

16th May 2007

FRANCO-ITALIAN PAAMS FINAL QUALIFICATION FIRING SUCCESS

The final system qualification firing of the Franco-Italian Aster PAAMS (E) (Principal Anti-Air Missile System) naval air defence weapon was completed today, 14th May, at the Centre d'essais de la Méditerranée (CELM) test range in France.

The test fulfilled all the objectives set and, as such, was confirmed to be a complete success.

The firing was conducted on board the Italian *Carabiniere* ship with the PAAMS (E) System comprising the Empar radar and associated fire control system, A50 Sylver Vertical Launcher and Aster 30 missile.

The qualification firing scenario was representative of a PAAMS (E)-equipped air defence frigate defending a consort ship attacked by two subsonic missiles flying at very low altitude.

The first target was to be intercepted by a simulated Aster 30 and the second target was to be intercepted by a real Aster 30 missile. All the successive phases of the engagement were successfully executed, the second target being intercepted and directly hit at the intended medium range (around 19km) by the Aster 30 missile.

Fabrizio Giulianini, Surface-Air Multinational Programme Director, said : « This final successful qualification firing confirms the tremendous importance of establishing a fully integrated Franco-Italian team of engineers to work on the Aster missile programme. »

Notes to Editors

MBDA is the prime contractor for PAAMS, a 360 degree omni-directional weapon system providing multi-layer air defence to surface group warships or groups of unarmed support and merchant ships. The system can defeat all forms of threat (sea-skimming anti-ship missiles, cruise missiles, diving anti-radar missiles and fighter aircraft) even in saturation or severe electronic warfare environments. This successful firing was carried out within the framework of the tripartite PAAMS naval programme (France, Italy, United Kingdom). PAAMS will be fitted to the Franco-Italian Horizon class frigates (PAAMS (E) version) and the T45 UK Destroyers (PAAMS (S) version). The Royal Navy variant, PAAMS (S), uses the Sampson radar.

With an annual turnover exceeding €3 billion, a forward order book of over €13 billion and over 70 customers world wide, MBDA is a world leading, global missile systems company. MBDA currently has 45 missile system and countermeasure programmes in operational service and has proven its ability as prime contractor to head major multi-national projects. MBDA is jointly owned by BAE SYSTEMS (37.5%), EADS (37.5%) and FINMECCANICA (25%).

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