



# Italian Army Adds **CENTAURO II** to its Fleet

Recently, the Italian Army Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Salvatore Farina, was welcomed by Claudio Catalano, CEO of IVECO Defence Vehicles, at the Bolzano plant, Italy, where the new Centauro II are currently in production. These vehicles are going to be part of the cavalry units of the Italian Army. The Director of Land Armaments, Lt. Gen. Paolo Giovannini, was also present. During the visit, the work in progress on the vehicles was discussed and the first production vehicle was presented.

The Centauro II marks a step forward compared to the previous Centauro I, in terms of firepower, battlefield observation capability, mobility, shooting conduct, communication as well as increased crew protection. The new platform uses an all-digital architecture and a new generation turret with a 120mm cannon and Command and Control Communication systems, making it one of the most modern vehicles supplied to Western armies. The result is an innovative wheeled armoured platform capable of operating in every scenario –

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from national security missions, to peacekeeping and support operations including all interventions involving the Italian Armed Forces.

Last year, the Land Armaments Directorate and the Iveco – Oto Melara Consortium (CIO), signed a contract for 86 Centauro II, plus 10 further units in option, in addition to the 10 already contracted in 2018.

The supply addresses a total need of 150 vehicles to be assigned to the army cavalry units. Thanks to its state-of-the-art technologies, this platform can safely be used by the cavalry units also in high-risk operations.

### Key Features

The new Centauro armoured vehicle represents a new stage in the evolution of the storied Centauro 105 and 120mm armoured vehicle, reportedly the first 8x8 wheeled antitank vehicle in the world with a high-pressure gun.

The Centauro II vehicle integrates high hardness monocoque steel hull. The forward section of the hull houses the power-pack, while the turret extends from the middle to the rear of the vehicle. The driver is seated in the front section of the vehicle, whereas the crew members, including a commander, gunner and a loader are seated on anti-mine blast seats within the turret section.

With regards to mobility in particular, the power-to-weight ratio, increased to 24 HP/tonne, provides performance in terms of speed and acceleration thanks to the new-generation IVECO engine, offering more than 720 HP, and to the associated modernisation of the transmission, braking system and control electronics.

The digital tyre pressure control (CTIS), allied with run-flat systems, the new suspension and the low nominal ground pressure allow the new Centauro armoured vehicle to extricate itself from any type of terrain.

As for ballistic armour, protection levels are significantly higher than in the past, with a completely rearranged hull chassis and turret design, add-on ballistics and technical solutions, tested to the AEP 55 standard, capable of handling threats such as mines, IEDs and the latest-generation kinetic munitions.

Crew safety has also been further increased, with partitioning of stand-by ammunition and stores within the hull, in addition to the state-of-the-art NBC, fire-fighting and anti-explosion systems.

## Centauro II is an innovative wheeled armoured platform capable of operating in every scenario

In terms of ergonomics, the ammunition reserves in the hull are automated, as is the new automatic loading system in the turret.

The third generation 120/45 mm gun (optional 105/52mm interchangeable to 120 mm), with integrated and stabilised low-recoil muzzle brake, provides the same fire power as most modern main battle tanks, with the capability of firing all latest generation 120 mm NATO APFSDS and multi-role MP munitions.

The turret, equipped with new anti-mine seats, has a crew of three men, commander, gunner and loader, with the latter able to use the new automatic loading system, while being able also to undertake manual loading operations, as back-up, or other emergency operations.

Optronic equipment includes a panoramic commander's sight and a gunner's sight, both latest-generation, and a back-up sight for use in degraded mode. The vehicle is fully network-integrated (for NCW).

At recent event, the 8x8 VBM Freccia Digital Tactical Command Post was also presented. This vehicle is made in two versions, one for the unit Commander and the other one for the unit mobile HQ. These platforms are equipped with the latest communication equipment that seamlessly integrates into the Army and Joint tactical battle command network.

