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MBDA WINS QUEEN'S AWARD FOR ENTERPRISE WITH DUAL MODE BRIMSTONE

MBDA in the UK has won a prestigious 2014 Queen's Award for Enterprise in the Innovation category for developing an extra guidance mode for the Brimstone radar guided anti-armour missile. The converted weapon becomes the Dual Mode Brimstone and is a great British success story of innovation and enterprise. This has been accomplished through a combination of technical advances, cost effectiveness and the re-use of existing Brimstone missiles already in the Royal Air Force (RAF) inventory.

It provides crews of RAF Tornado GR4 aircraft with a world-leading, low-collateral, precision strike capability, including use in cluttered urban environments where surgical accuracy is paramount. There is **nothing comparable in-service in the world today**.

The Dual Mode Brimstone has its target laser designated by the aircrew, whilst the retention of the radar provides the necessary accuracy **more effectively than a laser only system** in the terminal phase of the missile flight. This allows opponents in fast-moving vehicles to be engaged, thereby giving the best of both guidance methods and allowing adherence with strict Rules of Engagement.

The innovation stretched beyond the new technological features as these were achieved without significantly increasing the complexity of the seeker. **80% of the original seeker design remained intact** and the new dual mode seeker was tested using the same test limits that had been applied to the original design, thereby enabling existing stock of the original Brimstone weapon to be upgraded to the Dual Mode Brimstone standard.

This was achieved at a **fraction of the cost of procuring a new weapon system** and in **significantly reduced timescales**. The system was available when most needed by the RAF as MBDA were able to replenish stocks quickly during simultaneous military operations in Libya and Afghanistan because it is a UK-sourced weapon and MBDA had a surge production capability.

Welcoming the news of the award, MBDA's Executive Group Director Technical and Managing Director UK, Steve Wadey said, "As the highest business award in the UK, an accolade of this significance and recognition is a tremendous achievement and one that we take huge pride in. The technology at the heart of Dual Mode Brimstone is truly world beating and is symbolic of the difference innovation can make for our Customers and the crucial role MBDA products have in delivering enhanced military effectiveness."

Note to editor

Advances in the seeker design incorporated new features such as optical devices, a fused quartz 'radome', a carbon fibre body tube and a diamond, precision-machined part, which replaced the original parabolic reflector. An enlarged collecting aperture improves detection

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performance at extended ranges in adverse weather conditions. New algorithms within the seeker processor were developed to optimise and fuse the data from both the SAL and mmW channels. This provides vastly improved system accuracy compared with competing SAL only systems.

The Dual Mode Brimstone development work was carried out at MBDA's Stevenage site with the dual mode seeker conversion and assembly at Lostock, Lancashire and final missile assembly at Henlow, Bedfordshire.

MBDA and its predecessor companies have now won a total of ten Queen's Awards over the years: 1975, 1976 twice (Export and Technology), 1979, 1984 twice (Export and Technology), 1986, 2000, 2004 and 2014.

With a significant presence in five European countries and within the USA, in 2013 MBDA achieved a turnover of 2.8 billion euros with an order book of 10.8 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 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 held by AIRBUS Group (37.5%), BAE SYSTEMS (37.5%), and FINMECCANICA (25%).

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