

**SAAB**

## PRESS INFORMATION

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### **Gripen successfully completes air-to-air refueling campaign with NATO standard compatible tanker**

**During the past month, the Gripen has been undertaking an air-to-air refueling campaign with a Boeing 707 tanker at Saab's facility in Linköping, Sweden. The campaign had the objective of verifying Gripen's air-to-air refueling capabilities with a NATO standard compatible tanker. It included a total of 19 sorties with the latest standard of Gripen, the Gripen C single-seat and Gripen D dual-seat, and a South African Air Force Boeing 707 tanker; the results were very successful.**

"The verification flights have been conducted according to plan and all the objectives have been fulfilled. The campaign has been very successful and the cooperation with the South African Air Force has been excellent. During the campaign the full available envelope for Gripen air-to-air refueling has been examined, including refueling at various speeds, altitudes and with various external loads." says Mats Thorbiörnson, Deputy Chief test pilot at Saab Aerosystems.

The aim of the campaign has been to technically verify Gripen's refueling capability, which is part of the aircraft's export adaptation. The Gripen C and D are fully NATO-interoperable and meet the demands for both national and international operations. The air-to-air refueling capability increases Gripen's operational range and endurance, a major advantage in international operations.

The sorties were carried out in close cooperation with a South African Air Force Boeing 707 tanker and its aircrew and ground crew of twenty, who arrived in Linköping on 19 March. The South African Air Force has extensive experience of air-to-air refueling and has previously verified a number of different aircraft from several air forces during similar trials.

"We are delighted to have been involved in these successful Gripen air-to-air re-fueling trials. It has been a very good experience for my team to work in close partnership with the Saab Gripen team and to have had the opportunity to live and work in Sweden over the past month", said the team leader of the SAAF tanker crew, Colonel Giel van den Berg.

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