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Rheinmetall's advanced MK82-EP general purpose aircraft bomb wins orders in France and Germany

Rheinmetall's advanced MK-82-EP general purpose aircraft bomb has recently scored major successes in France and Germany. France's procurement authority, the Direction Générale de l'Armement (DGA), has already placed the first serial production orders for the MK82-EP, which are earmarked for the Mirage 2000 and Rafale fighter jets. Furthermore, the German Air Force has selected the Rheinmetall MK82-EP to serve as the warhead of the GBU-54 Laser Joint Direct Attack Munition system, destined for its Tornado and Eurofighter platforms. Together, the orders encompass more than 2,000 MK82-bomb bodies, worth over €35 million in total.

In October 2020 France's DGA successfully qualified the new MK82-EP (*Enhanced Performance*) 500-pound bomb body. This follows a five-year programme of development and extensive testing conducted by RWM Italia SpA, Rheinmetall's airborne ordnance centre of excellence in Italy, in cooperation with explosives manufacturer EURENCO.

Engineered for maximum safety during storage, handling and operations, the state-of-the-art 500-pound MK82-EP warhead is an enhanced, fully interchangeable version of the standard MK82 bomb body, delivering improved effectiveness.

The MK82-EP can be deployed in free fall mode or as a precision guided munition in tandem with Paveway, Enhanced Paveway, Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) and Laser Joint Direct Attack Munition (LJDAM) or Armement Air-Sol Modulaire (AASM) kits.

Led by DIEHL Defence, the GBU-54 team supplying the German Air Force includes RWM Italia S.p.A., Boeing for the guidance kit, and Junghans Microtec for the fuse. DIEHL has recently been awarded a contract to supply several hundred of these systems during the period 2021 to 2024.

Thanks to this successful start in France and Germany, the MK82-EP is seen as a likely choice to arm the Future Combat Air System (FCAS) currently being jointly developed by the two countries, as well as serving as a new baseline for all Mirage 2000, Rafale and Eurofighter users.

► Key facts

- Enhanced version of the widely used MK82 500-pound general purpose bomb
- More than 2,000 MK82-EP bomb bodies ordered by France and Germany
- Orders worth over €35 million
- To be used by the Mirage 2000, Rafale, Tornado and Eurofighter
- Follow-up orders can be expected

► Contact

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

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