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British Army Tests Nine Counter-Drone Systems in Project VANAHEIM Trials

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The British Army has trialled nine counter-uncrewed aircraft systems (C-UAS) in Germany under Project VANAHEIM, a joint UK–US initiative aimed at strengthening battlefield defences against small drone threats.

The systems, mounted on Jackal vehicles (Supacat HMT 400) or operated in dismounted mode, were tested for their ability to detect and

neutralise Class-1 drones. Each platform was integrated with the Army's Android Tactical Assault Kit (ATAK), allowing real-time coordination with command systems in the field.

The range of technologies under evaluation included electro-optical cameras, radars, smart sights, and acoustic sensors. Radio-frequency tools demonstrated both disruption and takeover capabilities, able to sever a drone's communication link or, in some cases, assume direct control through cyber and electromagnetic measures. External electro-optical systems also proved capable of spotting drones using fibre-optic control links.

Project VANAHEIM, managed by the British Army's RAPSTONE Task Force, is designed to provide soldiers with portable, easy-to-deploy equipment that can be used by generalist troops or mounted on light vehicles. While primarily focused on UK and US cooperation, Ukraine has contributed to the trials, and Australia has taken part as an observer.

The project addresses the growing use of small drones for reconnaissance and attack in modern conflicts. By testing different systems in realistic scenarios, the Army hopes to identify scalable, cost-effective defences that can be rolled out quickly to protect both personnel and infrastructure.

For defence industry partners, the trials provide valuable insight into operational needs, helping them refine their products for real-world conditions. For the military, the data gathered will inform procurement decisions and ensure that future counter-drone measures are aligned with the fast-evolving threat landscape.

Project VANAHEIM's trials highlight a shift towards adaptable and integrated electronic warfare solutions, critical for staying ahead of emerging drone technologies on today's battlefields.