

Naval unmanned aerial system tested at sea from a French Navy frigate

[@AirbusHeli](#) [@DGA](#) [@MarineNationale](#) [#VSR700](#)

Marignane, 31 October 2023 – Airbus Helicopters and Naval Group, in collaboration with the French Armament General Directorate, DGA (Direction générale de l'armement), and the French Navy, have tested the SDAM demonstrator (Système de Drone Aérien Marine/ Naval Aerial Drone System) from a multi-mission frigate (FREMM). The trials took place on board the French Navy frigate, Provence, in the Mediterranean Sea between the 2nd and the 9th of October. The vessel had previously been adapted by Naval Group to operate the SDAM. These sea trials were arranged to demonstrate the system's high performance from an operational warship and the SDAM's capabilities for surveillance and intelligence missions.

"We are proud to see that the SDAM and the VSR700 are maturing," said Bruno Even, CEO of Airbus Helicopters. "The system that we will offer will be able to operate from a frigate and be adapted to the naval missions it was designed for," he added. "Working alongside Naval Group and other local partners we are building a robust and sovereign solution. I look forward to further demonstrating the potential of our system and to collaborating with the French Navy in order to offer an initial operational capability by 2026."

"We are very happy with the success of these trials which mark a major step in the reinforcement of the French Navy's future capabilities. We have passed a significant milestone in terms of the complexity of the integration of an unmanned aerial system (UAS) on board a heavily armed vessel, both physically and operationally," said Pierre-Eric Pommellet, CEO of Naval Group. "These trials have also shown the relevance of the Naval Group I4Drones® mission system, and the fact that the SDAM demonstrator can seamlessly be integrated on a vessel and will work harmoniously with other existing systems. In synergy with the ship's combat system and the embarked helicopter, the drone will be another means to access complementary airspaces and will truly be a remote sensor that will expand the crew's perception and treatment of threats in real time."

The derisking study for the SDAM programme was awarded to Airbus Helicopters and Naval Group by the DGA. The objective is to design, produce and test a rotary wing unmanned aerial system demonstrator for the French Navy. The system works with the Airbus Helicopters VSR700 unmanned aerial system and the I4Drones® mission system developed by Naval Group. Naval Group has also been tasked with the integration of the system onboard military vessels. The project also involves French SMEs like Hélicoptères Guimbal and Diades, contributing to the creation of a local naval UAS industry in France.

Follow us



If you wish to update your preferences to Airbus Communications, media@airbus.com
If you no longer wish to receive communications from Airbus, media@airbus.com



Copyright: Naval Group

Newsroom

Contacts for the media

Emmanuel Huberdeau

Airbus Helicopters

+33 6 17 27 93 31

emmanuel.huberdeau@airbus.com

Follow us



If you wish to update your preferences to Airbus Communications, media@airbus.com
If you no longer wish to receive communications from Airbus, media@airbus.com