



## Saab to invest in Gripen Fighter Weapon School in South Africa

**Saab is to invest in an advanced training centre for experienced fighter pilots initially from Gripen countries and its user air forces, at Air Force Base Overberg in South Africa.**

The Gripen Fighter Weapon School is an initiative from Saab in co-operation with the Gripen Air Forces user group. The Gripen Fighter Weapon School will hone the fighting skills of experienced Gripen pilots from all over the world. The custom built facilities on the southern tip of Africa will provide exceptional training with extensive airspace over mountain ranges, desserts and the Indian and Atlantic Ocean. The course will be run during the South African summer which offers favourable metrological conditions. The training will focus on different multirole aspects every year and the advanced airborne exercises will be mixed with academia and survival training in an African context.

“Gripen is now operative and in service in five countries world wide, and the system is continually under development. Saab now believes there is a need to establish an advanced training centre for experienced Gripen pilots with the aim to increase their operational capabilities, provide an opportunity to operate in an environment different from their own and a chance to train in a region that mirrors a realistic future potential deployment scenario,” says Magnus Lewis-Olsson, President Saab in South Africa, and adds:

“The Gripen Fighter Weapon School will increase our understanding between different Gripen operators and our own efforts to create a common software baseline as the pilots will cross reference their experience of Gripen.”

Supporting Gripen customers in Sweden, South Africa, Hungarian, Czech and Thailand, the first course is scheduled to take place late 2013.





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New threat scenarios and new requirements will drive the course syllabus at the school and the need for more in depth training on the Gripen aircraft and its systems. It will also increase the students' operational capabilities by providing a possibility to experience a tactical behavior that differs from their national SOP's (Standard Operating Procedures) and thereby broaden their skill.

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