

Langkawi, 27 March, 2013

The Alenia Aermacchi ATR 72MP: Ensuring Security and Sovereignty over Malaysia's seas

Security and sovereignty over the nation's maritime zones it is not an easy task to accomplish. Malaysia is a country with a total land mass of about 330,000sq km and 4,675km of coastline. Its waters included in the Economic Exclusive Zone are about 574,000sq km, nearly twice the size of peninsular Malaysia and East Malaysia combined. Moreover, the distance between Peninsular Malaysia and East Malaysia is roughly 1,200 km, forcing maritime patrol aircraft, ships and personnel to be based in both parts of Malaysia.

For Malaysia, patrolling and protecting its 200 nautical miles of the Economic Exclusive Zone, the Spratly Islands, the Malacca Straits and the waters between Sabah and the Philippines is a significant security task.

The Alenia Aermacchi ATR 72MP is the perfect solution for this requirement. The ATR 72MP is a maritime patrol aircraft developed by Alenia Aermacchi and based on the new ATR 72-600 series.

Thanks to its maximum endurance (at 5000 ft) of about 10 hours, the ATR 72MP is capable of patrolling Malaysia's EEZ at extremely low operational costs. The ATR 72MP can perform search and identification of surface ships, SAR missions, anti-narcotic, piracy, and smuggling operations and provide environmental protection and EEZ patrol. The ATR 72MP can also implement crew and paratroopers transport.

The ATR 72MP offers significant benefits to Malaysia in terms of training and maintenance. Additionally, 44 ATR are already operational in Malaysia with three airlines and 38 more are on order. Alenia Aermacchi has a long standing presence in Malaysia built on a significant installed base of military equipment with its MB.339A and MB.339C jet trainer aircraft.

In line with the Malaysia's 2020 vision and Economic Transformation Programme (ETP), Alenia Aermacchi's industrial participation proposal envisages an on-going dialogue with the Malaysian aerospace industry in order to foster strategic international partnerships and maximize the usage of local content leading to indigenization; establish a sustainable Malaysian industrial, economic and technological base; encourage transfer of technology and know-how; collaborate and facilitate investment in strategic human capital development initiatives; and launch education and training initiatives that will develop and sustain a skilled workforce and valuable intellectual capital.

The ATR 72MP is a member of a proven in-service family of Maritime Patrol aircraft developed by Alenia Aermacchi with an outstanding growth potential for the future. A total of 22 aircraft have been already ordered, and the active fleet has recorded more than 37.000 flying hours as of December 31,2012.

The aircraft has a fuselage door that can be opened in flight and a two observer station equipped with large bubble windows.

With appropriate changes in the configuration and with the integration of specific sensors and systems, the aircraft is capable of being transformed to an efficient anti-submarine warfare aircraft.

In December 2008, the Italian Air Force signed a contract for the supply of four ATR 72MPs. These aircraft will carry out tasks of surveillance, maritime patrol and SAR. The new aircraft will replace the Italian Air Force's Breguet Atlantic aircraft. The ATR 72MP will be equipped with an ATOS (Airborne Tactical Observation and Surveillance) mission system developed by another Finmeccanica company, Selex ES.

The mission system is based on three main sensors:

- An electro-optical turret Star Sapphire HD
- A research radar AESA Selex ES Seaspray 7300E
- An ESM (Electronic Support Measures) sensor provided by Elettronica.

The following capacities complete the aircraft's configuration:

- Automatic identification system
- Link Communications 11/16
- Satellite Communications (KU Band)

The aircraft will be equipped with the latest generation of communication systems and a data link for real time information exchange between the aircraft and command and control centers, and other sea or aerial platforms. The mission system is integrated with the aircraft's avionics in the new glass cockpit configuration, a unique feature of the new ATR 72-600 platform.

The aircraft will also be equipped with a self-protection system (chaff & flare dispenser, radar warning/missile warning/laser warning), which is similar to the one installed on the Alenia Aermacchi C-27J aircraft and integrated with board avionics.