

Rome, 10 November 2009

Finmeccanica signs EUR 220 million contract with ARMAEREO for six M-346 Masters for the Italian Air Force

In Rome today, Finmeccanica – via its Company Alenia Aermacchi (a subsidiary of Alenia Aeronautica) – and ARMAEREO (Direzione Generale per gli Armamenti Aeronautici) signed a contract worth EUR 220 million to provide the Italian Air Force with six M-346 Master advanced trainer aircraft (T-346A) and related flight simulators, which together comprise an Integrated Training System (ITS). This contract forms part of a broader agreement to supply a total of 15 M-346 Masters and related support.

Also included in the contract are logistics support, the training of military personnel and the construction of part of the logistic-infrastructure platform to be used for training and ground operations. This will consist of multimedia training rooms and a new flight line for the M-346 Master to be built at the Lecce Flying School along with a hangar and maintenance services for the aircraft.

The first two M-346 Masters, which are scheduled for delivery by the end of 2010, will be initially assigned to the Flight Testing Department at the Pratica di Mare air base, where the first operational tests will take place. The Italian Air Force will receive four more aircraft by the end of 2011, and will be the world's first Air Force to have a training line based on the M-346 Master, the most advanced aircraft currently available on the market for training military pilots to fly fourth and fifth generation combat aircraft.

This contract testifies to the fruitful partnership between the Finmeccanica Group, Italy's Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Economic Development, together with Ministry for the Economy and Finance, and the country's Air Force, and represents a first important step in promoting the M-346 Master on the international market. A number of countries around the world are at present evaluating the aircraft for their flight schools, including the United Arab Emirates, which recently selected 48 M-346 Master aircraft. The contract for these aircraft is currently being finalised.