RAFALE EXPORTS BOOST DASSAULT'S 2015 DEFENCE SALES

News / Manufacturer

Dassault has attributed a 12-fold year-on-year increase in defence sales to its success with exports of the Rafale multi-role combat aircraft, having secured orders from Egypt and Qatar in 2015.

Defence order intake at the French manufacturer for the 12 months to 31 December was €8.3 billion ($9.2 billion), up from €693 million in 2014. It attributes the “large increase” to the sales of a combined 48 aircraft to the two Middle East nations last year.

Its backlog for the Rafale comprises 38 for France, 18 for Egypt – three further aircraft were handed over in January – and 24 for Qatar, and Dassault is now attempting to close a 36-aircraft deal with India for the type.

Dassault aims to deliver nine examples in 2016, when it will also begin assembly of the Rafales destined for Doha. Eight Rafales were delivered in 2015 – five to France and three to Egypt.

Pricing discussions between the French and Indian governments and Dassault over New Delhi's order continue, it says.

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Meanwhile, the upgrade of the Indian Mirage 2000 fighter “favourably impacted” its 2015 figures, Dassault adds.

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An Egyptian Rafale

Dassault

The results also confirm Japan's coastguard has ordered a pair of maritime surveillance-configured Falcon 2000 business jets. No quantity had previously been revealed for the deal.

Defence exports represent around 55% of Dassault's €14 billion consolidated order backlog – up from €8 billion in 2014 – the Falcon business jet line 27%, and domestic defence 18%.

The company is also focusing on its unmanned air vehicle product line, both in the medium-

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altitude, long-endurance (MALE) and unmanned combat aircraft domains.

Dassault hopes to “extend the Neuron programme while waiting for the launch of a [unmanned combat air vehicle] programme”, which it believes is “essential to the sustainability of our combat aircraft sector”.

The 100th flight of the pan-European Neuron UCAV demonstrator took place in 2015, with all participating nations conducting an element of the test campaign.

Evaluations were due to end in 2015, but the consortium behind the stealthy prototype has indicated further demonstrations will take place this year.

Dassault is also an industry lead, alongside British counterpart BAE Systems, in the Anglo-French Future Combat Air System programme. The two governments on 3 March agreed to provide €2.2 billion for the next phase of the project, which will see prototypes of the aircraft design developed.

May also saw Dassault, with Airbus Defence & Space and Alenia Aermacchi, win a contract from the French, German and Italian governments for the MALE 2020 development.

They were contracted to carry out the two-year definition phase for the next generation of MALE UAV, and Dassault says 2016 will see it “sign a study contract concerning a European MALE drone programme”.

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