**Date: 25-09-2024Armed ISR / ISTAR - MALE - General - PlatformAarok, French MALE Combat Drone from Turgis Gaillard Set to Enter ProductionURL: https://armyrecognition.com/news/aerospace-news/2024/aarok-french-male-combat-drone-from-turgis-gaillard-set-to-enter-production**

The French company Turgis & Gaillard is about to begin production of its own MALE (Medium Altitude Long Endurance) combat drone, named Aarok, as reported by Ouest France. Designed and manufactured in France, the Aarok represents a new technological development in the French military industry. First unveiled at the Paris Air Show, this drone stood out for its ability to carry a heavy weapons load while being equipped with sophisticated sensors for surveillance and intelligence missions. Follow Army Recognition on Google News at this link

Competing with American drones like the Reaper, the Aarok can fire missiles with a range of 35 km, allowing it to avoid certain air defense systems such as Russian Pantsir batteries, which have a range limited to 20 km.(Picture source: Aarok)

Part of the assembly of this drone will soon take place in Saint-Malo, a project entrusted to Gaillard ASA, a subsidiary of Turgis & Gaillard. Gaillard ASA, less known to the general public, specializes in the manufacturing and maintenance of aeronautical systems, land vehicles, and both civilian and military ships. Its establishment in Saint-Malo was confirmed by the recent sale of a 1,700 m² plot, intended for the construction of a 700 m² building. This new facility will be used to assemble prototypes, including parts of the Aarok drone. This key step in the Aarok’s production highlights Turgis & Gaillard’s ongoing expansion in the defense sector.

The Aarok is a MALE drone with a maximum takeoff weight of 5.5 tons, a wingspan of 22 meters, and a fuselage length of 14 meters, making it larger than the American Reaper. It is powered by a 1,200-horsepower turboprop engine coupled with a five-blade propeller. This drone is designed to carry up to 1.5 tons of payload, including weapons, intelligence sensors, and multi-mode radars. Its endurance reaches 24 hours with a full payload, extending to 30 hours for intelligence-only (ISTAR) missions. It can cruise at a speed of 250 knots at an altitude of 30,000 feet. Competing with American drones like the Reaper, the Aarok can fire missiles with a range of 35 km, allowing it to avoid certain air defense systems such as Russian Pantsir batteries, which have a range limited to 20 km.

In terms of sensors, the Aarok can be equipped with an optronic pod like the Euroflir 610 from Safran, which was showcased alongside the drone at the Paris Air Show. This sensor includes high-resolution optics, a laser designator, a rangefinder, and an automatic target recognition system. Thanks to its large payload capacity, the Aarok can also carry a versatile radar with maritime capabilities and ground mapping modes. Additionally, it can be equipped with electronic warfare systems (ELINT, SIGINT) and can act as a radio relay on the battlefield.

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For combat missions, the Aarok can carry two 500 kg guided bombs or four 250 kg bombs, as well as lighter weapons. It can also be equipped with up to 16 air-to-surface missiles. This drone is designed for multi-role missions, including airstrikes, intelligence, and surveillance operations, and can operate on various types of terrain due to its automatic takeoff and landing system.

The French military already uses attack drones such as the MQ-9 Reaper, an American-made MALE drone, mainly used for strike and surveillance missions. However, the Aarok represents a significant step toward France’s technological autonomy in the field of combat drones. Developing national drones like the Aarok allows France to avoid reliance on foreign technologies while controlling the design and evolution of systems according to its own operational needs.

In a context where mastery of new military technologies is becoming crucial, the Aarok offers a strategic opportunity to strengthen France's sovereignty in defense. Turgis & Gaillard's project thus helps secure the technological future of the French armed forces and their allies.

**Date: 16-07-2024Armed ISR / ISTAR - Small - General - PlatformBreaking news: Ukraine Develops REX Drone Capable of Carrying 10 kg Bombs 50 kmURL: https://armyrecognition.com/news/aerospace-news/2024/after-the-baba-yaga-ukraine-has-created-the-rex-a-homemade-drone-capable-of-carrying-more-than-10-kg-of-bombs-up-to-50-km**

After the hexacopter Babayaga, an extremely heavy bomber drone capable of carrying a 12-kilogram load over a distance of about ten kilometers, the Ukrainian team at Armadrone has introduced the REX. This drone, modeled with wings similar to an airplane (unlike the Babayaga), is the latest complete unmanned destruction system. It can locate, fix, track, and strike a target up to 45 km away, then assess the attack result. REX is designed to drop various types of explosive ordnance on enemies, ranging from 2 to 8 with a total weight of 10 kg. Follow Army Recognition on Google News at this link

Two Ukrainians engineers preparing with inerts bombs REX UAV in August 2024 (Picture source: Armadrone)

This multifunctional system is intended for reconnaissance, surveillance, fire adjustment, and inflicting fire damage operations. It has an operational range of 45 km and can fly for 1.5 hours with a takeoff mass of 16 kg and a maximum speed of 35 m/s. Developed by the Armadrone team in Ukraine and Poland, which has 7 years of experience in the field of combat drones, REX integrates advanced technologies and components, including Israeli ones. The high precision in strikes is crucial to minimize the risk of civilian casualties in combat zones. Moreover, its ability to be launched by limited means, such as by a team of two preparing and launching the drone, coupled with its endurance and payload, makes this drone particularly interesting in the ongoing war.

The system is developed taking into account combat experience and military needs. The Armadrone team in Ukraine and Poland, with 7 years of experience in creating combat drones, worked on the development. For now, information on this drone is limited as the production team is still in the phase of operational testing. We also know that REX can drop its bombs one by one or in a cascade to maximize the destructive and psychological effect on enemy positions.

REX UAV droping series of 6 inerts bombs during test in august (Picture source: Armadrone)