



Avio: contract worth over Euro 100 million signed for 10 Ariane 5 launches

Production on the final lot before arrival of new Ariane 6 gets underway

Colleferro, February 22, 2018 - Avio and Europropulsion have signed in Paris a supply contract for the coming 4 years for the final Ariane 5 production lot. The order is worth over euro 100 million.

The Ariane 5 contract signed in Paris is the end point of a European Space Programme which began nearly 30 years ago: from 2020 in fact, Ariane 5 - which has made aerospace history - will gradually be replaced by Ariane 6, a new and better performing launcher for which Avio produces in Colleferro the booster case of the P120C in carbon fibre and, through the subsidiary Regulus in French Guyana, carries out the solid propellant loading.

The same P120C motors, used for Ariane 6 as boosters, will however be utilised as the first stage of the evolving European Vega C and Vega E launchers (which hold the world record of 11 successful launches from the qualifying flight). Vega C's qualifying launch will take place in 2019.

“The contract signed in Paris is the culmination of a journey lasting 30 years involving our enterprise's fruitful co-operation with our European partners, developing singular expertise in the solid propulsion sector and delivering unequalled results in terms of product reliability - stated Chief Executive Officer Giulio Ranzo. After this fantastic experience, we enthusiastically tackle the fresh challenges which Ariane 6 brings”.

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Avio is a leading international space launcher, spacecraft propulsion and space transport group. It has 5 sites in Italy, France and French Guiana, and employs over 760 people at the consolidated level. In 2016 its revenues totalled 292 million Euros.

The Avio Group manufactures the Vega launcher, with its subsidiary ELV (30% owned by the Italian Space Agency) as prime contractor. This makes Italy one of the very few countries in the world with the ability to produce a complete space launch vehicle.

Avio will build the new Vega C launcher and contribute to the new Ariane 6 launcher by providing the new solid engines and the Vinci and Vulcain liquid oxygen turbopumps. The new solid propulsion engine, currently named P120C, for the Ariane 6 European launch vehicle and the new, more powerful version of the Vega launcher will be developed and built by Europropulsion (J.V. 50% Avio, 50% ASL). To create this engine and the new Zefiro 40 engine (entirely developed, built and tested in Italy by AVIO and designed for the second stage of the Vega launch vehicle), a new composite material made of pre-impregnated carbon fibre will be used. It will be made directly by Avio in Italy, in its research centres in Colleferro (near Rome) and Airola (near Benevento).

Avio has many years of experience in the design and construction of solid and liquid propellant propulsion systems for space launch vehicles and tactical propulsion. Avio built the liquid oxygen turbopump for the Vulcain cryogenic engine, as well as the two lateral solid propellant engines for Ariane 5, the first stage of the Aster 30 anti-missile defence missile. To date, Avio solid propulsion has been used successfully in all of Ariane's launches (which number over 230 in total) and all of Vega's launches.

In the field of satellites, the Avio Group has built and supplied propulsion subsystems for ESA and ASI to put into orbit and control over 30 satellites, including most recently SICRAL and SmallGEO.