AIRBUS A400M FIREFIGHTING KIT COMPLETES A SUCCESSFUL TEST CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE

News / Manufacturer

Airbus Defence and Space announced successful completion of a series of test drops and demonstrations of its A400M firefighting demonstrator kit in Nîmes-Garons, France. The objective of this test campaign was to conduct an independent assessment of the effectiveness of the A400M firefighting kit. The tests were conducted by the Entente-Valabre's Test and Research Centre, a French public institution authorised and approved by the Ministry of the Interior to assess forest firefighting equipment, training personnel in France and abroad, and which is an international authority in this field.

Jo Müller, Head of Sustainability and Communications, Airbus Defence and Space commented: "Following initial tests conducted in Spain, the successful completion of these tests in Nîmes is a crucial step forward in our ambition to shape an ecosystem of firefighting capabilities. The A400M's exceptional versatility, combined with the rapid deployment capabilities of this kit, offers a game-changing asset to complement existing technologies and platforms on the ground, in air and

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in space.”

The test campaign, which ran at the end of April 2025, involved the A400M performing multiple drops over a designated section of the airfield. These rigorous so-called cup grid tests allowed the CEREN to precisely assess the system's capabilities, including the accurate distribution and concentration of retardant upon reaching the ground. During the drops, the aircraft reached altitudes under 30 meters (98 feet) and speeds around 230 km/h (125 knots).

The A400M Roll-on/Roll-off (Ro-Ro) firefighting kit offers unique operational advantages previously unavailable on the market. Its innovative roll-on/roll-off design requires no permanent modification to the aircraft, allowing any A400M in a fleet to be rapidly converted for firefighting missions on very short notice. The system, housed in the cargo hold, can discharge up to 20,000 liters of water or retardant by gravity through the rear ramp, with tanks capable of being refilled in less than 10 minutes using standard ground pumps. Furthermore, the A400M's inherent ability to take off and land on short and unpaved runways significantly enhances its flexibility, enabling operations from a wide range of air bases and airfields closer to fire zones. Its design also supports high maneuverability and potential for day and night operations under the latest safety standards.

Airbus Defence and Space continues to promote a comprehensive range of aerial firefighting solutions that cover both indirect and direct fire attack missions, aligning with its commitment to decarbonization and contributing to the fight against the escalating global challenge of wildfires.

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