

23rd May 2007

## **METEOR HIGH ALTITUDE FIRING MARKS NEXT TEST SUCCESS**

**On 22nd May 2007, MBDA conducted another successful firing of the six-nation Meteor air dominance missile at the QinetiQ-managed UK Ministry of Defence's (MoD) Hebrides missile firing range.**

The High Altitude Control and Dispersion (C&D) firing was conducted from a Saab Gripen fighter aircraft, and is the first Meteor firing to have been undertaken in the UK. This firing is yet another significant milestone in the successful European multinational Meteor project and follows on from the lower altitude Air Launched Demonstrator firings conducted in 2006 and a series of seeker data gathering trials completed in early 2007.

Following the successful firing, MBDA's Meteor Multinational Project Director, Dave Armstrong, said: "This is yet another major achievement for the Meteor programme, once again pushing the performance envelope and demonstrating the continued significant progress in the development of this world beating air dominance missile".

Carried out by MBDA in line with the requirements of the Meteor development programme, the purpose of the C&D firing was to test the performance of the missile's integrated boost, ramjet sustain motor and control systems during high altitude supersonic launch, extended free flight and extensive manoeuvres.

Meteor was rail-launched from the Gripen aircraft flying supersonic at an altitude of 42,650ft (13Km). After a couple of seconds in the boost phase, Meteor's Variable Flow Ducted Rocket opened its air intakes and the missile successfully transitioned to its ramjet operation. It then accelerated to speeds in excess of Mach 3, successfully executing various challenging manoeuvres including using the novel bank while turn control algorithms specifically developed for this high performance missile. The missile followed a pre-programmed flight profile for several minutes, which also demonstrated the high end game control capability for missile launches even at the maximum kinematic range. On achieving the trials objectives, Meteor was broken up in flight within the confines of the test range as intended.

### **Notes to editors**

Located in the Western Isles off the North-West coast of Scotland the UK MoD Hebrides Range is operated and managed by QinetiQ under the terms of an Long Term Partnering Agreement (LTPA) and has an extensive Sea Danger Area that extends out 260km and is 140km at its widest point. MBDA is the prime contractor for the Meteor missile programme.

METEOR is being developed to meet the requirements of six European nations for a superior Beyond Visual Range missile system with the operational capability to dominate the air battlespace, excelling in all future combat scenarios and capable of being integrated on Europe's major platforms, Eurofighter Typhoon, Gripen and Rafale. It also has the potential to add to the air-to-air capability of the next generation combat platform, the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

The METEOR programme sees France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the UK joining together in order to provide access to technology and expertise across Europe. The METEOR contract was signed by the UK Defence Procurement Agency on 23rd December 2002 on behalf of all six nations. This contract covers development of METEOR and provides production options to meet the individual national requirements.

METEOR is a fast and highly manoeuvrable Beyond Visual Range (BVR) air-to-air weapon. Guidance is provided by an active radar seeker benefiting from enhanced technologies drawn from the MBDA Aster and Mica missile programmes. The missile is allocated targets from the launch aircraft radar and is capable of engaging air targets autonomously by night or day, in all weather and in severe electronic warfare environments.

The Meteor programme has been moving ahead since last years first air launched development firings with Seeker Data Gathering (SDG) and Electronic Protection Measure (EPM) data gathering flights having been conducted both in Sweden and the UK. Environmental Data Gathering (EDG) flights to provide aircraft environmental data for missile design have also been completed on the Gripen aircraft and have now commenced on the Eurofighter Typhoon; Rafale EDG trials having been completed earlier in the programme. Additionally, Reliability Growth Testing and Hardware in the Loop testing have been undertaken.

MBDA leads the Meteor programme team with key partners including Saab Bofors Dynamics of Sweden and INMIZE of Spain.

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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