

## First batch of upgraded French Sagaies set for delivery

**Panhard General Defense will soon finish upgrading the first batch of 35 ERC Sagaie 90 mm 6 x 6 armoured cars for the French Army: the last armoured fighting vehicles (AFVs) in France's inventory to still use a petrol engine.**

The first upgraded Sagaies have already been delivered to the French Army, which will deploy its first squadron of them overseas early in 2007. Overall a total of 160 French Sagaie vehicles are being upgraded, with their Peugeot PRV V6 petrol powerplant and manual transmission being replaced by a more fuel-efficient Mercedes-Benz 170 hp diesel engine, coupled to a Renk fully automatic transmission with torque converter. The upgrade increases the operational range of the Sagaie from 700 km to about 900 km, while the automatic transmission reduces driver fatigue. The only major drawback is that the

diesel powerpack is 400 kg heavier, which has increased the overall weight of the vehicle and negated its amphibious capability.

Also, when originally delivered the vehicle's centre road wheel either side was normally raised off the ground and lowered for cross-country operations, but this capability has been removed on the upgraded vehicles. The vehicle's long-barrelled 90 mm gun is retained, as is the 7.62 mm co-axial machine gun (MG).

The number of Sagaie upgrades completed will increase to 55 units in 2007, with final deliveries due in 2008.

Under current plans the French Army will deploy the ERC armoured car through to at least 2020.

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