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Datum *Date*

23.07.2002

Referens *Reference*

CU 02-XXE

Saab's first successful flight with UAV-demonstrator

In recent years, Saab Aerospace has worked on a large number of concept studies for unmanned aerial vehicles, or UAVs. This work is now continuing with the flight of a UAV demonstrator which is another step towards the next generation of UAVs with high reliability and survivability and with the performance to make it possible to certify UAVs.

“The flight we now have carried out is an important milestone towards autonomous and reliable UAVs”, says Åke Svensson, Senior Vice President and General Manager, Saab Aerospace.

The work commenced in 1998 when Saab, within the framework of the National Aeronautical Research Programme, developed nine different configurations, all representing different construction philosophies. This eventually led to the selection of one concept, SHARC (Swedish Highly Advanced Research Configuration), whose flight properties were tested in a wind tunnel at Aeronautical Research Institute of Sweden (FOI).

Saab together with the Swedish Defence Materiel Administration (FMV) has developed and test-flown a configuration of SHARC. The development of the demonstrator is intended to bring about increased knowledge of UAV-systems and their design, as well as practical experience of flying with UAV systems.

Saab is convinced that, in the near future, UAV-systems will become increasingly important pieces in the Network Centric Defence concept. They will constitute an excellent complement to manned aircraft, navy vessels and land defence units. To achieve this, the UAV-systems must have sufficient levels of reliability to become certified.

The technology for achieving this is available within the aerospace industry, where the demands placed on 4th generation swing role Gripen fighter have generated systems knowledge which is directly applicable within the UAV-sector. Saab is therefore conducting evolutionary development in order to achieve this goal. The knowledge from manned aircrafts, advanced missiles systems, cutting edge sensor systems and command and control systems in the Saab group makes us well equipped to be a partner in future advanced UAV-systems.

“Saab has the experience and knowledge to develop the first certified UAV for civil aerospace”, finishes Åke Svensson.

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 capability in systems integration.

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Pictures and background information

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