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## The French Armed Forces Ministry takes delivery of its first MMPs

France's defence procurement agency, the Direction Générale de l'Armement (DGA), has accepted the delivery to the French Armed Forces of the first batch of 50 missiles and 20 firing posts from the new MMP system.

The deliveries were conducted between 15 and 23 November. The new system will gradually replace the Milan, the HOT missiles mounted on VAB Armoured Fighting Vehicles and the ERYX for some of these missiles. It will be issued to French Army infantry and cavalry units, and to Special Forces of the Army, Navy and Air Force. The MMP programme will see the delivery of 400 firing posts and 1,750 missiles across all of the French Armed Forces by 2025. The first deliveries will be used to train future users. The weapon system will be deployed in operations in the course of 2018.

The DGA, which awarded MBDA the MMP contract in 2013, qualified the system last July, clearing the way for serial production. The government-run techno-operational trials at the DGA's test centre in Bourges from August to October 2017, with the assistance of operational experts from the Section Technique de l'Armée de Terre (STAT), underlined the excellent performances of the system and confirmed that it met the requirement of the armed forces.

Thanks to input from army experts since the early stages of development and through to qualification, the MMP benefits from lessons learned in recent operational engagements. It offers both 'fire-and-forget' and 'man-in-the-loop' capabilities. The first enables fixed or mobile targets to be hit without intervention by the operator during the missile's flight. The second allows the operator to change targets mid-flight, to refine the point of impact, or to divert the missile; it also opens up the possibility of firing at hidden targets beyond the direct line of sight.

The weapon system can be used by day and by night. Its multi-purpose warhead is effective against a wide variety of targets such as vehicles, armour, infrastructures and personnel. Its extreme accuracy gives it the ability to strike at a range of over 4,000 metres while minimising the risk of collateral damage. Finally, the missile can be fired from confined spaces, a crucial characteristic for urban combat. MMP can be fired by dismounted infantrymen and is also to be fitted on the EBRC Jaguar armoured reconnaissance and combat vehicle, due to be delivered to the French Army in 2020.