

France orders Wasp remote-controlled turrets for armored vehicles

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French defense procurement agency DGA has placed an order with Panhard, working with program co-contractor Sagem (Safran group), for 100 Wasp turrets as part of an operational emergency acquisition procedure.

These Wasp turrets will be used on the French army's PVP and VBL light armored vehicles.

Developed jointly by Panhard and Sagem, the Wasp (Weapon under Armor for Self-Protection) is a light turret that is remotely-controlled from inside the vehicle. It is fitted with a MAG 58 7.62 mm machine gun, coupled to a day/infrared sight and observation scope derived from the FELIN soldier modernization program, for day or night operation. Incorporating lessons from previous deployments, the Wasp turret significantly enhances self-protection for soldiers, while enabling quicker responsiveness under armor.

Light and compact, the Wasp also features a small visual signature. Because of the weapon's wide range of elevation/depression (-40°+80°), it is ideally suited to combat in urban or mountain environments. It is also designed to subsequently add a fusion function for the daytime and thermal channels, providing the daytime ability to "see through" camouflage.

By combining Panhard's expertise in the design of armored combat systems with the technological innovations derived from Sagem-led defense programs, especially FELIN, the Wasp turret offers high performance for the price, while expanding the operability of light armoured vehicles.

***Panhard General Defense**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Auverland since early 2005, has been designing and developing armored vehicles for nearly a century. In particular Panhard produces the VBL light armored vehicle, and has already delivered more than 2,000 VBLs to fifteen countries, including 1,600 for the French army. It also makes the PVP, more than 750 of which are in service. Panhard had revenues of 90 million euros in 2009. For more information see www.panhard.fr*

***Sagem**, a high-tech company in the Safran group, holds world or European leadership positions in optronics, avionics, electronics and safety-critical software for both civil and military markets. Sagem is the No. 1 company in Europe and No. 3 worldwide for inertial navigation systems (INS) used in air, land and naval applications. It is also the world leader in helicopter flight controls and the European leader in optronics and tactical UAV systems. Operating across the globe through the Safran group, Sagem and its subsidiaries employ 7 000 people in Europe, Southeast Asia and North America. Sagem is the commercial name of the company Sagem Défense Sécurité. For more information: www.sagem-ds.com*

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