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PRODUCT UPDATE - NLAW

NLAW, the optimal anti-tank weapon

NLAW (Next Generation Light Antitank Weapon) is a unique missile system that has been optimised from the outset to combat tanks and other armoured vehicles. NLAW has been developed for the British and Swedish need for a weapon that gives individual soldiers the capability to combat a modern tank in all conflict situations and in all environments.

The development of NLAW started in 1999 and has been in production since 2008. The weapon is used by the majority of forces throughout the Swedish and British armies and thereby constitutes an anti-tank complement to the existing light and crew-operated medium range systems. In the United Kingdom, NLAW has replaced LAW 80. An additional two countries, Finland and Luxembourg, have chosen NLAW. In Finland, NLAW is deployed throughout the army, while Luxembourg integrates NLAW in connection with its international operations.

Attacks from the top

NLAW is a top-attack, PLOS-guided, fire & forget missile, which is preloaded into a disposable launch-tube. NLAW is handled and fired by one person and can be fired from confined spaces. The effective range is from 20 to 600 metres, which is well covering the need for an individual soldier's combat range. The maximum firing range is 1000 m beyond which the missile is designed to auto-destruct. The missile requires no target lock-on or IR signature before firing.

“NLAW is unique in that it is the only one-man weapon in the world with the capability to take out a tank in a single shot in any attitude, even if the tank is equipped with reactive armour, is hidden in a protected or firing position, located in a built up area or in woodland, or is concealed for example behind a wall of concrete”, says Markus Mellkvist, Head of Marketing and Sales Business Unit Ground Combat.

Unique live test firing

In the beginning of April 2014, Saab conducted a unique live test firing of NLAW. The firing was very successful despite the fact that the programme included a number of challenging and new firing cases for the system combined with bad weather conditions.

The entire team from Saab and the Bofors Test Centre performed outstandingly, with many preparations in the form of reconnaissance and preparing new firing sites, planning the tests and measurement equipment. Despite their efforts, on the day of the firing test the team was

forced to improvise and re-plan almost everything due to the demanding weather conditions, from the firing order and technical presentations to transport and mealtimes.

"Thanks to tremendous flexibility and a real fighting spirit from everyone in the team, we were able to complete five successful firings, including two that were world-firsts for the system: Newly trained external gunners firing successfully at ranges well exceeding the verified ranges of the system for both stationary and moving targets," explains Anders Wahlström, Market Area Western Europe.

Johan Ekeroot, Product Manager for NLAW, was also pleased:

"These firing tests highlight performance beyond what NLAW was originally specified for and the results really do show the system's outstanding capability."