



## **The Iveco - Oto Melara Consortium signs the contract for the supply of 76 VBM PLUS for the Italian Army**

The Iveco - Oto Melara Consortium (CIO) announces the signing of a contract with the Direzione Armamenti Terrestri (DAT) of the Italian Ministry of Defence for the supply of 76 VBM Plus, 60 in Combat and 16 in the Antitank version, integrated logistics support and related combat support vehicles.

Signed on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2024, the contract comes as part of the ongoing supply ("Phase 2") of Medium Armoured Vehicles to the Italian Army's Second Medium Brigade and includes an upgrade to the "PLUS" version for the VBM platform, as well as long-term integrated logistics support for all platforms purchased, along with "10x10" rescue and recovery vehicles, ensuring logistical communality among the different tactical platforms in service and representing state-of-the-art vehicles in terms of mobility and protection.

The upgrade of the VBM Combat and Antitank in the "PLUS" version see changes to both the vehicle and the turret.

As regards the vehicle, changes include:

- upgrades to common rail technology for the engine, taking it from 550 HP to 720 HP ready for a future hybrid-electric traction system;
- the implementation of a new generation hull, result of the experience gained over the years with the Centauro II and VBM platforms;
- upgrades to the driveline and suspensions with a significant improve in terms of mobility and an increase in growth potential.

These updates will also ensure a further increase in the ballistic and anti-mine protection of the hull through cutting-edge technological solutions.

With respect to the turret, it has been introduced a Leonardo's new X-GUN 30mm armament capable of using all types of ammunition from 30mmx173 to NATO standards, including the new ABM (Air Burst Munition) ammunition also suitable for anti-drone use.

The main upgrades in the turret mainly refer to the shooting system by Leonardo, with the introduction of latest generation electronic components compliant with the new NGVA (Nato Generic Vehicle Architecture) standard and capable of interfacing with the new digitized optronics of targeting and search "Janus D" and Lothar SD".



The new turret provides the crew with an increased level of ballistic and anti-mine protection compared to the previous version. The contract also includes the supply of the new digital intercom and a completely updated CIS system which involves the use of the SDR VQ1 four-channel radio and the new Command and Control system, called C2D/N Evo, both from Leonardo.

The new VBM PLUS distinguishes itself by increased mobility, protection, lethality and integrated C4I, allowing the Italian Army to face the challenges of the coming years with a truly state-of-the-art vehicle, integrated into the net-centric architecture of the digital battlefield. The vehicle will also be equipped with Galileo PRS technology developed in Italy as part of the European Union secure satellite navigation system. In specific terms this means the VBM will be equipped with a newly developed satellite receiver, the first of its kind capable of receiving secure satellite navigation services from both the US GPS and European Galileo PRS systems.

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**CIO Iveco - Oto Melara**

*The Iveco - Oto Melara Consortium, CIO for short, was established in 1985 on an equal participation basis between Iveco Defence Vehicles and former Oto Melara, now Leonardo. Within the Consortium, Iveco Defence Vehicles, an Iveco Group company, provides for the engines, transmission and all the automotive components of wheeled armoured vehicles, as well as the hull and final assembly, while Leonardo handles the weapon systems, sight, command and control communication systems, as well as the hull and final assembly of tracked armoured vehicles. Both companies have consolidated experience in the field of protection against direct fire, mines and IEDs.*