

U.S. Army Plans Universal Launcher to Fire Allied Munitions Across Battlefronts

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The U.S. Army is pushing forward with the development of a new modular launcher system designed to fire a wide range of munitions from both American and allied stockpiles. Known as the Common Autonomous Multi-Domain Launcher (CAML), the system aims to improve battlefield interoperability, reduce logistical burdens, and enable coalition forces to operate more cohesively in future conflicts.

Unveiled at a recent defense conference in Germany, General Christopher Donahue, head of U.S. Army Europe and Africa, urged industry partners to accelerate the development of a universal launcher with shared fire-control software. The goal is to allow U.S. and allied forces to load and fire their national munitions from the same platform, streamlining joint operations in high-intensity environments.

Two primary variants of CAML are under development. The CAML-Heavy (CAML-H) will be mounted on a Palletized Load System vehicle and support long-range missiles like the Tomahawk cruise missile and the Patriot PAC-3 interceptor. It will also feature autonomous resupply capability via a robotic support vehicle. The CAML-Medium (CAML-M), based on the Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles (FMTV) platform, will be equipped to launch munitions such as the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) and AIM-9X interceptors under the Indirect Fire Protection Capability (IFPC) program.

The Army emphasizes that both versions will be optionally crewed, rapidly deployable, and air-transportable, giving them flexibility in both offensive and defensive missions. This shift to modular, interoperable systems is seen as essential for deterring near-peer adversaries and responding quickly to evolving threats.

CAML builds on lessons learned from previous Autonomous Multi-Domain Launcher (AMDL) trials conducted during Project Convergence at Fort Irwin. These tests demonstrated how unmanned systems could deliver long-range precision fires in support of combined arms operations across land, air, and cyber domains.

The Army is working closely with defense contractors and NATO allies to ensure CAML fits into a broader effort to develop a shared “combat cloud”, a digitally connected battlefield where allied forces can coordinate seamlessly using compatible systems.

Prototype testing of the CAML platforms is expected within the next 18 to 24 months. The Army plans to begin with two Tomahawk-equipped CAML-H units and one PAC-3 variant, as well as multiple configurations of CAML-M using MLRS and short-range air defense munitions.

As the Army continues its modernization push, CAML represents a critical step toward futureproofing allied firepower and ensuring military cooperation remains fast, flexible, and focused on deterrence.