MBDA’s Sea Venom-ANL Missile Marks Further Trials Milestone

PARIS — MBDA’s Sea Venom-ANL anti-ship missile has successfully conducted a further firing trial, passing a significant new milestone for the Anglo-French cooperation program, the company said in a Dec. 12 release.

Conducted on Nov. 14 from a Direction Générale de l’Armement (DGA) Dauphin test helicopter at the DGA Missile testing range of Ile du Levant range, the trial was the final development firing for the missile prior to the start of qualification trials in 2019.

This latest trial highlighted Sea Venom-ANL’s lock-on-before-launch (LOBL) capabilities, with images from the missile’s infrared seeker being used by the operator to designate the target prior to launch.

“This latest successful trial is a great milestone for the program, which will provide a major increase in the naval strike capabilities of our armed forces,” said Frank Bastart, MBDA’s head of the Sea Venom-ANL program. “Throughout the trials campaign we have continued to push the system and its operating modes to its limits. The success of these tests is testament to the unrivalled performance of the Sea Venom-ANL missile.”

Sea Venom-ANL is capable of being launched from a wide range of platforms and will be used on the U.K. Royal Navy’s AW159 Wildcat and French Navy future HIL (Hélicoptère Interarmées Léger) helicopters. This 120-kilogram sea-skimming missile is designed to enable navies to deal with a range of threats including fast moving patrol boats, corvettes and coastal targets.

The missile is capable of being fired in both LOBL and lock-on-after-launch modes, with a two-way datalink and imaging seeker giving the operator the ability to monitor the engagement, perform aim point refinement, select a new target, or abort the mission if necessary.

The missile is being developed under a unique joint program launched at the 2010 Lancaster House Summit, that is the first to take full advantage of consolidated centers of excellence created within the Anglo-French missile industry under the “One Complex Weapons” initiative.