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MBDA READIES ROYAL NAVY'S PAAMS AIR DEFENCE SYSTEM FOR FIRING TRIALS

The Royal Navy's new advanced naval air defence system, PAAMS (Principal Anti-Air Missile System), is being readied for service as prime contractor MBDA prepares for the new system to undergo firing trials.

During the autumn, the PAAMS (S) Sea Trials Platform, Longbow, will be towed from its present berth in Portsmouth Naval Base (on the south coast of England) to the Mediterranean. Longbow will "sail" fitted with all the integrated system elements, except the missiles, of the Royal Navy's new air defence system.

Once in the Mediterranean, final preparations will be made to the barge and PAAMS (S) system in readiness for the start of a comprehensive firing campaign that will start in 2008. The firings will take place at the CELM (Centre d'Essais de Lancement des Missiles) test range near the Ile du Levant off the French Mediterranean coast.

PAAMS is the self, local and fleet area defence system that will equip the Royal Navy's new Daring class of Type 45 destroyers as well as the Horizon and Orizzonte frigates of the French and Italian Navies respectively. The Royal Navy's PAAMS (S) system differs from the PAAMS (E) selected by France and Italy with respect to the Multi Function Radar (MFR). Whereas France and Italy opted for the EMPAR MFR, the very specific requirements of the Royal Navy have resulted in the development of the SAMPSON MFR by BAE Systems INSYTE.

MBDA UK's Managing Director, Steve Wadey, said: "We are approaching the PAAMS (S) firing campaign with maximum confidence. A great deal of progress has already been made with all the system elements of PAAMS. Test firings have taken place with PAAMS using the EMPAR radar and these of course have provided invaluable information to support the PAAMS (S) integration. In addition, all the de-risking that has been taking place at the MBDA PAAMS Integration Facility in our Bristol site and other test facilities means we are now able to move rapidly forward and ever closer to the date when the Royal Navy will be equipped with what is undoubtedly the world's best naval air defence system of its type".

The firing campaign will benefit from all the experience gained from de-risking activities undertaken to date: preliminary system integration at MBDA's PAAMS Integration Facility in Bristol, full system integration at the Eskmeals development facility in Cumbria (north England), the integration and trials carried out on Longbow and finally system integration with the ship combat system at the BAE Systems' Maritime Integration & Support Centre (MISC) at Portsmouth.

Further maturity of the PAAMS (S) system elements has been provided by the numerous successful firings of the Aster 15 and 30 missiles for the Franco-Italian SAAM naval air defence system, the SAMP/T ground-based air defence system and the PAAMS (E) system (for which the final qualification firing took place in May 2007).

All the PAAMS (S) system elements have been installed on the first of class Type 45, *HMS Daring*, with all but the MFR being fully set to work. Deliveries of PAAMS equipment to the second Type 45, *HMS Dauntless*, are now in progress.

Notes to editors

PAAMS is a 360° omni-directional system providing multi-layer air defence to armed fleets or groups of unarmed support and merchant ships. It incorporates three separate mission capabilities in a single naval air defence system – ship self-defence for protection of the PAAMS warship; local area defence for nearby ship defence; and medium and long-range air defence. PAAMS has been designed to provide optimum protection against omni-directional and co-ordinated attacks from sub- or supersonic missiles, aircraft and high value UAVs.

PAAMS comprises a Multi Function Radar (MFR), a sophisticated Command and Control sub-system (C2), and a dual missile Vertical Launch Sub-system (VLS) containing a combination of forty-eight, ready-to-fire Aster 15 and Aster 30 missiles. PAAMS is supported by a Long Range Radar (LRR) for long range surveillance.

Depending on the threat, the combination of the Aster 15 and Aster 30 missiles enables the PAAMS system to fire in any configuration from the PAAMS Sylver A50 launcher providing an impenetrable defence envelope day or night, even in cases of extreme electronic countermeasures and in all weather conditions.

The PAAMS (S) system SAMPSON MFR contributes to the area defence around the Type 45 and the accompanying fleet, detecting all types of targets out to a distance of hundreds of kilometers and providing up-link messages to the Aster missiles to neutralise threats to the fleet. The radar is capable of tracking hundreds of targets at any one time and will provide a significant step improvement to the current capability of Royal Navy ships.

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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