

## New Longer-Range Aster B1NT Missile Passes Second Live Test

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The upgraded Aster B1 New Technology (B1NT) missile has completed a second live-fire test, confirming its extended range and enhanced capabilities. The test took place on 30 July at the DGA missile range in Biscarrosse, France, and was observed by representatives from the UK, France, and Italy under the joint OCCAR defence cooperation framework.

Developed as part of the SAMP/T New Generation air defence programme, the Aster B1NT demonstrated its ability to intercept high-speed, manoeuvrable threats at ranges of up to 150 kilometres and higher altitudes than previous models. The missile features a Ka-band seeker and advanced guidance algorithms, designed to defeat stealth targets, tactical ballistic missiles, and hypersonic projectiles.

This latest test builds on the initial firing conducted in October 2024, which validated the missile's capacity to discriminate between multiple aerial threats, including friendly and hostile aircraft operating simultaneously. Officials noted the success of this second firing as a critical milestone in confirming the missile's reliability and effectiveness under realistic conditions.

The Aster B1NT will form a key part of the evolving SAMP/T NG system, which combines mobile launchers, multifunction radar, and coordinated control centres. It is designed to deliver layered defence against a wide range of airborne threats, including cruise missiles, drones, and next-generation aircraft.

Plans are in place to equip the French and Italian land forces with the B1NT variant. In the UK, it is expected to be integrated into the Sea Viper naval air defence system during the mid-life upgrades of the Royal Navy's Horizon-class Type 45 destroyers.

The missile's technological upgrades represent a significant leap from the earlier Aster 30 B1 model, offering improved precision and a greater operational envelope. The enhanced seeker and electronics enable 'hit-to-kill' performance, a feature increasingly vital as hypersonic and advanced manoeuvring threats become more common.

In March 2025, the UK, France, and Italy jointly ordered 218 additional Aster missiles, reflecting their shared commitment to strengthening European air defence. The order, managed under the FSAF-PAAMS partnership led by OCCAR, is intended to accelerate the fielding of these systems across allied platforms.