

15 December 2023

Panther ready to pounce – Rheinmetall signs development contract with Hungary for next-generation tank

The Hungarian government has joined forces with Rheinmetall to develop the Panther KF51 through to production maturity. A contract to this effect has now been signed in Zalaegerszeg, Hungary. The development contract is worth around €288 million. A demonstrator vehicle will be constructed and qualified, paving the way to full-scale production. Rheinmetall is cooperating in the project with the state-owned Hungarian holding company N7, which also holds a 49 percent stake in the joint venture Rheinmetall Hungary.

“We’re delighted to have reached another important milestone on the path to producing next-generation fighting vehicles in Hungary”, declares Armin Papperger, CEO of Rheinmetall. “The Panther KF51 is the world’s most advanced main battle tank. It sets a new standard for the combat effectiveness of mechanized formations, while delivering a high degree of future adaptability. At the same time, in our accustomed manner, we’ll be empowering our local Joint Venture Rheinmetall Hungary and further strengthen the national defence industrial capabilities of our partners.”

Moving forward together as partners, Hungary and Rheinmetall will jointly develop and prepare for full production the next-generation tank whose concept Rheinmetall first presented to the world public at Eurosatory 2022 trade fair. Unlike the system demonstrator on show at Eurosatory, the Panther KF51 EVO will be armed with Rheinmetall’s tried-and-tested L55A1 120mm smoothbore gun, which also features in the latest variants of the Leopard 2. This will ensure logistical homogeneity with Hungary’s existing fleet of Leopard 2 tanks. Nevertheless, the Panther KF51 EVO will already be equipped with an autoloader. Moreover, the turret architecture will enable subsequent retrofitting of Rheinmetall’s new 130mm gun.



The Panther K51 possesses a high degree of digitalization and networkability. Furthermore, new force protection technologies like the standoff protection system StrikeShield will enable a low aggregate weight. Its chassis is based on the Buffalo armoured recovery vehicle, supplied by Rheinmetall. In combination with the tank’s low total weight, this contributes to the Panther KF51’s high mobility, while simultaneously resulting in synergy effects in logistics, maintenance and training owing to commonalities with the Leopard 2 family.

► Key facts

- ▷ Hungary awards Rheinmetall contract to develop Panther KF51 tank
- ▷ Development in cooperation with N7
- ▷ Contract worth around € 288 million
- ▷ Demonstrator vehicle to be built and qualified
- ▷ Panther KF 51 EVO to feature L55A1 smoothbore gun and autoloader

► Contacts

Oliver Hoffmann
Head of Public Relations
Rheinmetall AG
Tel.: +49-(0)211 473 4748
oliver.hoffmann@rheinmetall.com

Dr. phil. Jan-Phillipp
Weisswange
Assistant Head of Public
Relations
Rheinmetall AG
Tel.: +49-(0)211 473 4287
jan-phillipp.weisswange@rheinmetall.com

► Social Media

✕ @Rheinmetallag
© @Rheinmetallag
📺 Rheinmetall

The basic crew of the Panther KF51 consists of three soldiers: the commander, gunner and driver. A fourth station, in front on the lefthand side of the bow, is reserved for a subsystem operator. A company or battalion commander can also use it as a mobile command post.