

Rome, 20 October 2006

Alenia Aeronautica: the first C-27J in service with the Italian Air Force

After completion of the test activities, the Italian Defence Ministry has accepted the first Alenia Aeronautica C-27J tactical transport aircraft.

This aircraft is part of a 12-unit contract, and its related 5-year logistic support, whose supply will be completed by 2008 to the Italian Air Force 46th Wing, Pisa Air Force Base. A second aircraft will be presented to ItAF for test by the end of the year.

The Italian Air Forces' aircraft have the new C-27J standard configuration, with a flight-refuelling device, self-protection system and double head-up display.

The C-27J Spartan, the only true next generation medium military airlifter in its class, is a twin-engine turboprop tactical transport aircraft with state-of-the-art technology avionics, propulsion and aircraft systems; it provides high performances, high cost effectiveness, extreme operating flexibility, best performances for aircraft of its category in all operational conditions and unique interoperability with heavier airlifters.

The C-27J can perform many missions, among which cargo and troop transport, logistical re-supply, MEDEVAC, airdrop operations, SAR (Search and Rescue) missions, humanitarian assistance and missions in support of civil protection, operating from paved and unpaved runways.

The C-27J has been ordered also by the Greek, Bulgarian and Lithuanian Air Forces. The Greek contract includes 12 C-27J new-generation tactical transport aircraft, plus three options, to the Hellenic Air Force (HAF). The first HAF aircraft is in service since September 2005. The Bulgarian contract, signed last February, is for 8 aircraft to Air Force (BuAF). The first BuAF C-27J will be delivered in November 2007. In June 2006 3 C-27Js were ordered by the Lithuanian Armed Forces to replace the current fleet of An-26 aircraft. The C-27J will allow the Lithuanian Armed Forces, engaged in a modernization campaign, to fully meet the interoperability standards of the Atlantic Alliance Countries.

A range of potential American, European and Asian customers have also shown a keen interest in the C-27J. Particularly the C-27J was engaged in campaigns in the USA and Canada. In USA the C-27J Team, including Alenia North America, L-3 Communications, Boeing and GMAS is competing to provide the US Army and US Air Force with a solution for their joint program JCA – Joint Cargo Aircraft. The JCA program is a key component in the services upgrading of fixed wing fleets to meet the evolving requirements of current and future conflicts. To support the future force, the JCA must be a multirole and interoperable aircraft, able to perform logistical re-supply, MEDEVAC, troop transport, airdrop operations, humanitarian assistance and missions in support of homeland security. The JCA program is expected to replace the U.S. Army's C-23 Sherpas, C-12 and C-26 aircraft and augment the U.S. Air Force's current fleet of C-130s, C-17s, and C-5s.

In Canada the C-27J is the best answer to the fixed wing search and rescue airlift requirement (today Canada operate a fleet of Buffalos and C-130s) of the Canadian Government, which could purchase 15 units.

The aircraft has already been formally evaluated by the Air Forces of Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ireland, Norway, Romania, Australia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, United Emirates and Taiwan.

Alenia Aeronautica, a Finmeccanica Company, is the largest Italian aeronautic player which operates world-wide in the commercial and military aviation, unmanned aerial vehicles and aerostructures. Alenia Aeronautica also coordinates the activities of Aermacchi and Aeronavali - wholly owned companies – respectively active in the design and manufacturing of military trainer aircraft and in the overhaul, maintenance and modification of military and civil aircraft. With its joint venture ATR, Alenia Aeronautica is the world leader in the regional turboprop market. Over 2005 Alenia Aeronautica reported a value of production of 2,046 millions Euro, backlog for 6,865 millions Euro and orders for 3,230. The total workforce is 11,198.