



February 18, 2002

Ref: 006/2002

GRIPEN STRENGTHENS PARTNERSHIP WITH MIELEC

Gripen International partners Saab and BAE SYSTEMS and the Polish Aviation Company in Mielec, have signed a number of new Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) covering a wide range of manufacturing, engineering and technology work linked to the supply of Gripen supersonic, multi-role fighters to the Polish Air Force.

Should Gripen be selected to meet the national and NATO defense needs of Poland, the Mielec plant, which already produces tail-cone components for all Gripen aircraft, will undertake a significant amount of new work, including final assembly of Polish Air Force aircraft. The final assembly role would include the production of additional airframe parts and sub-assemblies, installation of wings, mechanical and electrical systems tests and finally, acceptance flight test.

Where possible, the jigs and tools required for the new work will be manufactured in Poland. This further commitment by the Gripen team is covered in a further MOU between the Gripen team and Mielec Tooling Company.

Importantly, technology transfer forms an important element of the MoUs, building further on the existing capabilities at Mielec through involvement with one of the world's most advanced and capable multi-role fighters.

“ The new partnership agreements present exciting opportunities for a significant enhancement of the existing capabilities in Mielec. This will introduce new skills, manufacturing processes, techniques and competencies. It will also provide considerable employment prospects by further developing indigenous capability in the Polish Aerospace and defense industry” states Simon Carr, sales and marketing director, Gripen International.

Gripen partners Saab and BAE SYSTEMS, together with a team of major European and American defense suppliers have been actively strengthening links with Polish industry for more than five years.

In advance of any contract being placed for Gripen, work packages and tenders have already been placed with various companies and institutes with a value of around US\$ 60 million.

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“ We are proud of the pre-contract offset activities that have been established in Poland, “ comments Simon Carr. “ As well as demonstrating a considerable level of commitment, they are practical examples of our ability to deliver real economic and industrial benefits linked to the purchase of Gripen.”

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Notes to editors:

Gripen International is a company equally owned by Saab of Sweden and BAE SYSTEMS of the UK.

Gripen is the first fourth-generation multi-role fighter in service world-wide, designed to meet the demands of all current and future threats, while at the same time meeting strict peace-time requirements for flight safety, reliability, training efficiency and low operating costs.

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