed MICA missile used for combat and self defence. The first Meteor missiles will be delivered as of 2018 to equip the Rafales of the French Air Force and Navy.

The result of a cooperation between France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the UK launched in 2003, Meteor is a federated programme enabling the consolidation of the European defence industry and technology base associated with the missile sector. The main industrial partners of MBDA UK, the industrial prime contractor for the programme, are MBDA France, MBDA Italy, SAAB (Sweden), Bayern-Chemie (a fully owned subsidiary of MBDA Deutschland) and Inmize (Spain).