

MMU IOC at Eindhoven AB



On 23 March 2023, at Eindhoven AB (ICAO code: EHEH), NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, traveled to the passenger terminal of Eindhoven Air Base, to take part in the ceremony marking the Initial Operational Capability (IOC) of the new Multinational Multi-Role Tanker Transport aircraft fleet. The fleet, an important example of NATO-European Union cooperation, will perform key functions such as air-to-air refuelling, air transport and medical evacuation.

The event was hosted by Kajsa Ollongren, Minister of Defence of the

Netherlands. Ministers and high-level officials from the countries participating in the MRTT project, as well as the European Commissioner for the Internal Market, Thierry Breton, and representatives of other organisations that are facilitating the project, also took part in the event.

Next to the IOC event, was there another event. The 10th Airbus A330 MRTT aircraft was officially ordered and the contract was signed by Ludivine Dedonder for Belgium, Siemtje Möller for Germany, François Bausch for Luxembourg, Kajsa Ollongren for the Netherlands and Anne Marie Aanerud for Norway. After the

signing of the contract, there were speeches by Jurgen van der Biezen, the commander of the Multinational MRTT Unit, Kajsa Ollongren, minister of Defence of the Netherlands, Thierry Breton, European Commissioner for the Internal Market and Jens Stoltenberg, NATO Secretary General.

Jurgen van der Biezen received from Kajsa Ollongren symbolically the IOC status, formed by a model tail of an A330.

On the Eindhoven AB tarmac, two A330 MRTT aircraft were located. One in the tanker configuration and one in the MEDEVAC configuration.

The MMF programme (Multinational MRTT Fleet) brings together six European countries:

Germany (5,500 flight hours), the Netherlands (2,000 flight hours),



Luxembourg (1,200 flight hours), Belgium (1,000 flight hours), Norway and the Czech Republic (100 flight hours each).

The acquisition of the ten A330 MRTTs was carried out by the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR), under the aegis of NATO. The logistics management of the fleet is provided by NSPA, NATO's support and procurement agency. With the 10th A330, the Belgian Air Force will get to 2000 flight hours. ✈️

Report by Joris van Boven and Alex van Noije

Photos by Joris van Boven

