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THE GRIPEN TEAM INTRODUCES ANOTHER NEW INDUSTRIAL PROJECT WITH AUSTRIA

Metallic foams have enormous potential as structural and functional materials in lightweight designs. One of the new projects of the SAAB-BAE SYSTEMS Gripen AB's industrial cooperation in connection with a future Gripen fighter aircraft contract is focusing on this new material.

The Austrian partner in the project is Alulight International GmbH. The ambition of Alulight is to develop and manufacture customer specific and advanced high tech aluminum products.

Research into potential uses for metal foams in the automobile industry and other industrial areas and the optimization of the materials and manufacturing processes are within the scope of this project. Metallic foam is at a density level of just 15 to 20 % of the solid metal offering excellent specific properties such as vibration and sound damping, high strength and stiffness, and thermal and electrical properties. Metal foams also have a low environmental impact.

The primary goal of the project is to forge alliances between Alulight and Swedish, British, and international industry with a demand for lightweight metal with specific characteristics of aluminum and other metallic foams. So far great interest for metallic foam has been seen in the Swedish automotive area but aerospace applications could prove to be the next important field.

The Gripen Team, benefiting from the knowledge and resources of companies such as Saab, BAE SYSTEMS, Ericsson, Volvo and Investor AB, one of the world's largest industrial holding companies, has extensive experience in the development of cooperation programs for military hardware and many other high technology areas.

"Our customers profit from an industrial cooperation concept that is fundamentally different than that of traditional compensation agreements. This concept creates new jobs and ensures long-term growth in countless key industrial sectors through direct foreign investments, export promotion and technology transfer, as well as through a number of other measures focusing on commercially sound business" explains Johan L.Eliasson, Vice President, Business Value Development at Saab. Besides its unbeatable industrial benefits the Gripen industrial cooperation program will create thousands of jobs in Austria in key future-oriented areas.



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In addition to manufacturing and marketing the NATO-compatible Gripen, Saab Aerospace promotes the export of the multi-role/swing-role fighter in cooperation with BAE SYSTEMS and has an excellent record in offset agreements in Austria. In 1994, the Austrian government confirmed the fact that 70 Austrian companies profited from the compensation agreements associated with the purchase of the Draken and that the business volume well exceeded the agreed scope in the same period.

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