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June 20, 2011
CUE 11-038

Gripen passes 160 000 flight hours during mission over Libya

The Saab Gripen Multi Role fighters are now flying with great succes in 5 different air forces around the world. Integration of new weapons and capabilites are ongoing and the demonstrator for the future Gripen NG has been flying with new avionics and displays since May 19th.

Gripen is also now operational in Thailand following delivery to the Royal Thai Air Force in February of the first 6 aircraft, out of a total requirement of 12. Thailand now formally joins Sweden, South Africa, Hungary, the Czech Republic and the UK based Empire Test Pilot School as a Gripen user.

Another first is the Swedish participation in the NATO led operation 'Unified Protector' over Libya. Since April 22nd eight Gripen fighters, based at the Sigonella air base in Sicily, are flying daily reconnaissance and air supremacy missions. So far more than 300 recce missions have produced over 80 000 photos.

Among the upgrades of the existing Gripen C/D fleet, two new weapons are being integrated. In May Denel Dynamics, South Africa, completed the integration of the A-Darter fifth generation air-to-air missile on Gripen. While at the Vidsel test range in Sweden Saab is integrating Small Diameter Bombs on the Swedish Air Force Gripen.

On May 19th the Gripen NG demonstrator aircraft flew with new avionics for the first time. At this stage of flight testing, after almost 200 flights, an open system architecture avionics system that separate flight critical from mission critical functionality is integrated in the aircraft. Also integrated are new Tactical Mission Computers, Ethernet networks and new Rockwell Collins displays.

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