

► WEAPON AND AMMUNITION

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Rheinmetall is supplying qualification rounds of a new generation of tank ammunition for a joint qualification of the Bundeswehr and the British Army

Rheinmetall has successfully completed the development of the latest generation of its enhanced armour-piercing 120mm KE-ammunition to counter state-of-the-art protection technologies. The qualification readiness of the KE2020Neo or eKE (enhanced Kinetic Energy) ammunition has also been proven. As a result, Rheinmetall has been commissioned by the Bundeswehr and the British Army to manufacture qualification samples of the new ammunition. A corresponding official qualification contract was signed in September 2020 by the Federal Office for the Equipment, Information Technology and In-Service Support of the Bundeswehr (BAAINBw) and the management of Rheinmetall Waffe Munition GmbH.

The new 120 mm x 570 KE2020Neo kinetic energy ammunition continues the successful series of kinetic energy (KE) rounds from Rheinmetall. Thanks to the use of new technologies, the high-strength tungsten penetrator shall be able to penetrate the latest protection technologies.

Rheinmetall's current KE projectiles also use a high-strength tungsten penetrator and offer superior performance against modern armour. The first generation to come into use was the DM13. It was followed by the more powerful DM23 in the mid-1980s, and yet later, the DM33. Rheinmetall developed two types of performance-enhanced KE ammunition when the Leopard 2 was upgraded to the A6 version. These were the forerunners of the DM53 and DM63 models used by the Bundeswehr. The DM63 is now available in the REACH-compliant version A1. The enhanced DM73 is currently the most advanced iteration, which has been introduced in the Bundeswehr for use with the L55A1 high-pressure weapon.

The recently awarded qualification contract once again underlines Rheinmetall's leading role in the field of main armour armament and smoothbore technology. Rheinmetall's 120mm smoothbore technology includes the Rh120 guns and the related ammunition family. It is the de facto standard for main battle tanks in NATO and the western hemisphere. It is used, among others, in the Leopard 2 and M1 Abrams main battle tanks and is currently also being fitted in the British Challenger 3 main battle tank with its increased combat effectiveness.



► Key facts

- Rheinmetall supplies qualification samples of the new 120mm KE 2020 Neo ammunition
- German-British project
- Advanced technologies to overcome modern protection systems
- Order underlines Rheinmetall's leading role in the field of main battle tank armament

► Contact

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

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

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