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PRESS INFORMATION

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Successful Meteor missile firings with Gripen completed

An important stage in the Meteor missile programme was reached today when the second Air Launched Demonstration (ALD) firing took place. This successfully continued the first Meteor firing campaign with a Gripen fighter aircraft at the FMV Vidsele test range in northern Sweden.

"The successful ALD-firings with Gripen, demonstrates that Saab is fully committed to deliver both knowledge and expertise in aircraft integration and advanced flight testing for the development of future air dominance capabilities for Europe's new generation combat aircraft systems", says Lennart Sindahl, Senior Vice President and General Manager of Saab Aerosystems.

In 2001, Swedish authorities signed an international agreement to provide the Gripen new generation fighter aircraft as a test platform for testing the high-tech Beyond Visual Range (BVR) Meteor missile.

The Meteor programme is an international cooperation between leading aerospace companies in Europe. The Meteor programme is being led by MBDA, in partnership with Saab Bofors Dynamics, and Spain's INMIZE. Today's successful firing demonstrates that Saab is playing an important role in future European defence development programmes.

"Saab has fully met the requirements for reaching these important firings for the Meteor programme. It has been very interesting and a challenge for all of us to be a part of this international collaboration. I am proud to say that Saab has proven to be a reliable and capable partner for the integration of complex future missile systems", says Thomas Hellström, Project Manager Meteor at Saab Aerosystems.

"Meteor was rail-launched from Gripen at an altitude of 23,000 ft. The missile successfully transitioned to its operation according to plan and all the objectives have been fulfilled", said Magnus Ljungdahl, Gripen Test Pilot at Saab Aerosystems.

Several important flight test campaigns will be performed with Meteor on the Gripen combat aircraft during 2006 and onwards.

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Saab is one of the world's leading high-technology companies, with its main operations focusing on defence, aviation and space. The group covers a broad spectrum of competence and capabilities in systems integration.

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Notes to editors

Meteor is a fast and highly manoeuvrable Beyond Visual Range (BVR) air-to-air weapon, for use against air targets. In the future it can replace the American AMRAAM system. The development of the Meteor air-to-air missile is being carried out as an international industrial project involving the UK, Germany, Sweden, France, Italy and Spain.

The prime contract for the Meteor program was signed, during December 2002, by MBDA as prime contractor and the Defence Procurement Agency in UK on behalf of the Governments of France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and the UK.

In November 2003, Saab Aerosystems received an order from the Swedish Defence Materiel Administration, FMV, concerning the integration of Meteor on the Gripen. At a later stage Meteor will also be integrated in Rafale and Eurofighter aircraft.

The Gripen is the first of the new generation combat aircraft to enter service and the only fighter aircraft currently available for testing the high-tech beyond visual range missiles of the future. Using the latest available technology it is capable of performing an extensive range of air-to-air and air-to-surface operational missions and employing the latest weapons. Gripen, designed to meet the demands of current and future threats, is in service with the Swedish, Czech Republic and Hungarian Air Forces and has also been ordered by the South African Air Force. The UK Empire Test Pilots' School (ETPS) is also operating Gripen as its advanced fast jet platform for test pilots worldwide.

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%).