

“New Blindo Centauro” Goes to Italy



The Centauro II turret can be fitted with a Hitrole Light RCWS that increases flexibility

A contract for the first tranche of 10 Centauro II Vehicles, named “New Blindo Centauro” by the Italian Army, was signed by the Iveco – Oto Melara Consortium (CIO) senior management at Guidoni Palace, headquarters of the General Secretariat of Defence and of the National Armaments Directorate, in the presence of the Italian Army Chief of Staff and of the Land Armaments Director.

The Iveco – Oto Melara Consortium (CIO) is 50 per cent owned by Leonardo. The Centauro II marks a step forward compared to the previous Centauro I, in terms of power, observation capability, mobility, ergonomics, firing range, communication and maximum crew protection.

The Centauro was one of the first 8x8 wheeled antitank vehicle in the world with a high-pressure gun. The Cen-

tauro II represents the evolution, being armed with a third generation 120/45 mm gun, with integrated muzzle brake and semi-automatic loading system. The weapon system provides a firepower equivalent to that of most modern main battle tanks, and is capable of firing all latest generation 120 mm, NATO APFSDS (Armor Piercing Fin-Stabilized Discarding Sabot) and multi-role MP munitions. The result is a new concept



The turret is equipped with new anti-mine seats



the H-drive architecture, the Centauro family hallmark, the chassis was rearranged to further improve protection against mines and IEDs, state-of-the-art add-on ballistic packages fitted to the hull ensuring high level protection against kinetic energy and hollow charge projectiles.

Ammunition stored in the hull and in the turret is hosted in compartments separated from the crew section by explosion-proof doors, pre-carved panels and dedicated anti-explosion systems ensuring further crew safety.

With regards to mobility in particular, the power-to-weight ratio, increased to 24 HP/tonne, provides unequalled 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, integratable add-on ballistics and technical solu-

tions, 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 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.

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

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. The turret can be fitted with a Hitrole Light RCWS that increases flexibility in other-than-war scenarios while ensuring maximum crew protection. In the turret, as an alternative to the external turntable-mounted anti-aircraft machine gun, a remote-operated HITROLE Light turret can be installed, with the possibility of using 7.62 or 12.7 calibre machine guns as well as 40 mm AGLs, integrated with the firing system, allowing the loader to undertake battlefield surveillance from a protected position.

The Centauro II turret is fitted with latest generation optronics for the commander and gunner and with a suite of communications and command and control systems ensuring maximum situational awareness.

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).

Reference Text/Photo:

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of wheeled armoured vehicle capable of operating in any scenario: from national security missions, to peacekeeping and support operations including all interventions involving the Italian Armed Forces.

Increased Mobility

To ensure unique mobility, a new-generation engine, upgraded transmission, braking system and control electronics have been adopted. While maintaining